

Hastings Middle School Parent Newsletter

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From the Desk of the Principal

The first month is complete and I am happy to report we are off to an awesome start. Our sixth grade class has settled in nicely; teachers report they are pleasant, eager to participate in class, and excited to be here. All indications reveal our sixth grade parents have survived the middle school jitters as well. Grade eight students have grown accustomed to their new home in the wings right off of the cafeteria. Teachers say the move has resulted in quieter hallways and smoother transitions between classes. As for the seventh grade group, students in this class have evolved from shy, anxious sixth graders into more confident youngsters. We look forward to a promising year for all of our students.

After school fun has begun for students who want to be involved in all the extras. Students can choose from a plethora of activities including jazz band, rock band club, video game club, soccer, intramural sports, art club, and a newly created fangs, wings, and, magical things group. I am as curious as the students are about what this club might entail but am sure it will involve creativity and imagination with just the right amount of learning thrown in for good measure.

We are especially excited about the revitalization of our media center. Media Specialist Ann Rich-

ard has been busy weeding our collection, adding new books and subscriptions, working with classroom teachers on research projects, and teaching two research seminar classes to grades seven and eight. It is our goal that our media center becomes the heart of our school and integral to the daily operations at Hastings. Ms. Richard takes this mission to heart and has been making plans to host a book fair and facilitate a Hastings mock election. In essence, our library supports teaching, learning, and research in an intellectually and welcoming environment, providing instruction in the use of traditional and new information technologies that enhance and reinforce the school curriculum. The library is open before and after school for student use.

The resurgence of the media center has also sparked a renewed sense of urgency relative to our efforts to instill a love of reading in students. To encourage life long reading our sixth grade teachers have adopted SSR or silent sustained reading. For the first fifteen minutes following lunch, students settle in for quiet reading time. Because the main thrust behind our SSR program is to demonstrate to students that pleasure-reading is something to be valued by all, teachers, guidance counselors, the assistant principal, and I often sit and read with students. I encourage families to support this initiative by setting aside some time each day to drop everything and read! You just might find a book you can't put down.

I'd also like to mention a particularly important aspect of

our work with children. At Hastings we emphasize that we are a community in which all should feel respected and supported. Our guidance counselors visit every classroom and teach students about the realities of bullying and other kinds of negative behavior and attitudes. Students are encouraged to treat everyone with a positive attitude and alert an adult if they know of or have been a victim of a bullying incident. In addition, health teacher Ashley Morton and guidance counselor Sarah Decas attended training in the Second Step program, an award winning violence prevention program that integrates academics with social and emotional learning. It is research-based and has been shown to reduce discipline referrals, improve school climate by building feelings of inclusiveness and respect, and increase the sense of confidence and responsibility in students. We expect parents will support our efforts by talking and listening to their children every day. Safe schools are everyone's responsibility. For more information click on <http://mentalhealth.samhsa.gov/15plus/aboutbullying.asp>.

Finally, all parents now have access to the X2 parent portal, which allows parents to view their child's progress in each class. Please log in and check on your child's assignments

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and grades. If you have trouble accessing the portal, please email parentportal@fairhavenps.org. As always please keep the lines of communication open by emailing your child's teachers. An effective home/school connection is a critical component to a child's success.



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.

Additionally, students must maintain a **passing grade with at least a Satisfactory** in all *Enrichment* 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 September. They are: **Nicole Arruda, Hannah Abrantes, Grace Galinha, Douglas Genereaux, Zachary Cudmore, James Plummer, Nathan Fincher, Justin Avila, Jayne Faria, Alexander Kuechler, Quinn Stoeckle.**

Early Release Schedule



Students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. **No lunches** will be served on the dates listed below: **October 16, November 26, December 18, January 15, 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.

	September
Grade 6	Kristian Berg
Grade 7	David Santos
Grade 8	Quinn Stoeckle

Grade 6 Homework Club By Mrs. Freeman



Does your 6th grader need a little quiet and some supervision to get homework completed? Perhaps the Homework Club is the answer. On Tuesdays and Wednesdays in Room 45, Ms Freeman is offering a Homework Club for any 6th grader. Starting at 2:30 students will sign in, get organized and complete assignments - with assistance if necessary. Late bus passes will be given to students who need the late bus. The club is over at 3:15.

Students who are disruptive and interfere with the ability of other students to complete their work will be asked to leave.

If you have any questions, please email Ms. Freeman at sfreeman@fairhavenps.org.

Immunization / School Nurse Notes

Nurse—Barbara Webster

Tel: 508 979-4064

Email Address:

bwebster@fairhavenps.org



The Department of Public Health (105 CMR Section 200.200) requires that public schools have on file a report of physical examination of each child upon entrance into the school system and every 3—4 years thereafter (*Grades 4, 7, and 10*). If you are the parent of a **Grade 7** child,

your child is scheduled to have an updated physical. Please send the physical exam form from the physician to the nurse.

All Grade 7 students need evidence of having had Td Booster.

Also be aware that if your child will be participating in school sports, a current physical is required for tryouts.

Comments from the Assistant Principal



I would like to thank everyone for a great start to the school year. I thought it would be a good idea to go over some items from the handbook for our sixth grade students and parents. It will also serve as a reminder for our seventh and eighth graders.

ATTENDANCE: Parents are reminded that they need to call in a student absence by 9 AM the day of the absence. The number to call is 508-979-4066. If a phone call is not received, the student will be considered truant. This is a safety issue. We need to know that all our students are here in school or safe at home.

RETURN OF SCHOOL FORMS: Please remember that students have **2** days to return anything sent home from school that requires a signature. Students will be assigned aftersessions and detentions if papers are not returned in a timely fashion. If you lose the form, progress report, or report card have the student come to my office to request a copy or write a

note stating you have seen the form.

MORNING DROPOFF: The traffic flow in the morning is moving quite well! Just a reminder to say your goodbyes and make all plans for the day as you drive up Ash Street. Students should be ready to exit the car quickly. Three to four cars should be able to exit when the line of traffic stops. **Please be patient! It is imperative that all cars stay in a single line and follow the flow of traffic.**

Officer Riggs and I have been noticing an increase in the number of sixth grade parents driving at the bottom of the parking lot and dropping sixth graders off at the top of School Street near the rotary. This is becoming more and more of a safety issue! We have noticed a back up of cars there. Also parents doing this are blocking off that section from students walking or riding their bikes up the street. Again it is a matter of safety. We ask that all parents stay in the line and drop their students off at the top of the

parking lot along with everyone else. If we all follow this, students will be able to walk safely to their appropriate entrances. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

CONDUCT REPORTS: In order to keep parents informed of their child's behavior in school, I will be sending conduct reports home with the progress reports and report cards. These will only be sent if a student has had an office referral, which may have resulted in anything from a warning, to a detention, or even a suspension. I know that most parents want to be made aware of what is happening in school so that they can address the situation at home. I have no doubt that, with your help, all students can be successful here at Hastings!

Please feel free to call my office at 508-979-4066 if you have any questions or concerns.

Clubs / Activities at HMS



Intramurals: 2:30—3:30
 grade 8—Mondays;
 grade 7—Tuesday;
 grade 6—Wednesday

Homework Club grade 6: 2:30—3:15
 Tuesdays and Wednesday

Video Game Club: 2:30—3:15
 Wednesday

Drama Club: 2:30—3:30
 Wednesday

Renaissance Club: 2:30—3:15
 Tuesday or Wednesday

Student Council: 2:30—3:15
 Tuesday

Chess Club: 2:30—3:15
 Wednesday



Science Club: 2:30—3:15
 Meet 2—3 times a month

Math Club: 2:30—3:15
 Tuesday

Comic Book Club: 2:30—3:15
 Wednesday



From the Stacks By Ms. Richard

We are very excited to have our library media center open again here at Hastings. Since we have been without a library for a few years, our collection has suffered. We will be purchasing new titles for our shelves very soon, but we could always use donations. Anyone who has any new or slightly used young adult titles at home that they would like to donate to the library: PLEASE SEND THEM IN!

We are lucky to have a few parent volunteers who have come forward to help in the library. They will soon be in the stacks sorting, cataloging and straightening out our collection. If you are interested in helping out in the library or with an upcoming Book Fair please email Ann Richard at arichard@fairhavenps.org. If you just want to see the library please stop by before or after school any day. The library is now open from 7:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. from Monday-Friday. Students can come in to check out books, read, finish homework, or use the computers to research or print assignments.

New Bedford Symphony Youth Orchestra By Ms. Chirigotis



We have some exciting news in the Music Department! The newly formed New Bedford Symphony Youth Orchestra held auditions on Saturday, September 20, at UMASS Dartmouth. I am proud to announce that Autumn Cyr, Kyle Bueno, and John Paul Stapleton have all been accepted into the NBYSO. Their diligent practice on their violins has earned them this great honor. The NBYSO will rehearse on Saturday mornings and will give three concerts throughout the school year. As a member of the New Bedford Symphony Orchestra, I am very excited to have my own students achieve such a great milestone in their musical lives. Having a chance to participate in a large orchestra where you can feel the “big” sound is something that I find very rewarding for myself; I am so excited that they will have a chance to have the same experience. Anyone else interested in being a part of the NBYSO, either Band or Strings, please contact me at dchirigotis@fairhavenps.org. Congratulations to Autumn, Kyle, and John Paul!

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 September.

Grade 6: Tyler Souza
 Christina Pinheiro

Grade 7: Zachary Viera
 Janelle Mercer

Grade 8: Timothy Magalhaes
 Nora Saunders

Box Tops for Education



Student Council will be collecting *Box Tops for Education*.

1. Clip Box Tops

Clip box tops from hundreds of your favorite General Mills products found throughout your local grocery store. Each box top is worth .10 cents to our school.

2. Send Box Tops to School.

Our school will collect submitted box tops and send them to General Mills

3. Our School Earns Cash.

Twice a year, General Mills will send our school a check worth .10 cents for each box top redeemed. The more box tops we receive the more money we can earn. Thank you for your continued support.

Millicent Library Summer Reading Program

Congratulations!

The following student participated in the *Millicent Library Summer Reading Program*.

Student who read 10 hours:
Samantha Correia
Hannah Pothier

Student who read 20 hours

Jordan Costa
Autumn Cyr
Benjamin Elliott
Bria Rodrigues
Kelsev Storov



Second Step in Health Class Ms. Morton

We will be starting the Second Step program in health class this October. Below you will find a brief overview of the topics that will be covered throughout the program.

6th Grade: Stepping Up

The theme of this level is rising to the challenge of being a middle school student. It addresses skills students need to deal with the increasing complexity and responsibility in their lives. This level covers skills and concepts in empathy and communication, bullying prevention, emotion management, problem solving, and an extended focus on substance abuse.

7th Grade: Stepping In

This level focuses on helping students engage positively in life and school by staying in control and making good decisions. It reviews and extends the skills and concepts from sixth grade and includes lessons with specialized topics, such as cyber bullying, sexual harassment, and coping with stress.



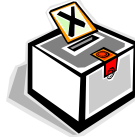
8th Grade: Stepping Ahead

This level highlights the importance of leadership and goal setting. Here students continue to explore the skills and concepts from sixth and seventh grade in ways that reflect their increasing maturity. Included at this level are lessons in stereotypes and prejudice, bullying in dating relationships, and goal setting.

The homework activities during Second Step provide further exploration of lesson skills or concepts for the students and familiarize the adult with what students are learning. I encourage you to work together with your student on the homework, and discuss what they have learned.

If you would like more information about the program, the informational parent/guardian DVD will be posted on the Hastings Middle School website during the month of October. If you have any further questions please feel free to email me, amorton@fairhavenps.org.

2008 Mock Election



Hastings Middle School will participate in The National Student/Parent Mock Election which will educate and engage American students in the 2008 Mock Election across the country. This national voter-education program for K-college students gives young Americans a chance to make their voices heard in the electoral process. The Mock Election will take place on October 30, five days before the rest of America votes in the November election. Every American student, parent and educator is invited to participate at no cost. Students here at HMS will be voting on the morning of October 30th in their homerooms.

Several weeks prior to the election teachers will be integrating aspects of the voting process into their curriculums. There is so much information that can be taken from the civic election process. We are very excited here at Hastings to provide this opportunity to our students. This first hand glimpse of a real election process will present them with a real world application of class content. This engaging interdisciplinary project will provide students with a better understanding of the responsibilities and privilege of voting.

Science Engineering & Technology By Mr. Riseborough



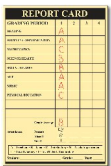
Over the past month 6th grade has been working with simple machines and putting them together with Lego. They then began making more complex machines combining some of the simple machines. We are moving into gearing and gear ratios.

The 7th grade has been involved in energy, learning about differences between potential and kinetic energy. They also have built planes that are powered by the elastic potential energy of rubber bands. We will be moving into a unit on electricity shortly, where we will be doing an energy audit of the school, checking the lights and other uses of power for efficiency.

The 8th grade has looked at friction. They are now finishing up a unit on Newton's laws with the building of Estes model rockets which we will launch next week. The students will calculate the height of these rockets as well as the force at which they travel.

I would like to use this opportunity to put out an "All Call" if anyone has any Lego or Hot Wheels track that they are willing to donate, the Science Engineering & Technology classes will gladly put it to good use. Volunteers are always welcome. Email briseborough@fairhavenps.org.

Raising the Bar By Dr. Gifford



At Hastings Middle School, our focus is on excellence for every member of our learning community; excellence academically, socially, and culturally. An orderly and safe environment, high expectations, rigorous and engaging coursework, and dedicated faculty combine to produce the perfect combination that is sure to result in a realization of our goal. With this in mind, our grading policies have been changed to reflect our commitment to setting high standards for our students and holding all accountable for achieving those standards. New this year, all academic subjects and enrichment classes are being graded with letter grades (A-F) or I for incomplete. Students are reminded that all courses play a role in determining promotion. Education experts indicate education policy and practice must be based on a comprehensive approach that addresses the learning needs of the whole child. By providing a balanced curriculum and requiring students to achieve in all areas, we believe we are meeting this demand and raising the bar to influence our children's success.

Listen

Submitted by a Student

When I ask you to listen to me, and you start giving me advice, you have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me, and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way, you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me, and you feel that you have to do something to solve my problem, you have failed me, strange as that may seem.

Listen! All I asked was that you listen, not talk, or nag — just hear me.

Advice is cheap: 50 cents will get you both Dear Abby and Billy Graham in the same newspaper.

And I can do for myself; I'm not helpless. Maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.

National Junior Honor Society By Mrs. Tracey



On September 24, 2008, elections for the NJHS Officers were held. A d v i s o r s would like to thank all who ran for office and congratulate those elected:

President:

Alexandra Saulenas

Vice President:

Danielle Paulson

Treasurer:

Daniel McLaughlin

Secretary:

Ashley Pereira

Eligibility requirements in NJHS include a cumulative scholastic average of at least 90%. Selection for membership is based on outstanding scholarship, citizenship, character, leadership, and service. Members must complete 4 hours of school service and 8 hours of community service.

Guidance News By Mrs. Tracey

Each year, guidance goes into every sixth grade class to discuss the issue of bullying. Last week, our sixth graders engaged in lively discussions with teachers and guidance counselors identifying bullying behavior as well as appropriate, effective ways to deal with it. Most importantly, students are taught that bullying is not tolerated and will always be addressed. Students are encouraged to inform a teacher or their guidance counselor with any concerns.

New this year... guidance counselors are running semester based classes to assist students who have been identified as requiring more support to reach their academic potential. Students are scheduled for this class based on past grades, teacher and guidance counselor recommendations.

New Promotion Guidelines: PLEASE take time to review the new promotion guidelines in the student handbook (page 2). There have been significant changes regarding passing grades, grading for exploratory subjects and consideration of grades in both academic and exploratory subjects for promotion. Please call guidance at 508 979-4147 if you have any questions regarding this.



Parent Portal Update By Dr. Gifford

We hope you have had a chance to view our parent portal by now. It is a great tool to help parents keep informed about their child's progress in each class. Teachers will be updating grades on a weekly basis. Zeros can represent many things; student was absent, failed to submit, or just needed more time. Some teachers don't record homework

on a daily basis; they may add up about 10 assignments into 1 homework grade. Best advice: if you have a question email your teachers. If you did not receive your portal password earlier this year or are having trouble accessing the portal please contact parentportal@fairhavenps.org.



Autism Education By Mrs. Charette

Hastings Middle School teachers, guidance staff, and administration were invited to attend an autism workshop offered by the district at the beginning of this school year. Much of the faculty was in attendance to learn about the newest research presented by Michael F. Dorsey, Ph.D., a specialist in the field.

The staff learned about this very complex and baffling developmental disability in children and how to work with these special youngsters in the classroom. Some children with autism have a difficult time relating to their peers. Some have intellectual limitations, but some are very intelligent and have impressive recall abilities. Einstein, for example, may have been diagnosed as autistic with today's sophisticated tools. Likewise, the Oscar winning movie *Rain Man*, starring Dustin Hoffman, portrays a very intelligent and unique individual with autism.

Dr. Dorsey helped us understand what behaviors to look for in the classroom and how loud noises, sounds, or smells may cause stress for these children. We have to maintain a routine in classrooms and prepare students ahead of time for change. It is also important to reduce distractions and help the autistic child complete a sequence of steps so that a routine is developed. As more and more children are diagnosed with this baffling disorder, our staff will be ready to employ the many techniques that were discussed at this valuable workshop.



What? Spanish space race contest!

Who? All students are invited, not just foreign language students

When, Where? Thursday, October 30th in the library from 2:30 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Prize? The highest three scorers between 2:30 - 3:00 win CASH at 3:05 p.m.

How? Go to www.quizlet.com/set/412534/ to

It Takes a Village so SMILE!

By Dr. Gifford

The SouthCoast Mentoring Initiative for Learning Education and Service (SMILES) is a school based one-to-one mentoring program founded by a group of business, faith, social service, and education leaders. By working with school, business and community partners on a clear mission to affect social change, SMILES strives to help students achieve their personal and educational potential by pairing them with positive adult mentors. SMILES connects caring adults with students to encourage and help them thrive both in and out of the classroom. The success of the program depends upon you, the community. There has never been a better time to be part of a solution. By becoming part of the social network of adults and community members who care about our youth, you can help them develop and reach positive academic, career, and personal goals. If you are interested in becoming a SMILES mentor, please attend an informational meeting on October 15 at 6:00 in the Hastings Middle School cafeteria. Be part of the solution, be part of our community, work with us to help our children realize their potential to succeed in life and contribute to society in a positive fashion.

PTO News

The HMSPTO would like to thank everyone who attended Open House and our first meeting. We would especially like to extend our thanks to those of you who signed up to help with different school events throughout the year.

Feedback from the 6th grade mixer was very positive! All the students really had a great time!

The PTO is sponsoring the Halloween Dance this year. It will be on October 24th from 6:30-9:00. Costumes are permitted, however, weapons are not! No masks please. We will be selling pizza, drinks and candy.

You can win a Wii! The PTO is selling raffle tickets to win a Wii in December. The tickets are \$1 each or 6 for \$5. You may purchase the tickets at all school functions or on certain lunch days.

Mark your calendar! The PTO will be having an Election Day Bake Sale on November 4th if you have not yet signed up to help and would like to, please contact Marianne Tichon at 508-989-5328.

The next HMSPTO meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 12th at 6:30 pm in the cafeteria. Everyone is welcome to join us.

We look forward to seeing everyone on the 12th!

Spanish Space Race Contest! By Mrs. Duarte and Mr. Beaulieu

practice for the competition.

(practice with familiarize, learn, test, scatter, space race, flash cards, etc)

How many? There are 133 terms to learn and identify (all terms are HOUSE related)

Huh? Ask Señor Beaulieu or Señora Duarte for details.