

✦ Knightly News ✦

August 2010

Hollis Brookline Middle School



From the Administration

The summer months provide much needed time for reflection; what worked well this year, what have we accomplished toward our goals and what needs to change? As one example, the PTSA Executive Council and I met one morning to process the year.

The discussion included the effectiveness of the Knightly News. In summary, it was felt that the benefits of the Knightly News were information regarding upcoming events and reminders, not necessarily the team and specialist news since parents are well aware of their child's assignments. After considerable thought the decision was made to change the focus of the **Knightly News**. Through Alert Now you will be sent a notice that the newsletter has been posted on our website. Each month there will be a newsletter that will include general school news, information about upcoming events, and will showcase significant projects and/or events. Your feedback will be appreciated as we progress.

During the 10-11 school year we will continue to fully implement our new **student information system** and **grading program**. The student agenda contains specific information regarding the parent portal. In addition, **literacy** remains our primary focus. The HBMS teachers have articulated essential questions for their content areas which we plan to line our hallways with as students arrive!

We have experienced very little turn over in staff this year. As we bid Mrs. Grupposo a wonderful transition to retirement, we welcome **Mr. Kerby Elliott** to the position of **Team Hypatia English**. Mr. Elliott is an experienced educator, passionate about English and very knowledgeable about the needs of our young adolescents. Also, Mr. Melillo has resigned to accept the position of director for an alternative school in Massachusetts. Presently we are in the process of interviewing for a guidance counselor.

Our **PTSA** is an excellent resource for new and returning parents. Please plan to get involved by becoming a member or a volunteer. Your involvement directly contributes to our success! Monthly meetings will be held the 3rd Friday of each month in our school library from 8:30 - 10:00. A special introduction is planned for Sept. 9th, 9:00-10:00 entitled **Parent Orientation - How to Stay Connected in the Middle**.

This newsletter contains many **enclosures**. Please make time to complete the paperwork and send it back to HBMS as soon as possible. The emergency form, acceptable use signature page, PTSA paperwork, OTC medication form and physical documentation are important. In advance, thank you for your attention to this request. Please feel free to drop these off at the school during the summer, mail or send via your child. Information on our existing fundraisers, Spirit Wear and United Scrip is also included.

We will conclude with a few suggestions to help your child transition from the summer months to the 10-11 school year. The **organizational demands** of middle school are different from elementary school. For some students, organizational skills come naturally, but for most they must be learned. Here are concrete ideas for how you can prepare.

Make Connections *Good organizational skills can translate into more independence, less stress, more free time, better grades and more self-confidence.*

Calendar Of Events

August 25th— New Student Orientation—9-11:00 AM
September 1st—First Day of School—7th Grade ONLY
—12:00 Dismissal
September 2nd—ALL STUDENTS
—Sports Tryouts (see article on page 2)
September 6th—No School—Labor Day
September 8th—School Pictures
September 9th—Parent Orientation: How To Stay Connected
in the Middle—9-10:00 AM
September 10th—SCRIP Order Deadline
September 14th—Open House—Grade 7—6:45 PM
September 16th—Open House—Grade 8—6:45 PM
September 17th—PTSA Meeting—Library— 8:30-10:00 AM
—Spirit Wear Order Deadline
October 8th—Early Release
October 11th—No School—Columbus Day
November 2nd—No School—Teacher Workshop Day
November 11th—No School—Veterans Day
November 24th—No School—Teacher Workshop Day
November 25th-26th—No School—Thanksgiving Recess
December 6th—Early Release

Organize Binders *A binder is like a file cabinet carried all day to retrieve papers, homework and information. Accessing materials quickly will be easier.*

Plan with your Agenda *Each student will receive an agenda on the first day of school. It should be the one central place where homework is recorded daily.*

Have a Study Buddy *This person can be a great resource if you have been out sick, need a handout or class notes.*

Create a Homework Space *A specific place at home that is free from distractions such as people talking, TV and video games will help your child do their best work.*

Be Proactive *Encourage your child to take personal responsibility for seeing a teacher if s/he needs help, to follow up when absent or when s/he may have questions regarding a grade.*

Read the Student Handbook *Please take time to read together. Students will be held accountable for the content and both parent and student will be asked to sign a statement that the handbook has been read.*

HBMS Website *Please access regularly. Daily Student Announcements are posted so that you may read what your child hears. In addition it is a resource for teacher websites, updated information, reminders, valuable links and more.*

Without basic organizational skills, middle school students can be overwhelmed. We encourage you to take some time to help your student recognize and appreciate the benefits of good basic organizational skills.

Sincerely,

Patricia Lewis Goyette, Principal
Stephen Secor, Assistant Principal

Food Service Information

Ms. Liz Murray is our Head Cook at Hollis Brookline Middle School. Mrs. Amy Cassidy is the Food Service Director for the Hollis Brookline Cooperative District.



The Food Service Program operates on a prepayment system (as well as cash for purchase). If you would like to utilize the prepayment system you may send a check with your student made out to **Hollis Brookline Hot Lunch**. *Please be sure to include your child's full name and school ID# on the check. The money is deposited into the students account and s/he is able to access it via their ID# at the register. Please be aware that student accounts from 6th grade roll over to the Middle School.*

A full lunch is available for the cost of \$2.25. A lunch includes a main entrée, fruit, vegetable, bread/grain, milk and dessert when available. Daily alternates include a variety of sandwiches, salads and pizza.

Please note that if a student owes more than \$4.00, a cheese sandwich lunch will be provided in lieu of the main meal or alternate. At no time is charging of snacks or beverages allowed.

We are always looking for substitute kitchen workers. If you are interested, please contact Mrs. Cassidy at 465-2269 ext. 245.

Lunch times are as follows:

- 11:42—12:10 (Grade 8)
- 12:30—12:58 (Grade 7)



Athletic Spotlight . . .

Interscholastic Sports

All students trying out or participating in a fall sport **MUST** have the **Pupil Data/Emergency Form** and a **current physical on file at HBMS** prior to their participation. **There will be no exceptions!** Practices are held every day there is school, and students representing HBMS are expected to be at all practices and contests.

Field Hockey (Coach – Mrs. Smith)

Tryouts will begin on Thursday, September 2nd from 2:30-4:15. All girls interested **must bring** shin guards, a colored mouth guard covering all teeth, water bottle and a change of clothes. All girls should be picked up behind the Middle School promptly at 4:15.



Girls Soccer - Tryouts will begin on Thursday, September 2nd from 2:30-4:15. All girls interested **must bring** shin guards, a colored mouth guard covering all teeth, cleats, a water bottle and a change of clothes. All girls should be picked up behind the Middle School promptly at 4:15.



Boys Soccer (Coach – Mr. Lyle) Tryouts will begin on Thursday, September 2nd from 2:30-4:15. All boys interested **must bring** shin guards, a colored mouth guard covering all teeth, cleats, a water bottle and a change of clothes. All boys should be picked up behind the Middle School promptly at 4:15.

Girls Volleyball (Coach – Ms. Dunbar)

Tryouts will begin on Thursday, September 2nd from 2:30-4:15. All girls interested **must bring** knee pads, sneakers, a water bottle and a change of clothes. All girls should be picked up behind the Middle School promptly at 4:15.



Boys and Girls Cross Country (Coaches – Mr. Johnston and Mr. Bond)

Practices will begin on Thursday, September 2nd from 2:30-3:45. All students interested in running roughly 2 miles on trails through the woods should bring running shoes, a water bottle and a change of clothes. Everyone who joins the team may participate in all practices and meets. All students should be picked up behind the Middle School promptly at 3:45. Please email Mr. Johnston at ronruns2@yahoo.com with questions about the team or training programs.



Bus Safety

There are a number of expectations of students which should promote the safety of all persons while the school bus program is in operation. Please take a few moments to review the following with your child.

Students should:

- 1) Remain at a safe distance from roadways at bus pick-up points. If necessary to cross a road, always walk in front of the bus.
- 2) Remain quiet and orderly while riding the bus.
- 3) Remain in their seats until destinations are reached, keeping aisles clear for possible emergency exiting.
- 4) Keep hands and objects inside the windows at all times.
- 5) HBMS students may choose seats within the first half of the bus.
- 6) Students may not eat or drink on the bus.
- 7) Alternate buses will only be allowed when maximum seating has not been reached. A note from

home that is also signed by administration must be presented to the bus driver. A signed note is also required to exit at a different stop.

- 8) Students may not board nor get off their bus at the high school.
- 9) Students must board buses at their home stop. A parent should accompany a student in all other cases.
- 10) Students are required to arrive at their home stop five minutes prior to the scheduled pick up time.

Failure to comply with the safety rules and regulations may lead to suspension of riding privileges.

In advance, thank you for your attention to these expectations. Safety is our primary concern.



Bytes from the Technology Department -By Mr. Gruce

HBMS Library Media Center—By C. Jahns

The Library Media Center becomes very busy with the many activities of fall. New books will be on display throughout September and student orientations will be scheduled the first few weeks. Parents are invited to visit the media center during our HBMS Open House night. Also, check the Library Media Center page on the school website for information throughout the year.

Reading time? With so many activities for middle school students, it can be a challenge to find time to pursue reading at home; one way to encourage reading is to talk about books. How do you choose a good book? What makes a fascinating character or setting? What type of plot interests you? Here is a great list of “Best Books for Young Adults” from the American Library Association (ALA): <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/booklistsawards/bestbooksya/09bbya.cfm>

The variety of themes and genre for young adults is amazing!

The Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) is a growing division of the ALA and sponsors an annual Teens’ Top Ten (TTT) where books have been chosen by students nationally: <http://www.ala.org/ala/yalsa/teenreading/teenstopten/teenstopten.htm>

The Hollis Brookline Middle School strongly encourages students to have USB Flash/Jump/Thumb Drives. This item will make the transporting of MS Office documents, and other school related files easier. In the past, there have been many compatibility issues with floppy disks used between home and school. USB Flash drives have reduced those conflicts. It is suggested that your child’s USB Flash Drive does not need to be any larger than **1 Gigabyte**. Some suggested places to purchase this item;

- Target / target.com COMPUSA / compusa.com
- STAPLES / staples.com

A search on the web can produce more.

Make sure that the USB Flash Drive **does not have any “security”** software installed (U3). If that is the only type you can find, please disable the security feature once you bring the USB Flash Drive home. Check the manufacturer’s website for help. There are also “third party” websites that can help.

PEANUT FREE AREA IN CAFETERIA

As a larger population of students begin to have allergies to peanuts, we have established procedures that will help protect students while at school. We ask that parents carefully consider ingredients that may be included in any food prepared for school events or activities.

Due to this increasing need we have established a peanut-free area in the cafeteria. There will be two tables designated as peanut-free. These tables will be clearly marked.

If you have any questions, please contact Sheila Mandragouras, School Nurse at 465-2223.

SKI PROGRAM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



In order for our 2010 Ski Program to be successful, we are in need of a Coordinator, as well as chaperones, to accompany the students to Wachusett Mountain. This is a six-week, Monday evening program beginning in January. Buses leave the school at 2:30 PM, arriving at Wachusett by 3:30 PM. Departure from the Mountain is 7:30 PM.

The number of chaperones is dependent upon the number of students participating but the ratio is 1 to 10. Please contact Penny Arsenault at the middle school at 465-2223 to lend a hand.

FIRST DAY JITTERS



Please help with your child's first day jitters by reviewing with him/her the following information.

Grade 7 students will arrive on Wednesday, September 1st. They will be greeted by staff on the north side of the building. (The same procedure will be followed for grade 8 students on Thursday, September 2nd.)

ROCK lists will be posted on the side wall for easy viewing. Teachers and students will congregate in the general area of their lists. When signaled, teachers will escort their group into the building.

Our first day will include orientation time. Administration will be present during lunch to answer student questions. Grade 7 students will be dismissed at noon on Wednesday, September 1st.

Should you have a specific question regarding our opening day, please feel free to call us at 465-2223.

MOST COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

? - Does every student have a locker?

✓Yes, all students will have their own locker with a combination. Lockers are large, therefore may accommodate sports gear, coats, books and backpacks. Combinations should not be shared with anyone.

? - Do I need to call the office when my child is absent?

✓Yes please! We do follow up on all student absences with phone calls unless we have heard from you.

? - When should I write the school a note?

✓Please send a note, via your child, when he/she will be dismissed early or when requesting permission to ride a different bus or exit at a different stop.

? - Is there a specific spot to drop off my child in the morning?

✓Yes. Use the drive to the left of Farley and proceed to the front of the building for drop off. (Busses will use the drive to the right of Farley and travel behind the building for drop off.) Please pull up to the end of the building before stopping. Also, we ask you to not idle your vehicle at the end of the day when picking up your child. Please turn your engine off. Go green!

? - What time does school start?

✓Our day begins promptly at 7:15 a.m. and dismissal is at 2:15 p.m.

? - How will my child know which bus to take?

✓Bus routes will be posted on the front doors of HBMS on August 27th. They will also be published in the local newspapers.

? - How do I know if there are any changes to afterschool sports/activities?

✓Please check the Sports and Activities alert on our website. Any change will be made by 1:30 PM.

? - How does my child collect homework when absent?

✓On the second day you may call the office to collect. Prior to the third day your child should check the website.

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION

On Wednesday, August 25th from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. we will hold an orientation for all new students to the district (both 7th and 8th) who have registered this summer.

Please join us!

Bus Routes

Complete bus routes will be posted on the front doors of the Hollis Brookline Middle School, on Friday, August 27th. Routes will also be publicized in all the local newspapers.



Hollis Brookline Middle School Expectations!

- Manage Yourself
- Cooperate with Others
- Respect Personal and Public Property
- Act in a Healthy and Legal Manner

APPEARANCE AND DRESS

The matter of dress and appearance is, for the most part, a matter of individual taste. Students must, however, respect the learning environment. Any appearance or dress which would cause a distraction from the learning process, infringe upon the rights of other students or dress that is unsafe will not be tolerated.

1. Dress and grooming should be clean.
2. Immodest clothing will not be tolerated.
3. Students may wear shorts however, shorts and skirts must be at least mid-thigh length.
4. Students may not go barefoot at any time.
5. Students must wear a shirt at all times inside and outside school buildings.
6. Abbreviated tops such as halters, tube or thin strapped tank tops are not permitted.
7. Students will refrain from self-imposed body art.
8. Shirts advertising illegal substances, violence or vulgarities should not be worn.
9. Undergarments should not be visible.
10. Students may not wear hats at any time (including bandanas and visors).

ATHLETIC FEE

Parents and students, participation on an interscholastic team will require a **\$40.00** fee with a family limit of **\$160.00**. All monies will support championship banners, coaches awards and replacement uniforms.



WASHINGTON, DC March 22nd — March 25th, 2011

Attention Grade 8 students and parents! Our eighth grade Washington, DC trip has been scheduled for Tuesday, March 22 through Friday, March 25, 2011.

A parent information session will Be held immediately following the Grade 8 Open House, Sept. 16th.



Private School Application Process

Students who will be applying to private schools this year ***must*** submit all forms, including individual teacher recommendation forms, to the grade 8 guidance counselor. Guidance will then deliver the necessary forms to each teacher for completion. This will allow Guidance to track each student's application and ensure that all forms are mailed together in a complete package. Forms must be submitted ***at least two weeks*** prior to the application deadline to ensure they are mailed out in time. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact guidance directly.

EMERGENCY FORMS

Dear Parents and Students,

In order to facilitate a smooth entrance to school this year, we are requesting that an *emergency form* and a *current physical* be on file prior to the start of the school year. All 7th grade students are required to have a current physical on file in the Health Office. (Please note, we have no standard physical form. Whatever your doctor provides you with is acceptable.) ***Pupil Data/Emergency Forms*** need to have current information annually. For your convenience we are enclosing an emergency form to be completed and returned to HBMS before the start of the school year.

Students who plan to try out for a fall sport will have met the initial contract requirements, once the above described paperwork has been completed and returned. School tryouts for fall sports are scheduled to begin on the first full day of school, September 2nd, 2010.

If you have any questions, please call the HBMS office at 465-2223.

Sincerely,

Patricia Goyette, Principal Gayle Bottcher, Athletic Director Sheila Mandragouras, Nurse

2010 FALL SPIRIT WEAR-N-GEAR SALE SPIRIT WEAR-N-GEAR SALE

The PTSA is pleased to announce the 4th annual Fall Sale of Hollis Brookline clothing and gear, all of which promotes school and community spirit and pride!! Every Friday at HBMS is "SPIRIT DAY"! Order forms are available in the Front Office. All profits from this fundraiser go to programming opportunities at HBMS

The order DEADLINE is Friday, September 17th!! Any questions, email Leslie Eisenberg at leslieeisenberg@charter.net

Descriptions and Prices:

Tee-shirts—Light grey short- or long- sleeve cotton tees with Hollis Brookline on the front in fashionable "distressed" lettering. Sizes Adult s m l xl xxl xxxl Both styles are \$10.00

Hoodies—Come in zip-front or over-the-head styles, royal blue or light grey. HB on the chest and Hollis Brookline across the back. Sizes Adult s m l xl xxl. Zip hoodies are \$25.00 and over-the-head style is \$20.00. Names can be embroidered on the sleeve for an additional \$5.00.

Sweat pants—Come in both open-legged and elastic-bottom styles. Light grey. Hollis Brookline lettering down one leg. Open leg style sizes-Adult xs s m l xl xxl. \$20.00 Elastic-bottom style sizes-Adult s m l xl xxl. \$15.00

Flannel pants—Blue plaid flannel style sweatpants with Hollis Brookline down one leg. Sizes-Youth L, Adult s m l xl xxl xxxl \$20.00

Flannel Shorts—Blue plaid boxer style shorts with HB on one leg. Sizes—Youth L, Adult s m l xl xxl xxxl \$15.00

Mesh Shorts—Royal blue athletic style shorts with Hollis Brookline at bottom of one leg. Sizes—Youth L, Adult s m l xl xxl xxxl \$15.00

Baseball Hat/Cap—"Distressed" khaki hat with Royal blue HB on hat. One size. \$10.00

Sports back-sack—Royal blue back sack with Hollis Brookline on it. One size. \$10.00

Sports Blanket—Royal Blue polar fleece blanket with weatherproofed backing. Hollis Brookline on corner. Roll up with strap. One size. \$20.00 Names can be embroidered on blanket for an additional \$5.00.

Sports Chair—Folding sports chair. Royal blue with cup holder and carry bag. Hollis Brookline printed on the back of the chair. One size. \$25.00 Bags can be embroidered for an additional \$5.00.

NEW ITEMS!!!

FLIP FLOPS—Royal blue with Hollis on one strap and Brookline on the other!!
 Sizes-Adult s (women's 5-7) m (women's 8-10) l (men's 8-9) xl (men's 10-12) \$10.00

Polar Fleece Vest—Royal blue zip vest with Hollis Brookline on the Chest.
 Sizes—Youth L, Adult xs s m l xl xxl xxxl \$25.00 Names can be embroidered on chest for an additional \$5.00.

Kids Who Read Succeed

How can we best help our students? The answer is READING. Reading daily, for a *sustained* period of time. Research states that students who read excel. The following chart shows the correlation of standardized test scores with daily time spent reading:

Standardized Test Scores Percentile	Time Spent Reading a Day	Number of Words Read Per Year
20 %	7 minutes	25,000
30 %	9 minutes	35,000
40 %	13 minutes	250,000
50 %	20 minutes	500,000
70 %	45 minutes	1,500,000
80 %	60 minutes	2,000,000

* From: *Reading Research Quarterly* and Ellin Keene, Berg, *Increasing Your Success As a Literacy Coach/ Reading Specialist*, 2008.

The culture of HBMS is literacy based. We expect students to carry a novel with them throughout their day. They can read during skills, ROCK SSR time, or after completing a test. Through curriculum and classroom activities, students interact with a variety of texts during the school year. This may include short stories, poetry, textbooks, research articles, primary source documents, newsprint, online database resources, as well as novels. To support these efforts, we are asking families to create a culture in your own home that values literacy and provides structure so that students will spend more time reading.

What exactly is a literacy-rich home?

This is a home environment that encourages family members to become lifelong readers. Parents can support language learning by creating an atmosphere in which reading, writing, and discussion are a natural part of daily life.

Here are some tips to help your family:

- Designate specific time / place for reading, writing or discussion to occur.
- Find books the family would all enjoy reading and then discuss them together.
- Newspapers, magazines, and other reading materials should be in easy reach of all family members. These materials can be borrowed, new, or used. They just need to be a part of your home and everyday life.
- Allow for choice. Choice motivates readers.
- Read aloud at home.
- Model reading, including book selection. Allow your child to see you reading and let him know when you cannot put the book down. Supper will just have to wait until the book is done.
- If your child is a reluctant reader, help the child find the right book by talking to a librarian. Finding the right book is critical. Then, have the child start off reading in short chunks of time until he or she is hooked on the book.
- Find books on tape/downloadable that can be played in the car while on the go. Hearing the expressions of the reader models fluency and brings the story to life.

Reading is like exercising; people love it or hate it. However, when a person decides to get fit, he needs to start off exercising for smaller chunks of time before he can run a mile. The same is true here. Struggling readers need to slowly build up their time for sustained reading.

Reading Is Fundamental Newsletter: May-June 2009, Creating Literacy-Rich Homes, 29 June 09. <<http://www.rif.org/parents/literacyrich/default.msp>>. ©2008 Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.