

# Hastings Middle School Parent Newsletter

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## From the Desk of the Principal

Spring is in the air; I have to admit I've been bitten by the spring fever bug. Having a passion for gardening, I was very disappointed with the weekend weather. Rain, rain, rain. To make matters worse, the chilly and damp days were followed by a work week that can only be described as lovely; clear skies, warm temperatures, and brilliant sunshine. How disheartening to an outdoor lover with lots of planting to do. Being in the outdoors is a magical experience; watching gold finches hang upside down to munch on thistle, experiencing a thrill at the first sighting of a bluebird, smelling the sweet aroma of lilies and lilacs, being left breathless by the sudden appearance of a double rainbow, splashing hot, tired feet in waves of a cooling ocean, or riding a bike along a country road lined with a farmer's wall, are moments that warm the heart.

How many of our young people have experienced these and other enchanting moments? How many spend leisure time riding bikes, playing in a neighborhood wiffle ball game, or horseback riding? How many are creating memories of fun-filled summer camps, lazy days at the beach, or a trip to a zoo? Writing this, I am distracted by memories of my own childhood; days spent working with my father in our vegetable garden, happy

hours riding bikes for miles and miles, romping in the backyard pool until dark, or playing kick the can with the neighbors. We were always busy, hardly stopping for lunch. My point is it is critical our children develop a healthy lifestyle complete with outdoor activity and quality time with positive influences in their lives.

Unfortunately, today's children are more sedentary than the youth of the past and eat more fast-food laden with ingredients that can't be found in a chemistry textbook. This month's Middle Ground magazine echoes this sentiment. In his article, Tom Burton, educator, principal, and president of the Ohio Middle School Association, states "we have heard a lot lately about the research on obesity and the unhealthy lifestyle of young adolescents. The data trends are not encouraging, as our youth are less healthy and becoming further detached from a healthy lifestyle. To put it bluntly, it is time we start getting off of our can and start kicking it."

In response to the data, the federal wellness policy mandate, which went into effect just over a year ago, provides schools and communities with opportunities to make school wellness a higher priority; it is paramount that we energize our collective efforts to shape students' lifelong habits of good nutrition and physical activity. At Hastings, we understand the importance of helping students make appropriate choices. Our cafeteria offers nutritional menus that include vegetables, fruit, and salads. Students

participate in physical education on a routine basis and learn about living well in health class. In addition, our students are encouraged to participate in after school organized sports including intramurals. As a team, we are making every effort to be creative within the constructs of our busy schedule.



With summer on the horizon, May is a good time to initiate a wellness program that includes lots of physical activity, plenty of rest, and nutrition. Consider these tips:

**Take an inventory of family fun activities:** What brings you pleasure; gardening, listening to music, monopoly, bowling. Plan family time and enjoy!

**Link healthy habits to happiness:** Stay motivated to exercise with your child by choosing activities you both enjoy. Vary the routine. Make exercise enjoyable!

**Be attentive:** When it comes to fun, quality counts as much as quantity. Savor the experience. You might realize you don't need that second cup of coffee if you pay more attention to and truly enjoy the first.

**Find fun:** Try new activi-

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ties. Explore new places. Have you been to the Slocum walking path in Dartmouth? Make a game of activities. Find something pleasurable in just doing.

Like the Nike saying suggests: Just Do It!



## 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 of Satisfactory or better in all Unified Arts subjects.

## Boys’ Baseball Team by Mr. Mitcheson



The coaches would like to thank all the students that tried out for the baseball team this year. As usual, the selection process was a difficult one, but one that had to be made. The behavior, attitude, and effort exhibited during the tryouts were remarkable. The coaches are proud to have these young men represent themselves, our school, and our town.

*2008 Boys’ Baseball Team are:*

**Eamonn Andre, Dylan Bonneau, Brady Correia, Andrew Espindola, Feliciano, Hernandez, Tanner Kisla, Joshua, Langlois, Daniel McLaughlin, Danny Magalhaes, Timothy Magalhaes, Kevin Pepin, Connor, Riley, Aaron Simuel, Kyle Soares, Dylan Tichon, Drew Wethington.**

## 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 April. They are: **Danielle Pinto, David Costa, Jr. Nathan Fincher, Emma Rodiboux, Brittni Claflin, Emma Morehead, Alexander Kuechler, Bria Rodrigues, Amy Rapoza, Aaron Alferes, Jake Larsen, Kailey Morel.**



## 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.

	<b>Progress Reports</b>	<b>Report Cards</b>
Term 1	Oct. 5, 2007	Nov. 9, 2007
Term 2	Dec. 14, 2007	Jan. 25, 2008
Term 3	February 29, 2008	April 3, 2008
Term 4	May 16, 2008	Will Be Mailed

## Family Literacy Night By Mrs. Ronn

The Family Literacy Night was held on May 13<sup>th</sup>. The evening’s activities included designing bookmarks and bumper stickers, displays of student writing and faculty favorite books, book talks by Ms Gardner, Dr. Gifford, and Mrs. Dorgan and artwork by the students. All who attended commented on the wonderful display of faculty photos and book reviews. Tasty snacks were provided by Mrs. Freeman and Mrs. Beaulieu. Future events are being planned.



## Early Release Schedule



Students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. **No lunches** will be served on the dates listed below:  
**May 16 & June 12**

## 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.

<b>Grade 6</b>	<b>April</b> <b>Meaghan Fostin</b>
<b>Grade 7</b>	<b>Alyssa Charpentier</b>
<b>Grade 8</b>	<b>Aaron Alferes</b>

## Promotion / Retention Guidelines



All *Hastings Middle School* students will be retained in grade if any of the following are applicable.

- A. Student fails **Mathematics & English** for the school year.
- B. Student fails **2 consecutive years of either Math or English.**
- C. Student fails **3 academic subjects during a school year (Science, Social Studies, Reading, Foreign Language, Mathematics, English).**



## Immunization / School Nurse Notes

Nurse—Kerri Masapollo

Tel: 508 979-4064

Email Address:

kmasapollo@fairhavenps.org



At this time, all grade 6 & 7 students should have obtained the full series of Hepatitis B. If your child is missing a dose, you will be notified by the nurse & be required to obtain the immunization either by your doctor or at the clinic.

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

Students also need to show proof of having had **Chicken Pox** disease or having received the vaccine.

The above requirements are mandated by the Department of Pub-

lic Health.

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Please call the school nurse with questions at **(508) 979-4064**.

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, & 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.

## Comments from the Assistant Principal



**Creativity**, our Word of the Month for May, was exemplified on May 6 and 8 as student work was on display at the Art Show

and student singers and instrumentalists performed at their concerts. Mr. Lee and Mrs. Roveda proudly displayed their students' artwork in the cafeteria to the parents who attended the show. The string students combined to perform their numbers under the able conducting of Miss Chirigotis. It is wonderful to see how the numbers have grown under her leadership. The sixth, seventh, and eighth grade choruses, under the direction of Mr. Heater who had to stand at the back of the auditorium so that all the students could see him, combined to enthrall the

audience. Thursday evening music filled the auditorium again as all the bands, under the direction of Mr. Heater and Mr. Young, performed. Dr. Gifford and I were so impressed with the level of music played. It was a pleasure to see the obvious enjoyment the students had in performing and in knowing they had done well.

Also last week our cafeteria was filled with proud parents as students in each grade who had made the honor roll at least one term were celebrated with a breakfast sponsored by the PTO. Thanks also go out to the members of the Student Council who performed school service and helped serve the wonderful treats.

June is looking to be very busy for all students. Friday, June

6, will be our annual Fun Day for sixth and seventh graders. The eighth grade will be going on a whale watch that same day. June 10 is the day for their dinner/dance. Rehearsals for the promotion ceremony will be on Monday, June 9, and Wednesday, June 11. The ceremony itself will be Wednesday, June 11, in the gymnasium from 7 PM to 8 PM. Students will receive **four** tickets each on Thursday, June 5. Please make sure that all outstanding bills have been taken care of before this date. If you have any questions, please feel free to call your child's guidance counselor at 508-979-4147, or my office at 508-979-4066.

## Internet Safety Presentation By Dr. Gifford



Children need instruction and boundaries regarding their journey through life; this includes using the Internet safely. No parent would contemplate giving a child of legal age the keys to the car unless the child had participated in driving lessons and understood the rules of the road. The same is true when exploring the information highway – the Internet. Children need to be taught the rules of engagement in order to travel safely.

If a person unknown to you was speaking to your child in your front yard, what would you do? If your child was communicating with the same stranger on-line, what would you do? Along with the ever increasing number of children accessing the Internet, comes the growing number at risk to online dangers such as speaking to strangers. In an effort to inform parents of these dangers and steps they can take to keep children safe, Hastings Middle School, in cooperation with the Fairhaven Police Department and a representative from FBI is sponsoring an **Internet Safety presentation on May 29 at 6:30** in the cafeteria. This important session will provide you with vital information relative to chat rooms, blogs, cyber bullying, MySpace and more.

## Did You Know? It's the PTO! By Dr. Gifford

I'd like to take a moment to make you aware of some of the opportunities our students have been provided with this year thanks to the generosity and hard work of our PTO. This small group of very dedicated people have put in a bazillion hours in support of our students. They have coordinated fundraisers such as bake, plant, and school clothing sales as well as two dances. In addition, they provided our staff with a delicious luncheon as a token of appreciation of our work. Our students were also treated to a Luau day as well as limo rides and luncheons. As a result of their efforts each grade level has also been given the opportunity to participate in a field trip. Students have ventured to the IMAX theatre, Trinity Rep, and the Boston Museum of Science. The group also funded a guest presentation for the entire 6<sup>th</sup> grade class. This educational show enhanced students' understanding of Greek

mythology, a unit included in the social studies curriculum. And remember the drama club production of *Give My Regards to Broadway*? The PTO sponsored the entire production. With the end of the year approaching, the PTO has also been hard at work designing the Honor Roll Breakfast invitations and tickets and funding three breakfasts as well as working to make our Fun Day enjoyable for staff and students alike.

Obviously all of this takes the support of all families. If you have not had a chance to participate in any of the activities or fundraisers and would like to make a donation to the PTO please feel free to do so. Like a grain of sand on a mile of beach, every contribution combines to enhance our children's experiences.



## Concert Review Dr. Gifford



The 2008 Hastings Middle School spring concerts were held in the auditorium; on May 6 and 8, the strings and instrumental orchestras, jazz band, and combined chorus delighted the audience with awesome performances. Under the direction of Ms. Chirigotis, strings opened the program with a rousing rendition of the Star Spangled Banner. From that moment on, very talented, young musicians entertained parents, friends, and family with three other pieces including a toe tapping fiddle tune entitled Old Joe Clark. The orchestra was followed by the combined chorus which entered the auditorium singing Come and Sing by Robert Lau. Especially impressive was the delivery of a lively arrangement of Joshua Fir the Battle of Jericho. Not to be outdone, the eighth grade band presented an instrumental arrangement of the same. Many thanks to Mr. Heater, Ms. Chirigotis, and Mr. Young, directors of our music program as well as Mrs. Martin, a volunteer pianist. It is evident that under the direction of these talented musicians, our music program continues to impress! Plan on catching next year's events.



## 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 April.

**Grade 6:**  
**Andrew Eusebio**  
**Grade 7:**  
**Adam Lima**  
**Grade 8:**  
**Joshua Langlois**

**Danielle Charette**  
**Ashley Pereira**  
**Caitlyn Thatcher**

## **Maintaining Safe Schools: Culture and Climate By Dr. Gifford**

Billy, a new student on his first day of classes walks into his homeroom, looks across the aisle and says to Sarah, "What's this place like?" Sarah proceeds to tell Billy who the nice teachers are, who the mean teachers are, areas of the school to avoid, which cliques are in power, what events are fun to attend, and what the sports program is like. Sarah is describing the school culture to an outsider.

School climate is created by the attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms that underlie the instructional practices, the level of academic achievement and the operation of a school. School climate is driven by how well and how fairly the adults in a school create, implement, model and enforce these attitudes, beliefs, values, and norms.

The product of good school climate is a strong school culture. School culture is "the way we do that here". The "that" can reflect any attitude, belief, value, norm, procedure or routine including "how we do relationships at this school". In a school with strong culture any staff or student will be able to explain and demonstrate "how we do that here".



At Hastings, we have worked diligently to develop and maintain a positive and safe school climate and culture. A component of our efforts includes ensuring all students respect and contribute to our educational atmosphere. To this end, we use various methods to educate our school community about appropriate behavior; our staff has been trained in civil rights, guidance has spoken to every classroom relative to bullying and harassment, and we adhere to a clear harassment/bullying policy.

Another area we consistently address is student attire; for example the issue of students planning to wear the same colors on a daily basis. Across the country, schools are dealing with this issue; students combining together to act in plural fashion and demonstrate their plurality by what they wear, how they act, reputations they gain through presence, and group intimidation. In an effort to prevent the formation of such cliques or groups, which, can promote disruptive or demoralizing values counterproductive to our educational mission, it is our policy to address any behavior that might be perceived as an attempt to control, intimidate, or otherwise disrupt our climate and culture. Please join us in our continued efforts to maintain a productive, safe, and healthy environment.

### **Locks of Love**



**Give Thanks to the eighth grade class for their donation of \$100 to Locks of Love. Your generosity is greatly appreciated.**

## **Technology/Engineering By Mrs. Vastano**



**Who designed and built the strongest bridges?**

Suspense, thrills, and destruction! I think most students would agree that the testing of the bridges was the most exciting part of the unit on bridges. Although it was not a competition per se, many students were interested in finding out whose bridge held the most weight. All students who persisted and persevered through the difficult task of gluing balsa sticks together are winners however. Here are the top ten teams whose bridges held the most weight in Kilograms.

Kayli Berche and Madison Shields – 14.6 Kg. (7<sup>th</sup> grade)

Marisa Gubler and Amy Silvia – 10.5 Kg. (7<sup>th</sup> grade)

Nathan Nadeau and Jarett Raphael – 10.4 Kg. (8<sup>th</sup> grade)

Leeanne Swire and Amy Tavares – 10.1 Kg. (8<sup>th</sup> grade)

Samantha Caffin and Molly Silva – 9.5 Kg. (7<sup>th</sup> grade)

Jason Heller and Timothy Magalhaes – 8.5 Kg. (7<sup>th</sup> grade)

Adam Carvalho and Andrew Pereira – 8.2 Kg. (6<sup>th</sup> grade)

Colby Britto and Kyle Perry – 7.8 Kg. (8<sup>th</sup> grade)

Andrew Espindola and Daniel Magalhaes – 7.5 Kg. (8<sup>th</sup> grade)

Jake Larsen and William Lessa – 6.5 Kg. (8<sup>th</sup> grade)

The average weight for all 27 bridges tested is 6.14 Kg.

Students are full of energy with the end of the school year just around the corner. They will put some of that energy into good use by studying the different forms of renewable and non-renewable resources. Groups of three or four are working toward designing and creating a game that incorporates an electric circuit and teaches one of the renewable resources. If there's time we would like to power the games with wind and solar energy. Each team member has a job to do. Ask your student to find out what his/her job is.

# Contest Winners

## By Dr. Gifford



What do you want to be when you grow up? That was the question students were invited to answer during the first Dartmouth, Fairhaven, and New Bedford "Grade Six Essay Contest" sponsored by Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School. Four Hastings Middle School 6<sup>th</sup> grade students accepted the challenge and submitted well written and thoughtful essays. On April 16, all four participants, Raegen Docca, Courtney Girouard, Zachary Mendonca, and Shain Ramos, attended an awards dinner held at GNBRVT High. These students, all members of the White team, received a \$25.00 Baker Book gift. Special recognition went to Raegen Docca for her excellent essay entitled "My Dream of Teaching." Ms. Docca wrote "As a teacher everyday you teach a student something new, and put a smile on their faces which can truly make a difference. I enjoy giving to my community, and what a better way then giving the gift of education." For her inspiring words, Raegan was named as a first place winner and presented with a \$50.00 Baker Books gift certificate and an All Language Dictionary. Hastings Middle School says "Congratulations" to all our students who participated in this contest. These young people are a source of pride in our community.

## National Junior Honor Society

### By Mrs. Drouin

On May 22, 2008, the Chester M. Downing Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society will host an induction ceremony for our new members.

The ceremony begins at 6:30 pm. All students should wear appropriate

dress and arrive by 6:00pm. The present 8<sup>th</sup> grade students should drop off their baked goods in the cafeteria and proceed to room 35. All 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade inductees will report directly to room 36. Students, parents and guests are invited to refreshments immediately after the ceremony.



# PTO NEWS

The 07/08 school year is almost at an end. The PTO would like to close with a few last reminders and information:

There will **NOT** be a PTO meeting in June.



We are still looking for people to form a fundraising committee. This committee would find various fundraising options for the year and then present them at a PTO meeting. If you are interested in serving on this committee for the 08/09 school year, please contact Marianne Tichon @ 508-990-7868.

Fun Fair Day is scheduled for Friday, June 6<sup>th</sup>. Any 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade parent who would like to help out and has not yet signed up to do so may contact Pam Corcoran at 508-997-6183. If you have already signed up, we would like you to be at the school between 8:00 and 8:30 on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Please enter through the main doors and sign in at the office. The event will last until 2:00.

The secretary position will be open for the 08/09 school year. Please contact any PTO officer if you are interested in hearing more about the position. We welcome any and all questions. J



The Geraniums will be ready for pick up on May 23<sup>rd</sup> from 11:00-3:30 in the auditorium lobby. Thank you to all those who purchased flowers.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed in any way to our Staff Appreciation Luncheon. All the donations were greatly appreciated by our staff!

The Honor Roll breakfast was a huge success!! It was a nice way to recognize all our wonderful students who worked so hard throughout the year.