

Hastings Middle School Parent Newsletter

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From the Desk of the Principal

School environments are as different as snowflakes. No two are exactly the same. Whereas some schools feel friendly, inviting, and supportive, others feel exclusionary, unwelcoming, and even unsafe. The feelings and attitudes that are elicited by a school's environment are referred to as school climate. A great deal of research indicates that how a student feels about his/her school greatly influences academic success and motivation. Student perception also influences students' behavior and emotions. Perceptions of school events, the nature of teachers' expectations, safety and orderliness, and patterns of interaction between students and teachers as well as between the adults in the building have an impact on academic attitudes and behaviors.

A report by John Hopkins University entitled, School Connectedness: Improving Students' Lives states, "In order to succeed, students need to feel they belong in their school." This belonging feeling fuels motivation and ultimately academic achievement. If motivation and academic achievement are to be an integral part of a school's culture, they must be communicated and celebrated through as many venues as

possible, the most significant in the classroom. For it is in the classroom where the special relationships flourish and the love for learning evolves into achievement. A school that can boast of this accomplishment is an effective school.

The significance of this research cannot be overstated. It confirms what teachers have known for decades: A safe and supportive school environment in which students develop positive social relationships and are respected, engaged in their work, and feel competent, matters. Given that school climate is grounded in students' experiences of school life, I thought it might be beneficial and interesting to let you hear our students' thoughts of how they feel about different aspects of the school. The following are their words:

"The cookies are good here. The projects are fun because you have to look up stuff on the computer and build stuff. We get rewards for doing homework. They are called Bendiksen bucks and you get to trade them for prizes. Ms. Burroughs is "da bomb." I love the pizza. School dances are fun. MURPHY. Mr. Baldo is the best science teacher ever. I like all the clubs especially art because I love art and it's fun. I like having exploratories spread out through the day because it gives us a break from academics. Ms. Bendiksen makes class fun because she gets kids involved, lets us talk about the issues, and shows fun videos that relate to

the class. The principal is the best. I like a lot of the teachers because they are fun and nice. In some classes you can joke around sometimes and not be all-serious. It makes it fun! Violin class is really fun. I think Ms. Chirigotis is my favorite teacher...I like how she teaches stuff. I like how we learn...some kids say they hate school but they shouldn't because we learn. It's more fun to learn with our friends. We have a really safe school. I think school is good because it gives you education and without education you wouldn't know anything and won't be able to succeed. If you pay attention you can see that the teachers try hard and want the students to succeed. I never knew about life forms, how motion came about, and different kinds of language for each subject like math and science. We have student of the month but I think teachers should have teacher of the month...they try so much and give us so much...they always help us succeed. FRIES! I like my coaches...Mr. Barr and Mr. Mitch. They are good coaches. Officer Riggs talks to us about good stuff. All the sixth grade teachers are awesome! These comments are heartwarming and encouraging.

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Our students are happy and comfortable here. They feel good about coming to school and the relationships they have formed with their teachers. It confirms our belief that Hastings is a great place to be!

Honor Roll



The “A” Honor Roll requires that you have “A’s” in all your subjects. The “B” Honor Roll requires that you have “A’s & B’s” or all “B’s” in all your subjects.



Progress Reports/Report Cards

It is always important for you to know when to expect progress reports and report cards. Our schedule for this school year is listed below.

	Progress Reports	Report Cards
Term 1	Oct. 10, 2008	Nov. 7, 2008
Term 2	Dec. 12, 2008	Jan. 23, 2009
Term 3	February 27, 2009	April 3, 2009
Term 4	May 8, 2009	Will Be Mailed

Promotion / Retention Guidelines



All *Hastings Middle School* students must meet the following guidelines to be promoted to the next grade:

- All students will pass three of four core academic subjects.
- Enrichments classes are considered in promotion as follows:
 1. Students who fail two enrichment courses in addition to one academic course, will not be considered for promotion.

- Students who fail the same core academic subject for two consecutive years will not be considered for promotion.
- In certain circumstances, a Promotion Review Committee may recommend approval of alternative learning experiences when deemed in the best interest of the student. The committee will submit its recommendations to the Principal who may at his/her discretion, approve or disapprove.

Student of the Month



Each month teachers nominate students for *Student of the Month* recognition. The students are placed on a ballot and teachers vote for one student from each team. Students are nominated for demonstrating the core values of our school. Those core values are *Politeness, Responsibility, Involvement, Discipline, and Excellence*.

Congratulations to the winners for December. They are: *Julia Days, Benjamin Elliott, Lauren Pedersen, Jason Monty, Corey Pietraszek, Delaney Corcoran, Torrie Arruda, Christopher Vigeant, Isaac Allen, Gabrielle Santos*.

Early Release Schedule



Students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. **No lunches** will be served on the dates listed below:
March 19, & Last day of school

Pride Cards

Pride cards are issued to a student who has done some type of school service for a student or a staff member. At the end of each month, one pride card is chosen from each grade from the boxes in the Guidance Office. These lucky students receive a prize.

	January
Grade 6	Brooke Sequin
Grade 7	
Grade 8	Kody Skolis

School Nurse Notes

Nurse—Barbara Webster Tel: 508 979-4064
Email Address: bwebster@fairhavenps.org



Just a reminder at the end of this flu season to encourage good hand washing in the home. The spread of viruses and bacteria can be stopped by good hand washing

techniques. Ideally, cleanse with soap and warm water for at least 30 seconds washing all surfaces of hands and wrists. Rinse and dry thoroughly. Please keep your children home from school if they are sick and have a fever.

Millicent Library Events



Books2Movies Club — Friday, March 6 at 4 - 5 p.m. Hear the beginning of Mrs. Frisby and the Rats of NIMH. **Monday, March 23 at 4—5 p.m. book discussion. Friday, March 27 at 4—6 p.m. movie!** Grades 3 to 6.

Teen Tech Week Activities — **YouTube Viewing Party** — Wednesday, March 11 at 6:30—7:15 p.m. Submit your favorite (appropriate) YouTube videos to lgardner@sailsinc.org in advance. We will watch them all together on the big screen and vote on our favorites! Ages 12+.

Contest Winner By Dr. Gifford

What do you want to be when you grow up? That was the question students were invited to answer during the second Dartmouth, Fairhaven, and New Bedford “Grade Six Essay Contest” sponsored by Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School. On March 3 our top student, **Justin Methia** will attend an awards dinner held at GNBVRT High School.

Congratulations, Justin!



Math Club Miss Chretien



Be sure to check out the new plaque that is on the wall across from the main office. The American Mathematics Contest plaque displays the name of this year's school winner, **Richard Souza**. The students also participated in the Math League contest on February 24th. The winners will be announced in a future newsletter. In March, the students will participate in the Stock Market Game.

Girls' Basketball Team By Ms. Phelan



The girls' basketball team completed another successful season. With only three returning members from last season's team, the balance of the team consisted of many young ladies who had not played together in interscholastic athletics. Over the course of the season, the girls refined their skills and developed a wonderful chemistry with one another. Constant adjustments both in games and during practice as well as the addition of new plays challenged the girls, not only in terms of the basketball skills, but also in terms of their basketball knowledge. The players improved in every facet of the game during the season. The growth of the team was evident in their contests with perennial rivals Old Rochester and Wareham, as well as in their contests with Acushnet and Fall River.

The members of the 2008-09 Girls' Basketball team are, in the 7th grade: **Kiyana Alfaiate, Courtney Carroll, Alexandra Charette, Delaney Corcoran, Courtney Girouard, Mary McCann, and Dina Tichon**. The 8th grade members are: **Kimberly Baptista, Sheri Lubertowicz, Danielle Paulson, Katie Langlois (Co-Captain), and Kay Mullen (Co-Captain)**.

The girls and coaches would like to thank the administration, faculty, staff, and students of Hastings Middle School for all of their support throughout the season. We would especially like to thank the Matty Oliveira Program for their support of the athletic program at Hastings Middle School.

Grade 6 English By Mrs. Hebert and Mrs. Leblanc



As part of the 6th grade English curriculum, students will be required to write a research paper on a character or monster from Greek Mythology. This project will involve a considerable amount of work and addresses numerous benchmarks. Students will be assessed in a variety of ways and all assessments (*Quiz, Test, Classwork, Homework*) will affect students' grades. A visit to the local area libraries (Fairhaven, New Bedford, Acushnet & Dartmouth) and/or local book stores for reference materials is a **MUST!!** Please monitor your child's agenda book closely as different parts of the writing process will have specific due dates.

***6 Blue students will be working on their papers:**

February 23, 2009 through March 13, 2009

***6 White students will be working on their papers:**

March 16, 2009 through April 3, 2009.

Physical Education Student of the Month

Mr. Galvam and Mrs. Nunes would like to recognize the following students for their sportsmanship, skill, and effort in Physical Education for the month of January.

Grade 6: Cameron Charette
Olivia Goguen

Grade 7: Adam Carvalho
Sarah Dupont

Grade 8: Alec Dompierre
Kayli-Anna Barriteau

Support our Troops! By Mrs. Haines



Hastings Middle School has adopted a platoon of 44 soldiers serving in Iraq. These soldiers are originally from Connecticut and are in need of some kind words, local news, and supplies. Each month a different team is responsible for putting together a care package that will be shipped to our platoon. Show your gratitude to our deserving heroes! Please do your part by writing letters, drawing pictures, and buying supplies and entertainment items for our platoon. Monetary donations are also needed to cover the costs of shipping and handling. Please look for notices coming home during your child's assigned month that will provide you with more information.

Months are assigned as follows:

October - November: 6W

November - December: 6B

December - January: 7W

January - February: 7B

February - March: 8W

March - April: 8B

Thank-you for your anticipated support!

For more information please contact Mrs. Haines at jhaines@fairhavenps.org and go online to www.adoptaplatoon.org

Education League Math Competition By Mrs. Charette

On February 3, the students at Hastings Middle School participated in a math competition offered through the *Education League*, a division of Online Testing Solutions. Our top 5 scores in each grade level were combined for a team score that placed all Hastings Middle School grade levels in the first round of the competition. The sixth graders placed third and will compete against East Quogue 6 graders on March 3. The 7th graders placed in two categories, pre-algebra and general math, third place and fifth place respectively. The pre-algebra team will compete against Utica Junior High in the next round and the grade 7 math team will compete against Pass Christian Middle School. Finally, our 8th grade algebra students achieved a second place spot and will compete against Iroquois Middle School.

The next test is schedule for March 3. We are confident our students will place again so that we can move on to a round robin finish with the top four teams in the region.

Great job Hastings Middle School math students!



Music in Our Schools Month By Mr. Young

Come join the Hastings Middle School Jazz Ensemble kick off "Music in Our Schools" month with "A Journey Through Time" on February 28, 2009 at the Fairhaven High School Gymnasium. The Jazz ensemble will be joining forces with the Fairhaven High School Concert Band, Jazz Band, and Orchestra for their annual Pops Concert. This year, the performers will be presenting a concert that spans the musical eras from the Renaissance to the Present. The dinner will include Baked Lasagna, Italian Meatballs, Oven-fried Chicken, Roasted Potatoes, Salad, and Bread and Butter, Assorted Pastries, Coffee and Punch. Tickets are \$15 for the dinner and concert. Tickets must be purchased in advance by February 23rd. See a band member or call (508) 979-4051 x1023 for details. Concert-only tickets are \$5 and can be purchased at the door. Dinner starts at 6:00pm and the concert starts at 6:30pm. We hope that you will join us on what's to be a trip to remember.



The month of March is a busy month for the Music Department. It is "Music in Our Schools" month. We start off the month with the S.E. Junior District Festival on March 6th and 7th. Four of our talented musicians were selected to participate in this prestigious event. Congratulations to all who auditioned and were selected.

If theater is your thing, the Fairhaven High School Drama Club will be presenting "Annie" March 19-22nd. Come and see this wonderful production, you may even recognize and want to adopt some of the orphans.

The month of March would not be complete without "Band Mania" and "String Explosion." This year's Band Mania concert will be held on Tuesday, March 24th at 7:00pm in the Hastings Middle School Gymnasium. String Explosion will be performed on Wednesday, March 25th at 7:00pm in the Hastings Middle School Gymnasium. Come see your children perform with all the instrumental students from grades 4-12, it's going to be dynamite.

National Spanish Competition By Mrs. Duarte

Ten students of Señora Duarte and ten students of Señor Beaulieu have been selected (out of a hat) to participate in this year's National Spanish Competition. Many thanks to the PTO for funding this contest, and also for their enthusiasm in favor of the project. The contestants will be treated to a pizza party when the competition results arrive in early April. Me gusta la pizza--¡Qué deliciosa!



For the next eight weeks the contestants will be practicing on-line to get ready. Helpful links to practices can be found on www.hastingsspanish.wetpaint.com/ and at www.nationalspanishexam.org.

Competing students are listed in no specific order:

Grade 8:

Nikolas Coelho, Jacob Carvalho, Kyle Everett, Daniel Buelterman, Danielle Fournier, Erin Hoberman and Isaac Allen.

Grade 7:

Victor Miller, Deanna Dang, Allison Roderiques, Sara daCosta, Dina Tichon and Samantha Stoddard.

Grade 6:

Cole McGarty, Dylan Cromwell, Rebecca Cabral, Evan Grodzki, Nicole Arruda, Shae Riley and Grace Galinha

Art Club

By Mrs. Roveda

Art club has been going great. Members have just finished a free-draw or paint assignment in which they chose their own art medium and subject matter. Projects ranged from oil pastel flowers and watercolor landscapes to Obama caricatures and Japanese *anime*. It was truly a pleasure to see all of the different projects and ideas from each student.



For our next project we will be creating the scenery and props for the Drama Club's spring performance of Willy Wonka. This endeavor will introduce members to the art of set Design which can be logistically challenging but extremely rewarding. *Any monetary donations received through March will go toward the set production for the spring musical. – Thank You!

PTO News



The PTO is having a dance on April 3rd. Tickets will be available during all lunches the week of the dance for \$5 or \$6 at the door.

The *Sweet Ginger fundraiser* is coming fast! The **Blue team** will meet on **Wednesday, March 12th** and the **White team** will be on **Wednesday, March 19th**. Coupons will go home the Monday before each date. All proceeds will go towards Fun Fair Day in June! Let's see which team will be victorious!

We are beginning plans for Fun Fair Day in June. If you would like to help out on June 5th, please contact Pam Corcoran at 508-997-6183.

The 8th Grade Cookie Dough Fundraiser was a huge success! The sales were \$7012.00. Any 8th grade parent who ordered cookies, pick up will be March 11th during the PTO meeting. We will be there from 5:00-7:45. Your student may also bring the orders home after school on the 11th.



The Drama Club presentation of "Willy Wonka" will be on March 26th.

Order forms will be in the HMS Main Office as well as by contacting Maggie Cardoso at Maggie71@comcast.net.

There are PTO Officer vacancies for the 09/10 school year. All positions are open. If you are interested in any of these positions, please contact Marianne Tichon at 508-990-7868.

We're Going to Knoxville! By Mrs. Freeman



Hastings Middle School has exciting news! On Saturday, February 7th, two teams comprised of 6th, 7th, and 8th graders competed in the Regional portion of Construction Challenge at the O'Donnell Middle School in Stoughton, MA. The Construction Challenge is sponsored by the Association of Equipment Manufacturers and Destination ImagiNation to provide opportunities for middle and high school students to explore real-world challenges that require knowledge, cooperation and an ability to 'think-on-one's-feet' in order to solve them.

The **Brainy Bunch** composed of *Madison Cabral, Deanna Dang, Raegan Docca, Alison Kuechler, Cole McGarty, Kenneth Borges, and MacKenzie Martin* and The **Eagle Dudes of Science** made up of *Erin Hoberman, Jesselyn Dugas, Benjamin Elliott, Kyle Koczera, Katherine Gilmore, Ross Perry and Noah Aurelio* worked hard to prepare for the event by researching and creating prototypes of a machine needed to perform a certain task.

And now for the best part! The Brainy Bunch walked away with first place

plaques in each of three required challenges and the Eagle Dudes placed in several competitions as well. The Brainy Bunch's outstanding accomplishment entitles them and Team leaders to represent Massachusetts in the Global Finals in Knoxville, Tennessee in May! Teams from Canada and all across the United States will be competing in this event - an estimated 20,000 people! Plans are currently underway to explore travel options and begin fundraising to pay for travel expenses.

Both teams worked hard to develop solutions for the challenges, which included bridge and machine building. **Team leaders Christopher Baldo, Gregg Barr, Bruce Riseborough, and Sue Freeman**, the entire Hastings staff and faculty, and our parents are very proud of all of our students who participated. We are confident that Fairhaven will be well represented at the Global Finals.



Congratulations!

Thank You

By Mr. Beaulieu



Mrs. Duarte and Mr. Beaulieu are thankful to all those who have donated index cards and binder clips. Special thanks to Maggie Cardoso for donating so many thousands of clips and cards! Rest assured that Spanish students will be putting them to very good use.

Muchas gracias and keep them coming por favor. Adios for now.

