



Knighly News

Hollis Brookline Middle School

December 2009

From the Administration

Early Release, December 7th. We had a variety of professional development activities organized for the early release day. To begin, Maggie Grupposo and Katrina Hall presented to the CSDA staff on curriculum mapping with a focus on math. They described the process implemented at the middle school and demonstrated Tech Paths. End result was a strong call for 6th and 7th grade math teachers to meet.

The majority of staff met for the final time with Cheryl Wrinn, our literacy consultant.

Cheryl met with departments to continue work with *essential questions*. Staff has heard continuously that the essential questions are the mental velcro for all text, activities, projects and homework.

Our paraeducators, guidance counselors and case managers attended a workshop organized by Grace Laliberte. Nancy Sagon presented *Executive Functions and Adolescents*. A follow-up workshop will be held February 11th.

To conclude, Steve Secor and I participated in a webinar. Jay McTigue lectured; *Simple Strategies for using Data to Improve Learning*. Jay is one of the presenters I spent a week with in Utah last summer. He is best known for his work with *Understanding By Design; Backward Planning*. The webinar supported three of the four overarching goals; data management, curriculum alignment and student growth. A DVD accompanied our registration which will be shared with the leadership team.

Student Council. Student Council again this year sponsored a canned food drive to support the Nashua Soup Kitchen. ROCK groups competed for the greatest amount! For the first time I accompanied the students for the delivery. Great experience for the students and parents. Presently our Giving Tree is set up in the office. Student Council has created tags with a child's name, age and their *wish* list. Gifts will be taken to the Nashua Children's Home prior to Christmas.

ICT Portfolios. Grade 8 students will have three opportunities to have their portfolio evaluated; February 11th, March 9th, or April 14th. Pairs of teachers will assess student proficiency using a

rubric developed to meet the ICT requirements described by the D.O.E.

Concerts. Over 300 parents and guests attended the 7th grade band and chorus concert held December 8th in the HBMS gymnasium. Nancy Spencer and Bill Hinkle are recognized for their skill, energy and for the relationship they have developed with our young adolescents. The 8th grade concert has been postponed until December 15th, due to the recent school cancellation.

Quarter 1 Report Cards. A second set of report cards was distributed to all students once errors were found in attendance totals and grading calculations. As I have continued to report, the transition to PowerSchool has had challenges. Mr. Secor is recognized for his attention to detail and problem-solving skills.

Fall Recognition Assembly. As a result of report cards being reissued, our assembly was postponed until December 7th. All fall sports, honor roll and drama students were recognized.

Tradition. The last hour of school on Wednesday, December 23rd will be devoted to the staff versus student volleyball game. Eighth grade classes are in the midst of the culminating volleyball tournament in physical education. The top four teams will challenge the staff.

We wish for you and your family a peaceful Holiday and a happy, healthy New Year!

*Patricia Lewis Goyette, Principal
Stephen R. Secor, Assistant Principal*

From the HBMS PTSA

We can't believe the holiday season is upon already! Just to remind us, we enjoyed our first snow day this week.

We are very excited to tell you that we had a great membership drive with over 150 joining this year.

The membership cards and Student Directories were sent out in early November; if you did not get yours please contact Cindy Van Coughnett-cwvanc@gmail.com Extra copies of the Stu-

dent Directories are available in the front office.

We celebrated Thanksgiving with our wonderful HBMS Staff by offering them a delicious Thanksgiving buffet. Families of our students contributed a huge variety of amazing dishes. We would like to thank all of you who helped, whether it was your time and/or cooking expertise. A special "Thank You" to Shelly Gillis and Lisa Schmalz for organizing this event.

Our fundraisers continue to be strong this year. The second order of Spirit Wear will be arriving soon! The Scrip Shopping cards have continued to grow stronger. We also collect "Box Tops," just send them in an envelope marked PTSA. Thank you to the Girl Scouts for helping process them.

Reflections entries are due in mid-January, to the front office of HBMS. The theme this year is, "Beauty Is ..." let's get creative over the holiday vacation! Contact Kathy Reuter at mail@thereuters.com if you have any questions.

It is never too late to come and check out the HBMS PTSA. Our meetings are on the second Friday of the month at 8:30 in the school library. Join us in the New Year.

We wish you a happy and healthy holiday season.

Generations Update

After careful reflection by HBMS administration and staff, eighth grade Generations Day will be suspended for the 2009-2010 school year. Lower parent involvement, the impact of missed class time, and the repetition of workshops were factors in our decision to cancel. Seventh grade Generations will proceed as normal and will take place on Friday, March 12.

School & Community News

Health Office Information

Mrs. Mandragouras

After experiencing last year's ice storm, many people have purchased generators to use during a power outage. If not properly used, generator use can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning. The symptoms of carbon monoxide poisoning can include dizziness, headaches, blurred vision, weakness, vomiting, chest pain, nausea and confusion. If you have these symptoms- get help immediately! Onset of severe symptoms may be neurological in nature and cause behavioral damage days after exposure.



However, instead of waiting for symptoms to manifest, install carbon monoxide detectors in your home, now! These inexpensive devices are widely available, easy to install and will provide 24/7 detection even during a power outage. A new state law passed this year will require CO detectors to be installed in single and multi-family dwellings built or substantially rehabilitated after January 1, 2010.

Equally important to know is how to properly use your backup generator *before* the lights go out. Portable generators should be placed 10 feet from any structure, with the exhaust facing away from the building openings. Placing a generator within the home, garage or other structure or too close to the house, can result in deadly exhaust fumes and potentially lead to severe injury or death. The Division of Fire Safety has a practical, informative bulletin on residential generators, which clearly outlines how to safely operate and position your generator to protect your home and your family; it's available at <http://www.nh.gov/safety/divisions/firesafety/building/electrician/documents/InformationalBulletinonResidentialGeneratorSafety7-14-09.pdf>.

Flu Information

Please keep your child home if they have a fever 100 degrees or higher (without fever reducers such as Tylenol or Ibuprofen) with a cough and or sore throat. Your student may return to

school when they are fever free for 24 hours (without fever reducers). When calling your child in sick, please remember to state if s/he has a fever and a cough/sore throat. Thank you.

Call your doctor right away if your child has:

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish or grey skin color
- Not drinking enough fluids
- Severe or persistent vomiting
- Not waking up or interacting
- Being irritable
- Flu-like symptoms improve but then return with fever and worse cough
- Has other condition (like heart or lung disease, diabetes, or asthma) and develops flu-like symptoms, including a fever and /or cough.

Fundraising Update

Scrip Facts--We are doing quite well with our PTSA Scrip Shopping Card fundraiser. If you have any questions about the program, please contact Ruth Kabel at 465-7487 (arkabel@juno.com), or Lynn Goldberg at 465-9269 (holycow07@charter.net). Some quick Scrip info:

Number of purchasing "families" - 67

Number of gift cards purchased since August 2009-1450

Student funds reserved for Washington DC-\$373

Earning potential-UNLIMITED!!!!

If you are participating in the Scrip program, THANK YOU!!!! Your support of the PTSA programs and the students at our school is greatly appreciated. If you haven't yet purchased a shopping card, consider making it one of your New Year's resolutions...supporting the school at NO EXTRA COST TO YOU.

Order forms are available on the HBMS website and are due the 10th of each month. You can designate a specific student to receive 1% of the face value of the cards you purchase to be saved for their Washington DC trip, or you can contribute your 1% to a DC scholarship fund. The remainder of the proceeds is used to support the ongoing PTSA programs.

Again, thank you all for your support. Let's see if we can get 100% family participation in 2010. Happy Holidays.

Seventh Grade News

Team McAuliffe—English

Ms. Rasmussen

The team McAuliffe English students are continuing their study of Charles Dickens' A Christmas Carol. Along with learning how to identify figurative language within the text and continuing their practice of using quotes from the literature to support their answers, the students will also be involved in some fun activities to help celebrate the book and the season. First, as many of you know, we are accepting donations for two charities: The Nashua Soup Kitchen and The Stork Project. For every item donated, the students add to the chain of giving in our room. We hope to see the chain circle the entire room before December, 18th. Thank you to those who have generously donated. Also, on December, 21 we will use the day to learn about and enjoy several Victorian Christmas traditions. For example, Mrs. Papadeas will make Victorian Christmas cards with the students. Did you know that the first Christmas card was mailed in Victorian England? Mrs. Connelly will play the Victorian parlor game of charades while Mrs. Evans will discuss Queen Victoria's heritage. Then on December, 22nd the students will travel to The Hanover Theater in Worcester to see a stage production of A Christmas Carol. This will be our first trip to the Hanover Theater, and we are looking forward to the experience. I would like to thank all of you have supported our charitable causes as well as the timely way you have responded to the return of field trip permission slips. Have a safe and happy holiday, and we will see you in the New Year.

Team McAuliffe— Math

Mrs. Werne

We are now half way done with our second quarter. We not only know how to open a jammed locker, but we have now figured out that we can't stop at our locker between every class and not be late!

We are just finishing up our unit on Geometry including our venture into the 3-d world. We are now able to identify many 3-d shapes and determine their surface area and volume.

Armed with this new knowledge, we are redesigning food packages to minimize the surface area. We will be writing letters to the food companies explaining how the company can save money by redesigning a package size. Ask us about it and we will explain it to you!

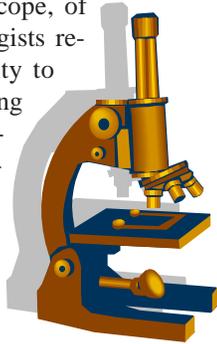
Finally, our new knowledge will allow us to estimate accurately how much wrapping paper you will need for a particular box. So, if you need help deciding how many rolls of wrapping paper to buy, let us figure out the package's surface area for you!

Team McAuliffe — Science

Mrs. Evans

Scientist Observe the Invisible World

Observing birth, head on collisions, and unusual eating habits—Where are these amazing events taking place? Right before our eyes—under the microscope, of course! Our microbiologists recently had an opportunity to observe a variety of living microscopic organisms including: paramecium, volvox, blepharisma, amoeba, stentor, euglena and spirostomum. The unique behaviors, movements, and habits of these microorganisms were easily observed using our compound light microscopes. I love the sound of the oooooos and aaaaahhs as the students viewed these protists and observed their unique behaviors. Each student was challenged to identify their microorganism by using a Dichotomous Key. Biologists use Dichotomous Keys to help them identify various organisms. A user of the key goes through sev-



eral pairs of contradictory statements and chooses the one from each pair that best describes a particular trait of an organism. The key guides the user to an end set of statements where the organism is finally identified.

Our most recent focus (no pun intended) is a unit on the eye. During this unit, the students will, have an opportunity to test their peripheral vision, determine their dominant eye, test for astigmatism, note the differences between a near and farsighted eyeball, and view cataract surgery. In addition, they will compare the size of their right eye blind spot to that of their left eye blind spot. In this lab, titled, Mapping Your Blind Field and Blind Spot, the students will use trigonometry to determine the size of their blind spots after they test their blind field (blind field is the area on paper where a person is blind from a distance of 300mm). Students will then follow the six steps of the scientific method and write their first lab report.

Team McAuliffe Social Studies students and Mrs. Connelly are using Technology while studying the Byzantine Empire

After successfully finishing our Roman unit and learning about the many reasons leading to the fall of the Roman Empire, students mapped the barbaric invasion routes and learned that a new Empire emerged in the east. We will see how these changes impacted the world for many years.

Students learned about the impact of Christianity on the Roman world, and made commercials related to the Miracle Stories in class. This was followed with artistic works related to the Beatitudes. Students developed their own interpretation of a Beatitude and then each student practiced his or her best penmanship in ink making their piece with an incredible illuminated letter just like those made by the monks who wrote the first Bibles. These wonderful pieces are on display in our room. Students discovered that the Roman Empire experienced a schism, not only in their religious beliefs, but also in the division of territory with the Byzantine Empire.

As we dive into our exploration of this period

of history, students participated in a wonderful Reader's Theater examining the life of Emperor Justinian and his powerful wife, the Empress Theodora. The saying 'Behind every successful man is a wise woman' seems to hold true through the centuries. Ask your child to share his or her name using Cyrillic, a language invented during the 10th century AD named after St. Cyril, a missionary from Byzantium. Then everyone will experience first hand the hard work and wealth accrued by some guilds tradesmen and women by being a candle maker, baker or some other trade. As we continue to learn about the changes that occurred to Byzantium with the influence of Islam and Mohammad, students will see how everything connects in the New Year.

Also as we make connections between the past and present, ask your children about a great song we enjoyed in class, 'Constantinople not Istanbul' by They May be Giants and how we are integrating more technology in class. Ask them to take you on a fun journey using wordle.net to create a piece of word art and how they related this to a creative writing using vocabulary. I wish you and your family a happy holiday season.

7th Grade Reading

Leonid Gershgorin

It has certainly been a busy three months!!! In December, some of the classes finished reading *The Boy Who Couldn't Die* by William Sleator, while others completed *The Dark Side of Nowhere* by Neal Shusterman. Using their novel, classes worked relentlessly with unfamiliar vocabulary, while also developing their fluency and comprehension through an assortment of strategies.

As Christmas break approaches, students have been reading *A Christmas Carol* in English class, while familiarizing themselves with its challenging vocabulary in reading. Students have been working with more than 60 long-standing words and applying them to their own lives.

January will bring our first ICT project of the year! Each student will have to read a Newbery Medal book and then create a book jacket for that particular title. Students will be using Microsoft Word and Paint to craft a truly unique creation.

Team Jordan— English

Mrs. DiZazzo

Team Jordan English students are working diligently! Recently, we have embarked upon our Victorian unit, which will take us through the end of December. This unit began with an introduction to Charles Dickens and also the Victorian Era, which provides the students with background knowledge and a sense of setting as they began to read the classic novel, *A Christmas Carol*. Students are currently busy reading and exploring the themes of change, generosity/selflessness, charity, and what it means to be a benevolent person. The unit culminates with a team-wide, week-long celebration of the Victorian time period, including a trip to see a theatrical production of *A Christmas Carol*, a Victorian tea party, and more!

Of course, we continue to work on writing, as well as reading quality pieces of literature. Students are given the opportunity for daily writing in the classroom, as well as the chance to read a variety of genres both in class and through the Free Choice Reading Program. In January, students can look forward to furthering their exposure to classic literature by reading a classic novel of their choice. In February, students will move on to non-fiction selections.

During the months of January and February, we look forward to an in-depth study of non-fiction writing, taking a look at memoirs, articles, essays, and more. During this unit, in a writing workshop format, students will craft a memoir based on a life experience, and will also create a well-researched essay on a topic that evokes much passion within them. Technological skills, such as creating Works Cited documents, note taking, accessing databases, etc. will all be utilized and strengthened during this unit of study.

Team Jordan— Math

Mrs. Hall

We are now half way done with our second quarter. We not only know how to open a jammed locker, but we have now figured out that we can't stop at our locker between every class and not be late!

We are just finishing up our unit on Geometry including our venture into the 3-d world. We are now able to identify many 3-d shapes and determine their surface area and volume.

Armed with this new knowledge, we are redesigning food packages to minimize the surface area. We will be writing letters to the food companies explaining how the company can save money by redesigning a package size. Ask us about it and we will explain it to you!

Finally, our new knowledge will allow us to estimate accurately how much wrapping paper you will need for a particular box. So, if you need help deciding how many rolls of wrapping paper to buy, let us figure out the package's surface area for you!

Team Jordan— Science

Ms. Ellerin

Nervous System

Team Jordan students began the nervous system unit with the essential question of what makes you, you? To jump start this discussion, students were given the following scenario to unlock their ideas: "Suppose for a minute that brain transplants were possible, as in a science fiction movie. If you had a brain transplant, would you be you, or would you be the person who donated the brain? Why?"

We began the exploration of what makes you, you by determining who in the class was right, left or whole brained thinkers. Using paintings, a shifty eye activity and a written brain dominance test, students were able to determine their own brain dominance.

A unit on the nervous system must include the basic unit of the system- the neuron. Students designed and constructed a model of a typical neuron using diverse materials such as clay, aluminum foil, pipe cleaners, toothpicks and plastic wrap. Students then went on to make a live action model of a nerve impulse that traveled through the nervous system.

Team Jordan science students also completed their second dissection of the year. The lab was buzzing with excitement as these young scientists donned their safety equipment and gathered their dissection instruments. The respect, courtesy and care they all showed during the dissection was impressive to see. Depth of grey and white brain matter was measured; the corpus collosum was identified and measured; the strength of the dura mater was tested; and regions of the brain were carefully cut and separated. Many students were surprised at the fragility of the brain.

Students then moved on to the very spatial activity of constructing a brain map cap. This cap can be converted between a two-dimensional and three-dimensional representation of the brain parts including the four lobes, sensory cortex and motor cortex.

To end the unit, students worked in groups to create a study guide based around their brain dominance. The creativity, collaborative effort and understanding of the nervous system was impressive to witness. Students created games such as "Science-opoly", "Wheel of Nervous System", "Science Jeopardy", "Brain Land" and a version of "Are you smarter than a 5th grader". Other study guides included poems, songs, dances/cheers, flip books, and analogies- did you know a neuron could be compared to a giraffe?

In December, we'll be moving onto our next unit of study, the eye.

Team Jordan – History

Mr. Capraro

In History on Team One, we are completing our study of the Byzantine Empire and will soon begin our study of the European Middle Ages. This unit on the Middle Ages will take us well into February. We will start with a look at the disorder of the early Middle Ages and the work of Charlemagne and the Holy Roman Empire. We will spend some time focused on feudalism, castle design and knights, chivalry and heraldry. This is a fun and exciting unit because there is a lot that can be done with the topics we cover. A favorite is the annual lesson on feudal taxation using pretzels to show how taxes were collected up the social pyramid. Some classes will do a computer simulation where we had to decide on our fief's priorities and then had to make decisions by them. In the coming weeks we will be designing heralds, learning to play chess and organizing ourselves into guilds! I enjoy teaching about the Middle Ages and look forward to all the fun and learning that we will be experiencing in the coming weeks. Please talk to your child about what we are learning in History and if you have any suggestions that would add to this unit, please don't hesitate to let me know!

Eighth Grade News

Team Hypatia— English

Mrs. Gruposso

English students on Team Hypatia have finished reading their historical novel and their broadsides which are one page newspapers. The pieces included a letter to the editor, an obituary, a news article, a political cartoon which was completed in history class, and a commemorative poem. Students read “Paul Revere’s Ride” and an obituary as models. They talked about the characteristics of traditional poetry, letters to the editor (another essay), obituaries, and reviewed news articles.

In addition to the broadside students have finalized Letters about Literature and are working on short stories and poems. The letters will be submitted to The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress and some of the other pieces to The Alliance for Young Artists and Writers.

As we move toward winter break, students will talk more and more about elements of style which will be the focus of the Mystery, Suspense, and Tension Unit. This is the study that ultimately leads to the original radio plays which will be assigned in January.

For parents who are not familiar with the radio play assignment, this is a cross-team assignment with students working in groups (or solo if they choose) to write, produce and perform a radio play. Since it is cross-team and Team Hypatia and Team Prescott schedules do not match up, students are expected to complete the assignment outside of the classroom. Students will be selecting groups, planning their schedule of meetings with locations as well as tasks to be completed. They will place the information on calendars that also provide check-in dates with Mrs. Coutu and me so that the group process will go as smoothly as possible. These calendars require a parent’s signature. Please do not sign them if all the information isn’t filled in.

Students will be clearly told that conflict during the radio play DOES OCCUR. It is not always wise for best friends to work together; students are encouraged to work with those with whom they can be successful. We do our best to prepare students to deal with the conflict that may arise from working with a group. Group work situations are part of our lives, and we are trying to help students learn strategies for working successfully in groups. Parents are asked

to help with transportation and providing the group a location to work. It is the students’ work, however. No matter how tempting it is to get involved, we ask you to please help us keep it the work of eighth graders.

Students have been working hard. In all core classes the Team has emphasized following directions, timeliness of assignments and the characteristics of a good student. We will continue to hone study skills as we finish up the pieces of writing and move into the next unit.

Reminder – We will be going to Keene on April 14 to see Romeo and Juliet. Please put it on your calendars.

Team Hypatia—Math

Mrs. Rossetti

Team Hypatia Math Students have completed their first ICT project for math. Using the statistics from previous years Middle School Champion Baseball Team, students were required to use spreadsheets and all associated formulas to find out who were the top three ball players based on batting average, slugging percent and on base percent. Algebra class is continuing their investigation into slope, intercepts, the equations of lines and linear regression. They have worked hard on understanding functions and how a particular function graph behaves. Algebra classes are using the graphing calculator as a tool to further enhance mathematical discussion as they learn how the calculator quickly processes the tasks they had been doing by hand. Pre-Algebra has continued in their exploration of polygons and quadrilaterals. They have just recently been quizzed on areas of parallelograms, triangles, trapezoids and circles. We will continue with areas of composite figures and cylinder properties. Have a happy and safe holiday!

Team Hypatia— Earth Science

Mrs. Smith

We are presently in the computer lab finishing an ICT project on GIS—Geographical Information Systems. All students will have participated in identifying where volcanoes and earthquakes take place. They have made predictions at the start of this project and now they are indicating whether their predictions are accurate. Each student will have an idea how GIS is used

in the real world based on our volcano and earthquake data. We still have a video called “Supervolcano” to watch perhaps before vacation depending on whether we have any more snow days, if not the video will come after the winter break. Then we will move on to earthquakes.

Students will participate in designing and building an earthquake proof four-story building. After researching this interesting topic, students will learn that the most destructive waves of an earthquake are the waves that reach the surface of the earth called secondary waves or *s waves*. These waves are the waves that shake buildings up and down and side to side. Students will build their towers to withstand this type of shaking and hopefully resist a 5.0 magnitude on a simulator earthquake machine. Some students will build their tower to try and withstand a 9.0. This project can be very frustrating for students because accuracy in their measurements is a must. So please encourage their tenacity! This is a very fun activity for each student, as they become very competitive with each other. I will certainly enjoy watching them problem solve, cooperate, compromise, reason, and be rewarded for their efforts. The day of testing is an anxious one.

Don’t forget to bring in current event articles about science in the news to receive bonus points on tests and quizzes. Get these in before the end of the second term. Be sure to take advantage of this opportunity.

Team Hypatia— American History

Ms. Lawler

Students are preparing for their second test of the year as we finish up the American Revolution. In order to prepare for the test, class has included discussion of how to study and different methods students can use.

As we work our way through the Revolution we have been watching an edited version of The Patriot. This film demonstrates many of the themes we have been discussing in class. Students have also been practicing their note taking, skimming and organization skills.

After break students will learn about the founding of our government. We will look at the Constitution, how our government functions, checks and balances and the ways citizens can exercise their rights.

Health Education

Team Hypatia has just finished their Adult CPR and First Aid unit. Students worked hard to pass both the written and the mannequin tests. These potentially life-saving skills are like second nature to us now. We learned first about caring for an emergency involving an adult, moved on to breathing emergencies and finished up with cardiac emergencies.

Students are currently working with Ms. Christy, the guidance counselor, on career development. Clearly, they are not planning out their entire futures, but taking perhaps a first glance at what they might do after high school.

Upon our return from the winter break we will learn Child and Infant CPR. Students who pass their tests will have their certification cards in the weeks following test completion. Be on the lookout for them at home!

Students will finish up with health on January 22, when they will move on to industrial arts.

Team Prescott— English

Mrs. Coutu

Prescott English has been very busy drafting many writing pieces and reading, specifically revolving around the unit The Novels of the Revolution. This is cross-disciplinary study as Mr. Lyle is studying the historical aspects right next-door with the students. The drafted written pieces are currently going into our broadsides (a newspaper from revolutionary times), an ICT project. We are in the computer lab working on this assignment and students are expected to independently follow specific written instructions. This has proved to be a challenge for some. Students wrote a feature news article, an editorial, an obituary and a commemorative poem. In social studies class, students built a political cartoon that will also be added to the paper. They can also add graphics, ads, and additional poetry to increase the authenticity of the broadside. We will finish with a reflective essay on all of the work we have done on the novels of the revolution.

We are also working on our next contest essay, Letters about Literature (L.A.L). Students are writing letters to authors whose work inspired them or impacted their lives in some way. The letter writing assignment is one I especially enjoy working on with the students because it helps them find their voices and work towards writing a cohesive piece without summarizing the text. These letters also help students reflect

on how literature does indeed impact their lives. The L.A.L. contest is sponsored by the Library of Congress and Target. If you see mail come to your house in February or March marked with a return address relating to the above organizations or about Letters about Literature, please open it and respond to it. We have had several state semi-finalists in the past.

Prior to vacation I will also have students draft pieces and go through the writing process for the Alliance for Young Artists and Writers contest. Students have many options for writing tasks to choose from. Drafting, frequent conferencing, and revision strategies will be worked on.

Our staff was also recently asked to develop assignments in case we experience a situation where school is closed for an extended time (i.e. the Ice Storm of '08). Mrs. Grupposo and I developed direction sheets and a handout guiding students through a piece of writing, including reminders to continue to read. Students have been given this handout and asked to put it in a location where they will have it with them- at all times (between school and home). This may be in the binder, agenda, homework folder, or even on the refrigerator. Hopefully we will not have to "activate" this assignment, but parents should be aware of it just in case.

For genres, we are finishing the study of historical fiction as of November 30th and our next focus will be mystery and adventure. Students are still working towards meeting their own monthly reading goals and it is still expected for students to read DAILY. In the classroom we will begin our Mystery, Suspense, & Tension Unit where we analyze style and examine how authors create tension in a story. We read "Tell Tale Heart," "Runaway Rig," "The Lottery," "Foul Shot" and "The Gun". The students all love the twists that are in these stories. All the preparation work in the classroom will lead to the radio play project, which will be assigned in January.

For parents who are not familiar with the radio play assignment, this is a cross-team assignment with students working in groups to write, produce and perform a radio play. Students DO NOT have to work in a group if they decide not to because of scheduling reasons or other conflicts. It is okay to work solo on this project. However, if choosing to work in a group and since it is cross-team and Team Hypatia and Team Prescott schedules do not match up, students are expected to complete the assignments outside of the classroom. Students will be selecting groups at the beginning of January. Several handouts will outline the process and the expectations, including a calendar. The CAL-

ENDAR is the document you must be most aware of. Parents must approve the group their child will be part of and agree that the child can meet at the location of the meeting for the allotted time on the given day. Make sure conversations happen early when the assignment is given and that you do not sign the calendar until it has been completely filled out. The calendar will provide check-in dates with Mrs. Grupposo and me so that the group process will go as smoothly as possible. Students will be clearly told that conflict during the radio play WILL OCCUR. It is not always wise for best friends to work together. Students are encouraged to work with others in which they know they can be successful. We do our best to prepare students regarding how to deal with the conflict that will arise. Group work situations are part of our lives and we are trying to help them learn strategies for working successfully in groups. Parents are asked to help with transportation, providing the group a location to work, and snacks. It is the students' work though- no matter how tempting it is to want to get involved- please help keep it eighth graders' work. The assignment can also be done with a basic tape recorder. It does not have to be done on the latest recording software/technology available.

I also wanted to give everyone a heads up about the early release day on April 14th. This is the day we will be attending the Shakespeare production in Keene in the a.m. We will send out a permission slip regarding the day and requesting monies to cover tickets and transportation sometime after the first of the year. The show starts at 9:30 and we anticipate arriving back to Hollis by 1:30 p.m. Because of the early release, students will need transportation home after arriving back at HBMS. I strongly suggest you start planning now. I hope neighbors can help neighbors for transporting students home so that all students can see the production.

With the sudden change in the weather (and a snow day!), we are all anticipating the holiday season. Wishing you all safe, happy holidays with your family and friends.

Team Prescott—Math

Mrs. Marquette

With the holiday season upon us, the excitement and energy is high. We are all anxious for various celebrations, but it is a good time to remind your student of how important it is to have good study habits. We still have a few more weeks until we break for the winter vacation with a lot on the agenda.

Our eighth grade math continues with a study of two and three dimensional space. Here is where they explored the number of degrees that can be found in each shape based off of a triangle. It led us into our unit on polygons and quadrilaterals where the students wrote a creative story incorporating the math that they learned with their writing abilities. Their masterpieces are being showcased in the room for others to read. Some of the students shared their story with the class. From investigating the properties of shapes, they are moving into area. How is area measured?

Through data analysis and investigation, they found which cell phone plan is the best. The algebra students looked at a specific carrier and analyzed the different plans offered within set guidelines. If they were hired as a consulting firm, what would they recommend? That is the question to ask your student. They are presenting their recommendations to the rest of their peers. We have just begun to enter into the real world of linear equations as well as the investigative piece! Stay tuned....

8th Graders Learn What Happens... When the Ground Begins to Move

Mr. Bond

Mt. St. Helens continues to puff steam twenty-nine years after its catastrophic eruption in 1980. Earthquakes continue to rock the Pacific Ring of Fire. News of glaciers melting around Mt. Everest as a possible result of global warming has scientists and environmental policy-makers scurrying. The earth continues to provide a showcase of natural events as students in Mr. Bond's earth science classes have been exploring the phenomena of one of the planet's most extraordinary spectacles...volcanoes.

In the weeks to come, students will continue their study of our dynamic planet as they explore the causes and effects of another of nature's displays ... earthquakes. One of the highlights of this unit will be experiencing firsthand what it takes to design and build a skyscraper that remains standing when the earth beneath it begins to move. Playing the roles of architects, engineers and contractors, earth science students will be brainstorming, sketching, drafting and building scale balsawood models of 150 foot skyscrapers, then subjecting them to a simulated earthquake. The quakes will be generated by a machine designed to simulate

the seismic waves that result during an earthshaking event. As the buildings are "put to the test," they will be videotaped, and the videos will be played back so that each student can evaluate the stress points in their building, as well as pin-point the section of the building that failed first. Last year, our best engineered building withstood a 9.0 magnitude quake for a period of 15 seconds. And, while many buildings withstood a minimum 5.0 quake, by the conclusion of the project, we had accumulated a pretty big pile of broken balsa sticks! We'll see how this year's buildings do!

P.S. To get a better idea of some of the topics your student is exploring this year in earth science class, in addition to homework, study guides and some of the activities they will participate in, check our Earth Science Department web site at <http://www.hbms.k12.nh.us/bondd>. You can even check out "Are You A Super Sleuth?" or get an up-to-minute weather report from our weather station!

Team Prescott—History

Mr. Lyle

We started off the term with a quick test on Pre-Revolutionary material, taxes and the Boston Massacre, the Tea Party, etc. Folks did pretty well on this. Needless to say, I was encouraged!

We then moved back into the computer lab for a small period of time to create a political cartoon in Microsoft Paint. These were very creative and spectacular. Many were amusing and clever. I feel the adventure was a worthy one.

We then moved on to Lexington, Concord and Bunker Hill. However, we can't forget Independence in Philadelphia. Team Prescott watched a classic musical together called "1776." It portrayed many of our Founding Fathers in a great light as they struggled to piece this document together. The students and I discussed New Hampshire's role there with 3 delegates attending: Josiah Bartlett, William Whipple and Matthew Thornton.

Lately we've been working hard on some classroom notes on the early war years of the American Revolution. We've been following General Washington as he takes command of the new Continental Army and fights the British across New York, New Jersey and parts of Pennsylvania. Students have completed all kinds of great exercises, charts, maps and notes in a Herculean effort to understand how we managed to win this amazing series of events and battles.

Soon we'll be studying the War in the American South, the Articles of Confederation and the Constitutional Convention. That should take us to mid January or so. We will be watching one more movie, to be graded as a project on December 23rd.

Family and Consumer Science with Mrs. Sarvaiya

By: Yasmine and Julie

This year in Family and Consumer Science, Team Prescott is applying the skills we learned in 7th grade in order to further our knowledge in the craft of sewing and cooking. We will be making a geometrical felt design, and will begin to sew a variety of upscale projects ordered from Hann Crafts, and of course cooking/cleaning in the kitchen. In the process we will be learning about nutrition. In order to accomplish these advanced skills everyone in the class has to cooperate with Mrs. Sarvaiya.

In order to be healthy, our world needs to have a new view on food and on how to pursue a healthy lifestyle. By learning about food, nutrition, and wellness early on in life, the students of today are more likely to be healthier in the future, because we will know how to make more suitable food choices, and therefore can take care of our health properly. In 7th grade, the classes watched several movies on nutrition and therefore were able to learn in a more visual way about how to be healthy. At the end of the year the students realized that all of a person's individual food choices throughout the day will impact that person's health tomorrow.

This year we are exploring a new, and more challenging variety of food. Our Family and Consumer Science classes are stepping up our cooking to culinary and even gourmet statuses. This includes making cheesecake, brownies, pizza and food inspired by Italian and other multi-cultural backgrounds. At the same time we gain knowledge as to how to make new renditions of already well-known foods that are made with substitutions instead. Overall cooking is a very useful skill that will be applied all through our everyday lives.

When we are not in the kitchen, we are working to perfect our sewing skills. This includes choosing a prepared design on paper which we color, trace, and then create on felt. Once that assignment is complete, the class moves onto a much more advanced project in which we order a kit. The kit consists of everything we need to make, ranging from stuffed animals and blan-

kets to stuffed animal/plush guitars and sports equipment. This project allows us to improve our sewing skills.

The combination of these activities; sewing, cooking, and learning about nutrition, guarantees having fun, and prepares us for our future. We are having a great year with our classes and Mrs. Sarvaiya!

Grade 8 Reading

Mrs. Dufresne

Grade 8 reading wrapped up their biography unit with some powerful PowerPoint presentations. Our essential question revolved around what made an individual or an individual's life accomplishments extraordinary. Each presentation addressed that question as it pertained to their individual biographical character. November and December split our classes on two different projects. Half of the students are finishing a novel by Neal Shusterman called *Scorpion Shards*. The book is a combination adventure and science fiction in genre. The students will write a letter to their teacher at the end of the unit that described a character transition. The story has six wild characters that make the task very simple. The rest of the students are reading *Behind Rebel Lines* by Seymour Reit. It is the true story of Sarah Emma Edmonds who disguised herself as a man to join the Union Army during the Civil War. Students are practicing bullet note taking and writing prose to depict the action in the story. The essential question for this novel was a focus on the roles women were inspired to assume on and off the battlefield during the Civil War. Sudoku and WOW weekly sentences continue to be a staple in our class. We practice thinking and writing skills through these venues. Please remember to check the reading website for homework and assignment information.



Math with Mr. Jahns....

Eighth Grade Math

We have just finished reviewing order of operations (with PEMDAS - Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally), integers (positive and negative numbers) and fractions in multi-step problems. We added powers and roots to the operations we order and solve, which led us, naturally, to scientific notation! We are currently

practicing ratios, rates and proportions. Fraction review will happen along the way as we begin to explore algebraic concepts. This will involve becoming familiar with new vocabulary like variables, terms, coefficients, expressions, like terms, etc. It will also involve simplifying and evaluating expressions. We will explore the algebraic equality, commutative, associative and distributive properties and their use in solving simple one and two step equations. The level of success in this unit will determine whether students are in Pre-Algebra next year as 9th graders, or in Algebra I.

Seventh Grade Algebra

Algebra is on track and making good progress. We have been studying Linear Equations. Students were also exposed to some non-linear equations, such as those involving absolute

value. We've also worked with functions and function notation, direct variations, slope-intercept, point-slope and two-point form. Or, hopefully, we will have by the time you read this!

Eighth Grade Geometry

Geometry is moving along nicely, having recently completed our study of triangles and their properties. Next, we will begin polygons in general. We are making extensive use of "Patty" paper and Geometry Sketchpad (as well as the traditional compass and straight edge) to explore triangle properties. We observe patterns in our class results and propose conjectures through inductive reasoning. We are now starting to try to prove the validity of these conjectures with deductive proofs. Soon, we will be moving on to circle properties. Let's hope we don't end up chasing our tails!!

Integrated Specialists

Adventure and Mystery at the LMC

By Mrs. Jahns



December has been a lively month for students in the library. Usage varies from finding an intriguing book, a quiet place to read or to work with a partner, or working on the computers. Seventh grade students have been reading **adventure** books; favorites are the *Alex Rider* series by Anthony Horowitz and various titles by Gary Paulsen. Eighth grade students have entered the **mystery** realm with quite a variety of titles and authors; including a newer one, *Diamond of Drury Lane* by Julia Golding, and an oldie, the *Face on the Milk Carton* series by Caroline B. Cooney. **Fantasy** is another genre that can be chosen for class reading; the *Eragon* series by Christopher Paolini remains popular, as well as *The Ranger's Apprentice* series by John Flanagan. Reading students (Gr. 7) are embarking on their **Newbery** quest; they will be hearing Newbery Award book talks this month in the library. Displays have been set up for each of these categories to assist students' browsing and choices. Students do need to improve on checking due dates (stamped in the book) and renewing books on time! Happy reading over Winter Break!

Our laptop computers continue to be busy in classrooms this month. Students are becoming well-practiced at word processing, researching with databases, as well as power point and other applications.

Book of the month: *The Graveyard Book* by Neil Gaiman, '09 Newbery Award Winner.

Want some fantastical suspense in an unusual setting with ghoulish characters?!!

Site of the month: <http://www.read.gov>

"Explore new worlds: Read. The Center for the Book in the Library of Congress invites people of all ages to discover the fascinating people, places and events that await you whenever you read." Great teen book information on this site, among other finds!

Integrated Specialists

Hola de Señora Lash y Señora Banks

Congratulations to our 7th grade students who have just completed another unit. They just finished learning how to express their likes and dislikes. 7th grade students will soon learn the first conjugation of verbs. Exciting stuff! Through this skill they will expand their vocabulary and greatly enhance their ability to communicate.

Our 8th grade students have just completed an important unit on commands, reflexives and daily routine. Your student can now describe some physical symptoms and how to stay fit and healthy. We also learned how to use direct object pronouns. These little words play a big role in helping us to speak Spanish in a more natural way.

*Hasta la próxima,
Señora Lash y Señora Banks*

Bonjour tout le monde!

Mrs. Cloutier

The seventh grade French classes are just finishing the chapter with “ER” verbs and can now use these verbs with many situations. As we discussed, it opens up many more ways to speak in French and makes the students feel confident about describing their day and routine. The book progresses nicely with the necessary verbs and vocabulary that set a foundation in French.

They will begin the family chapter next with another irregular verb, avoir (to have), and then study the vocabulary for houses and all the rooms.

Many students are doing a great job connecting the information from each chapter and are able to remember and use the material in their spoken and written language. They really like all our lively language games to help remember the material.

Bon courage!

The eighth grade classes are ready to put on their fashion show and give a preview of outfits that might be seen around town in the coming months! This is our popular event after finishing the clothing chapter. They were responsible for describing their own outfit and writing it up for a partner to read. The model then says a small description about his/her own cloth-

ing choice. We are presenting to the two Spanish classes next door and other French students. They are having fun with it and seeing an exciting project come to life. They remember seeing the 8th grade students presenting last year.

The students are now getting a good look at reflexive verbs and their conjugations as we start the next chapter. They can be a little confusing at first but after we work with them for a while, they become easier, of course. This chapter will be followed by one on driving and travel, then winter and other popular sports.

It is so wonderful to speak to them in French and have them understand so much now!

Repetition and Pattern in Art

Mrs. Papadeas



Team 1 students have been exploring visual repetition and patterns. Each unit that is repeated in visual rhythm is called a motif. Sometimes every motif is an exact duplicate of the first unit. Students were asked to make a design using two

recognizable shapes. They were told to stay away from simple geometric shapes. Many students chose to use holiday and winter items to design their two dimensional and decorative patterns. Students worked with hats, mittens, stockings, trees, sports equipment and other objects for various shapes. The best way to repeat these shapes was to either make a pattern out of oak tag that they could trace or use a piece of tracing paper. After tracing the objects several times students needed to consider the background space and what they were going to do with it. Mrs. Papadeas demonstrated filling in the negative areas with watercolor paint which was visually very effective. Another idea that students were able to work with was a very large thirty-six inch watch. Students could display their patterns on large clock watchbands. The watch could have a theme for example a cookie or a sports watch. It was also important that the students used two recognizable objects in this assignment. They could decorate the center of the watch however they wished. Many did giant Santa faces or practiced making Roman numeral numbers. Taking a rather small

object and making it extremely large can be another visual problem for students to deal with. This is a great lead-in to Pop art that will be done on a future date. Whatever the students decide to do for their pattern project they discover that they have lots of choices in art class. Stretching your imagination and coming up with interesting ways of solving visual problems is so rewarding in itself that it is hard to consider it work. “You got to have art!”

Bytes of Technology

By Mr. Gruce



Important Notice: Eighth

Grade students have begun choosing artifacts for their ICT Portfolio. The Grading Rubric and directions for completing this project will be given out

from January 4th to January 8th. This will be during Team 3’s Health class and Team 4’s FACS class. During Eighth Grade lunch, students will be able to choose a submittal date for their Portfolio to be grade by HBMS Teachers. These dates are;

February 11th, March 9th, April 14th

Students are expected to complete this project during their Skills Periods. The full details are posted on my website here at the middle school. If you have any questions on this topic, please contact me here at the middle school.

In addition, I have had quite a few students see me in regards to being unable to open a file brought from home. This is most often due to a different version of Office or a different word processor / office “suite” being used at home than what is being used in school. Currently the Hollis Brookline Middle School uses Microsoft Office XP Professional Suite. If you have purchased or upgraded your computer or software to another version of Office, particularly Office 2007, or you are using Works, Open Office, WordPerfect, NeoOffice, or other word processing / office suite program then, your child needs to save any work he/she brings into school in the Office 97 – XP- 2000- file format. This will help reduce stress when your child attempts to open his/her document and trips to my room requesting to convert the item into the proper format so it will work at the Middle School. If you or your child has any questions, please contact me here at the Middle School.

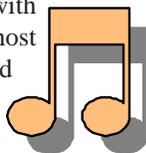
Thank you

Integrated Specialists

Music Department News

8th Grade General Music

Students have just started a 10 lesson unit on acoustic guitars using the H.O.T. Hands-On Training lesson book by Nancy Lee Marsters. Our course goal is to provide a positive music learning experience through the development of guitar skills. Students will be able to play E minor, A minor, and E major7 with accuracy. Songs include “The Ghost of Tom”, “Drunken Sailor” and “Hey, Ho, Nobody Home.”



Our next unit will be:

After discussing appropriate audience behavior at a classical or school concert, general music students will be asked to produce a concert conduct brochure using the computer lab during music classes.

7th Grade General Music

Students have been investigating different sound effects with the synthesizer. In small groups, students were asked to create the sound of snow falling, riding a skateboard, scuba diving and playing a video game. The project includes writing an original, creative story using a minimum of seven (7) sound effects to enhance the plot. Digitally recorded performances will be our final product for the class.

Our next unit:

Writing original compositions using the music notation program Sibelius.

7th and 8th Grade Chorus

Congratulations to both choral groups on two successful Winter Concerts! You should be very proud of your preparation and practice. Please review our chorus page on the school web site



for a required tongue twister. Click on Faculty-Spencer-Chorus-7th/8th Grade Songs to print a copy for study purposes. The tongue twister will digitally recorded in January for an individual singing grade. Once again, thank you for being a member of the HBMS Chorus.

7th and 8th Grade Band

Congratulations to all 7th and 8th grade instrumentalists who performed in the winter concerts. The students should be commended on their professionalism and musicianship. The focus and energy of the performers wowed a packed gymnasium and sent everybody home in the spirit of the season.



We are now starting to work on material for the spring concert. Please consider musical gifts this year such as reeds and valve oil so that transition into the second half of the year will be smooth and enjoyable.

Physical Education & Sports

In support of Red Ribbon week, the seventh grade physical education students enjoyed a power point presentation on drugs by the SRO, Officer Dunne. Currently, they are studying volleyball. Students have reviewed the safety, basic rules, and etiquette necessary for game play. They have been working hard to improve their underhand and overhead serve, overhead pass (set), forearm pass (bump), drive, spike (basic motions), and block. In preparation for the round robin tournament, classes discussed the qualities and sounds of teamwork and good sportsmanship and have these posted. The New Year will find the seventh graders working on a personal fitness unit covering self-evaluations, health-related and skill related fitness components, types of fitness programs, and target heart rates.

Our eighth grade students are finishing a volleyball unit and are now involved in a round-robin tournament. The best team in each Monday/Wednesday block will play against the best

team in each Tuesday/Thursday block on December 22. The winners of this competition will then play games against the faculty and staff in an afternoon assembly, December 23. “Bring it on, students!”

After the New Year, our eighth grade students will begin a Project Challenge unit. Students will be presented with activities that provide both physical challenges and critical thinking skills. In order to complete the challenges, students will need to work together as one unit. Cooperation, communication, leadership, decision-making, creativity, and organization are just a few of the skills needed to successfully complete each challenge. Rock climbing will be an extension of this unit. Students will learn how to spot each other while learning and performing low to the ground, technical rock wall traverses. Vertical climbing (22 foot walls) will follow wall traverses. Students will learn how to belay with ropes, tie special knots, use carabiners and ATC friction devices, and more.

Climbing is optional, but all students will learn the “on the ground” components of climbing and belaying.