

Hastings Middle School

Parent Newsletter

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From the Desk of the Principal



With an amenable host for vegetables and flowers. spring's arrival, my garden is exploding. Daffodils, tulips, grape hyacinths, and bleeding heart grace the landscape, bringing me the same magical exuberance of spirit I feel every year at this time. The passion for collecting plants and creating gardens that become enchanting getaways in an otherwise bland field is not new for me. At a very young age I was helping my father prepare, plant, maintain, and reap a family vegetable garden. I can still hear the snap of the bite into a fresh string bean and taste the unbeatable flavor of a freshly picked tomato. Before long my love for gardening lured me into planting flowers. Unfortunately our yard was not that fertile; it wasn't land that had once been farmed and it required lots of fertilizer and tender care to help it reach its potential and become

an amenable host for vegetables and flowers.

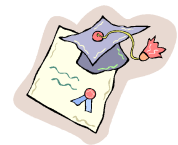
Over the years I have invested energy and time into my gardens that cannot be measured. I have learned the importance of feeding the soil, watering young plants often, pruning offensive branches and shoots in an effort to make a plant sturdy, trying to find locations more suitable for particular plants; shade or sun, clustered or climbing, and trimming faded vines. My tireless work has resulted in a yard overflowing with healthy and colorful plants.

Can't we say the same thing about the "making" of schools? The creation of a school community that effectively nurtures and produces young people who are resilient, critical thinkers, decision makers, collaborators, and communicators takes the same kind of investment; an investment and commitment of time, facilities, resources, energy, passion, knowledge, skill, and compassion. And just as a garden does not happen overnight, the fruits of our labor take time to become evident. In time, they are revealed through our

students' ability to participate in concerts and drama performances, to play together on a softball team, to earn a spot in a national competition by taking first place in a Construction Challenge, to show kindness to a fellow student who dropped his books, to attain a gold medal on the National Spanish Exam, to achieve a perfect score on MCAS, to write a thoughtful in response to an essential question, or work with a team to investigate the layers of the earth. So as I work my magic in my garden I will be thinking about the magic that takes place in our schools on a daily basis. I will reflect upon the experiences and growth that cannot be described or measured by a test, yet mean so much in the life of a child. And finally, to the question: "how does your garden grow?" I will respond with certainty and confidence it grows quite well...quite well indeed.

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Congratulations to our Grade 8 students and wish them the best in high school

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.

Early Release Schedule



Students will be dismissed at 11:30 a.m. No lunches will be served on the dates listed below: **June 11, 2009**

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: *Kyleigh Gonet, Allison Lima, Jonathan Smith, Shae Riley, Deanna Dang, Samantha Letton, Alexander Silva, David Santos, Jr., Bria Rodrigues, Justin Cortes, Christopher Walton, Carlee Claflin*

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.

	April
Grade 6	Kristian Berg
Grade 7	Deanna Dang
Grade 8	Justin St. Jean



School Nurse Notes

Nurse—Barbara Webster Tel: 508 979-4064
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Spring has sprung and with it are all the symptoms of seasonal allergies. Runny noses, scratchy throats, itchy eyes and cough are prevalent everywhere. Always remind your children to practice good personal hygiene to protect themselves and others from infectious disease. Good hand washing technique is the number one method of protecting ourselves and others from illness. Cover your coughs and sneezes into a tissue or the inside of your elbow, not into your bare hands. This practice halts the spread of organisms. Wash hands thoroughly and frequently. These are general practices known to ward off all types of infectious germs including the present popular virus known as the Swine Influenza A. Be sure your family is following a nutritious diet, getting enough rest and exercise and practicing good personal hygiene. These are the best methods of protection from any flu.



PTO PLEA

by Dr. Gifford

We would like to thank our PTO leadership team: *Mrs. Tichon, Mrs. Cardoso, and Mrs. Corcoran.* This team of people, along with their helpers have donated countless hours, energy, and dedication. Through their efforts, our students have experienced field trips, fun fair day, student of the month rewards, classroom materials, limo lunches, honor roll break-

fasts, and more. We can not thank the PTO enough.

Unfortunately, this group of hard working ladies is retiring at the end of this year. That means we are in desperate need of someone or someone's to assume the leadership of the PTO. Without your help, those extras that our students enjoy will not happen! Please contact our main office if you would like to volunteer!



Comments from the Assistant Principal

As we near the end of the year, it is a good time to mention a few things that are in the handbook.

Dress Code: Please review the items that are specifically mentioned in the handbook. Straps on sleeveless shirts need to be more than two inches wide, and slippers and pajamas are not allowed at all. Shorts and skirts must not be shorter than your fingertips when standing at attention. This rule also applies to tunics or shirts that are worn over leggings. Boys need to wear their pants so that boxers are not visible. T-shirts with inappropriate pictures or words are not allowed. There are other items in the dress code, but I thought I would mention these as they are the ones that are not followed the most.

Cell Phones: Cell phones are not allowed in school. We know students have them, and as long as they are not seen or heard, we do not make an issue of them. They should be

locked in the student's locker during the day. We are noticing an increase in students texting during classes. If they are seen texting by a staff member, they will have the phone taken and be assigned an administrative detention. According to the handbook, a parent will have to come to claim the phone.

Buses: Buses are provided for students who live on an approved bus route **only!** If there is an emergency or a special reason that requires your child to ride a bus, a parent or guardian needs to write a note, stating the reason, and send it in to my office twenty-four hours before it is needed. I will either grant permission for the student to ride the bus **for that one-day only** or deny the request. If the request is denied, I will call to let you know the reason the request was denied.

End of the Year Activities: It is hard to believe that the

school year is almost over! Many exciting activities are being planned! As usual we will be holding Fun Day in June for sixth and seventh graders. The date is Friday, June 5, with Monday, June 8, as the rain date. The eighth graders will have their dinner cruise on the same day, Friday, June 5, rain or shine. Just a reminder that any student involved in serious disciplinary action will not be allowed to participate in these activities. The dinner cruise and the awards ceremony are only for eighth graders who are being promoted. The ceremony itself will be Wednesday, June 10, in the gymnasium from 7 PM to 8 PM. Students will receive **four** tickets each on Thursday, June 4. 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.

Millicent Library Events



Teen Writing Club - Thursday, May 7 and 21 3:30 – 4:30 Writing games and support for budding writers! Grades 6 and up. *Held downstairs.*

stairs.

Teen Game Day - Friday, May 15, 3 – 5 p.m. Ages 12+. Come play Mario Kart and Guitar Hero on the big screen! Twister, card games, etc. Refreshments served.

Pennies for Patients By Mrs. Suher



Last month, our Renaissance Club coordinated our second Pennies for Patients Drive. The money raised for Pennies for Patients goes to fund research and patient programs for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. We are proud to announce that HMS raised over \$1,600 for this worthy cause. Ms. Bendiksen, Mrs. Haines, and Mr. Mitcheson's homeroom each raised over \$200. Congratulations to the entire HMS community for their generosity.

Guidance News-Career Day By Mrs. Suher

On April 16th, the Guidance department hosted its second Career Day for all 7th and 8th grade students. Hastings hosted a wide variety of professionals enabling the students to hear about four different careers. Students had completed interest inventories earlier in the spring in order to be matched up with their careers of choice. Mayor Lang kicked off the day with a wonderful keynote address on career development. Students, staff, and community members expressed how pleased they were with the event. One professional wrote, "What a wonderful group of students. They are excellent examples of Hastings Middle School".

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

X2 problems

If you are having problems accessing the X2 parent portal, please go to the Fairhaven Public Schools website at fairhavenps.org and use the link set up to help you.

Education League Math Competition at HMS By Mrs. Charette



On February 3rd the students at Hastings Middle School participated in a math competition offered through the Education League, a division of Online Testing Solutions. The top 5 scores in each grade level were combined for a team score that placed all HMS grade levels in the first round of the competition.

In the 2nd round of the competition the sixth graders competed against Onondaga Hill Middle School, the 7th graders competed in two categories, pre-algebra and general math. The Pre-Algebra (7th and 8th grade) team competed against Bruner Middle School and the general math team competed against Onondaga Hill Middle School. Finally, the 8th grade Algebra I students competed against The Classical Magnet school in the second round.

The top four students in each category went on to compete again in a quarter-final round at the state level. The 6th graders competed against East Quogue 6th graders. The final four 7th graders competed against Indian Land Middle School, and the 8th graders competed against O.W. Huth Middle School.

The final phase of the competition for HMS was a National Elite Eight Competition in which only two 7th grade general math and two 8th grade Algebra I students competed.

The students did a great job representing HMS for the first time in this math competition!! Merit certificates were awarded to the finalists at Hastings. In grade 6 recipients were **Kyle Koczera** – 1st place, **Alison Kuechler** – 2nd place, **Benjamin Elliott** – 3rd place, and **Danielle Scalata** – 4th place. In 7th grade General Math were **Adam Westgate** – 1st place, **Jonathan Smith** – 2nd place, **Zachary Viera** – 3rd place, and **Marisa Tsonis** – 4th place. Seventh and eighth grade Pre-Algebra finalists were, **Allison Roderiques** – 1st place, **Deanna Dang** – 2nd place, **Monique Desnoyers** – 3rd place, and **Jacob Maltais** – 4th place. The Algebra I finalists in the 8th grade were **Richard Souza** – 1st place, **Catherine Rapoza** – 2nd place, **Jackson Oliva** – 3rd place, and **Jacob Carvalho** – 4th place. Congratulations to all!

Math-a-thon By Mrs. Koczera



On Wednesday, April 15, 2009, students participated in the first Dartmouth, Fairhaven, and New Bedford Grade 6 "Math-a-thon" held at Greater New Bedford Vocational Technical High School. The competition began with a written exam with several math problems designed for sixth graders and up. The top six team scores then moved to the second and final Jeopardy round. Like the television show, each school picked a math topic from those provided and proceeded to answer those equations accordingly while accumulating points. The top three scoring teams were designated the finalist. Congratulations to Kyle Koczera, Shae Riley, and Alison Kuechler, who cooperatively worked as a team, placing second in the contest. They did a terrific job and should be commended. Everyone here at Hastings is very proud of them.

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: Shae Riley Noah Arbec

Grade 7: Delaney Corcoran Tyler Hemingway

Grade 8: Britni Claflin Jacob Perrone

Barnes and Noble Book Fair Ms. Richard



Thank you to all that participated in the Barnes and Noble Book Fair on April 22nd. The library received a gift card from the store with the proceeds of the sale. We can use this card to purchase books for the library and classrooms.

PTO News

The 08/09 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.



Fun Fair Day is scheduled for Friday, June 5th. Any 6th or 7th 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 5th. Please enter through the main doors and sign in at the office. The event will last until 2:00.

All PTO positions (President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer) will be open for the 09/10 school year. Please contact any PTO officer if you are interested in hearing more about the position. We welcome any and all questions.

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.



Hastings School Garden By Ms. Richard



We are pleased to announce a School Garden at Hastings this year. The Science Club has started working on the garden and also the Smiles Mentor Program is planting seedlings to be included in the garden. We received a wonderful donation of a garden shed from Stevens Home Improvement. We are still looking for tools and items for the garden. If anyone has extra shovels, rakes, a wheel barrow, a hose or perennials that they would like to donate please contact Ms. Richard at arichard@fairhavenps.org.



National Spanish Examinations Mrs. Duarte

Congratulations to several world language students from Hastings Middle School in Fairhaven who attained national recognition for excellent performance on the 2009 National Spanish Examinations

Students from Hastings Middle School earned a total of 2 gold, 2 silver and 3 bronze medals along with 4 honorable mentions. "Attaining a medal or honorable mention for any student on the National Spanish Examinations is very prestigious," said Kevin Cessna-Buscemi, National Director of the Exams, "because the exams are the largest of their kind in the United States with well over 115,000 students participating in 2009."

Students from Hastings Middle School have a long history of high achievement in many areas such as academics, visual/performing arts and athletics. Spanish teachers, Kevin Beaulieu and Melissa Duarte sponsored their students for the exam.

The National Spanish Examinations are administered each year in grades 6 through 12, and are sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese.

One sixth grader, Evan Grodzki, collected pledges, asking Fairhavenites to donate money for each point he managed to earn out of the possible 80 point National Spanish Competition. He earned 32 points and has begun to collect the promised money. He plans to give the collected pledges to the Muscular Dystrophy Association, a charity near to his heart.

On Tuesday, June 2nd from 2:30 - 3:15 there will be an informal awards banquet for all 21 Hastings participants. The winners will be announced at that time and prize medals and certificates will be awarded. The HMS PTO will provide a Latin buffet as well as pizza and soft drinks for the banquet.

Honor Students Celebrated By Dr. Gifford

During the first week of May the Hastings Middle School PTO treated honor roll students and their invited guests to a delicious breakfast. This celebration was in recognition of the students' honor roll attainment for at least 2 marking periods. In all 78 sixth graders, 55 seventh graders, and 55 eighth graders met the requirements and made the grade. Dr. Gifford congratulated the students for their achievement and their families for being supportive in their role as a child's first teacher. Students were also told their middle school years are very important in shaping their future. Congratulations to all!

