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# ✦ Knightly News ✦

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October 2010

Hollis Brookline Middle School

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## From the Administration

**Building Leadership Team.** In my September report I described my professional goal of creating a Building Leadership Team (BLT). I shared that I was delighted with 18 staff members volunteering to serve. After careful consideration, 9 members were chosen and our first meeting was held Oct. 13<sup>th</sup>. Members include Christine Page, Melanie Madden, Lynn DiZazzo, Lauren Corliss, Laura Lawler, Janet Lash, Erin White, Claudia Banks, Katrina Hall, Steve Secor and me.

The goal of the BLT is twofold; serve as a conduit for building wide initiatives (Data Team, ICT, Literacy Action Team) and become the research and development group for school wide concerns.

We began our work by brainstorming issues. Several were listed; homework, retention, study skills, disenfranchised students, uniformity of expectations, multiple intelligences, a school report card, teachers responsible for learning, and Response to Intervention (RTI). After a great deal of clarification on each topic we set the top four priorities; homework, study skills, uniformity of expectations, and disenfranchised students.

We have divided into two groups to begin research and prepare summaries of our findings for the next meeting.

**NECAP Testing.** My October report again this year emphasizes the time and energy devoted to the New England Common Assessment Program. Mrs. Hasychak has provided valuable coordination for the testing procedure. All students tested during their core blocks with their Team teachers. Data from last year's results showed that the majority of students completed the test in 45 minutes, however up to 90 minutes is allowed. Grade 7 students participated in three sessions of math and three sessions of reading. Grade 8 completed the same plus two sessions of writing. Overall testing time including make ups was less than 10 days. Many thanks to parents for their support!

**Community Service.** Once again ROCK groups engaged in their first service project; gifts baskets, which were raffled off during Open Houses. The baskets raised \$916.00! All profits were donated to the Make a Wish Foundation in memory of Jordan Coffey.

**Blue Ribbon Award.** Hollis Brookline Middle School again this year was recognized as a Blue Ribbon recipient for volunteerism. I attended the celebration October 25<sup>th</sup> in Nashua with our PTSA Co-presidents, Ruth Kabel and Lisa

Schmalz. Our volunteers provide significant contributions that contribute to our success!

**Student Council Elections.** Steve Capraro and Katrina Hall continue as Student Council Advisors. They organized a meaningful process of nominations, campaigning and speeches. Voting occurred Friday, Oct 1<sup>st</sup> during ROCK. Seventh grade representatives for the 2010-2011 school year are Sydney B., Cam C., Maggie D., Jack K., Teresa R., and Nikita V. Eighth grade reps include Lizzy D., Hugh D., Kristen M., Rebecca M. and Marin O. Our new Vice-President is Nicola C. and President, Andrew BB.

**Interscholastic Sports.** Our fall season has been tremendously successful. Field hockey and Girls' and Boys' soccer all made it into the playoffs. In cross-country our girls placed 7<sup>th</sup> in the state while the boys placed 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Of special note, Steve Capraro and Lauren Corliss have been supporting the field hockey team and Coach Patty Smith. Mr. Capraro has arranged a Saturday trip to watch the UNH team and have a Q and A with the players immediately following the competition! Kudos to Steve for organizing!

**Washington, DC.** An informational meeting was held for the parents of 8<sup>th</sup> grade students following Open House in September. A Fact Sheet was distributed with the itinerary to highlight aspects of the trip. Interest is extremely high among the students. The scheduled dates are March 22-25, 2011.

**Veteran's Day Assembly.** Steve Capraro has organized our Veteran's Day Assembly scheduled for November 12<sup>th</sup> at 9:00am in the HBMS gymnasium. This is one of our favorite assemblies.

**Quarter 1.** It is extremely difficult to believe that November is approaching quickly! As our school calendar states, marks close November 5<sup>th</sup>. Report cards (hard copy) will be sent home via our students the following Friday, November 12<sup>th</sup>. Please keep the report card to review with your child, however, sign and return the envelope for use during the remaining quarters of this school year.

**New Website.** As you know we are in the building phase of our new website. Many thanks are extended to Patty Avron and Rich Raymond for moving us forward. Our new website is [www.hollisbrooklinems.org](http://www.hollisbrooklinems.org)

We appreciate your involvement and input. Please feel free to contact administration with questions or concerns!

Mrs. Patricia Lewis Goyette, Principal  
Mr. Stephen Secor, Assistant Principal

## LITERACY NEWS FROM . . . *SCIENCE*

Is middle school science and literacy related? The definition of the word literacy as found in the dictionary is “a person’s knowledge of a particular subject or field.” Synonyms of the word include: proficiency, background, knowledge and learning. Students show science literacy in middle school by providing evidence that they understand and can apply the knowledge learned in a classroom setting.

In seventh grade, to help students gather the skills needed in understanding materials read from a text book different ways of taking notes have been and will be provided through the year. Students have already practiced taking notes using category style note taking and a linguistic/spatial note taking format. Students were given practical advice to figure out what’s important in a text book paragraph: bolded words, examples and topic/ concluding sentences. We have encouraged students to be brief when note taking, and to use their own abbreviation system. When taking notes, we do not want them to rewrite the book.

Since science is a very hands-on subject, one way that students show that they understand class activities is to write a summary of what has occurred in class. For example, during a seventh grade discussion about the six characteristics of living things, students were given an activity called the stimulus challenge. At the end of the activity, they were given a few minutes to summarize and then share their written work. In another case, students wrote a persuasive essay that detailed specific evidence proving their strongest intelligence.

Knowledge of a topic becomes stronger and more well rounded if links can be made across curricula areas. Currently team two students are in art class. As scientists, they are learning about brain dominance and the characteristics associated with each brain hemisphere. To initiate the brain dominance discussion, students viewed a few pictures by an Italian artist named Arcimboldo. Arcimboldo made pictures of faces that were made out of books or fruit or armor. In art, students are finding out information about the artist and will be creating their own design based on his style. These paintings were used to illustrate the difference between the right brained versus left brained dominant students. Each class was shown a picture for a brief second. The right brained students in almost every case saw the whole picture/the face, while the left brained student saw the details in the face/the fruit, the books, or the armor.

One eighth grade faculty member is exploring ways to integrate literacy into the science lab. In a recent study during the Spring, 2010, carried out by Mr. Bond, Earth Science Teacher at Hollis-Brookline Middle School, he conducted literacy research with 4th graders at CSDA in Brookline and HUES in Hollis. His research study was designed to explore the question, “Does the use of science reflective journal writing promote the growth of scientific thinking in young students and lead them to investigations that generate further questions or ideas?” The objective of the study was to replicate the procedure of earlier research done in the study titled, “Promoting Inquiry Through Science Reflective Journal Writing,” using a younger population

of heterogeneously grouped students, and measure the outcomes associated with students using science reflective journals. At the end of each science lesson, for a period of four weeks, the classroom teacher provided three writing prompts and gave students time to write their reflections in their Science Reflective Journal. At the end of each week, the journals were collected and the entries were compiled. Each entry was read and categorized, and a count of similar student responses was kept for each category. In addition, a rubric was designed to objectively measure specific performance characteristics of students’ responses to each of the writing prompts. At the beginning of each new week, the results were given to the classroom teacher for information and to use for initiating discussions in class. It was found that when 4th grade students used frequent reflective journaling following science lessons and activities, they demonstrated an evolution from fact-based, superficial journal entries early in the study to entries that exhibited a higher degree of complex thinking and an increased ability to formulate relevant science questions after several weeks. Reflective journal writing allows learners to become more engaged in the process of inquiry science, particularly in their ability to ask relevant questions, and encourages student interest in science investigation while sharpening critical thinking skills. Mr. Bond anticipates expanding on his earlier research by conducting the same procedure with his 8th graders this year.

In each of the 8th grade science classes journaling at the beginning of each class has been an important part of thinking scientifically. Journals have been an integral part of the curriculum to transition from other disciplines to a deductive reasoning state of mind. Both seventh and eighth grade middle school science faculty have been working hard at finding new and unique avenues for integrating literacy into the science curriculum.

### Private School Application Process

Students who will be applying to private schools this year ***must*** submit all forms, including individual teacher recommendation forms, to Mr. DuBois in Guidance. 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 Mr. DuBois directly.

## REMINDERS

Reminders will be a regular column in the Knightly News. Please check regularly and let us know if you have questions.

- ❖ **The first payment for the Washington, DC trip was due Oct. 15.** Please contact Mrs. Hasychak or Mrs. Goyette if you have questions. Students have been organizing their partners and roommates for the trip. Without the signed intent to participate form (purple) and first payment, students may not secure a partner.
- ❖ **Update your personal information.** This includes phone numbers, cell numbers and very importantly – email addresses. A tremendous amount of communication is conducted electronically.
- ❖ **November 2<sup>nd</sup> is voting day as well as a Professional Development Day for the SAU.** No School for students.
- ❖ **The PTSA meetings** are held the third Friday of each month. Please plan to join us!
- ❖ **Pull as far forward as you can when dropping off in the carpool lane.** The potential for traffic jams can be reduced by not stopping in front of the main doors. Please pull forward to the end of the side walk before stopping.
- ❖ **Front Office Volunteers** are always needed. If you did not sign up and feel your routines have settled somewhat, please contact Patty Avron to secure a date. [patty.avron@sau41.org](mailto:patty.avron@sau41.org)

## Calendar Of Events

*Each month we will share dates that span the upcoming two months. The dates may help with reminding students or, in fact, support your schedules. We hope this will help with your planning.*

*Nov. 2—Professional Development Day  
- No School*

*Nov. 5—Marks close, Quarter 1*

*Nov. 11—Veterans' Day—No School*

*Nov. 12—Veterans' Day Assembly (9:00am)  
—Report Cards Home*

*Nov. 17—Coop School Board Meeting (6:00pm)*

*Nov. 19—PTSA Meeting (8:30-10:00am)*

*Nov. 24 —Professional Development Day  
- No School*

*Nov. 25-26 —Thanksgiving Break*

*Dec. 6—Early Release Day —Dismissal at Noon*

*Dec. 10—School Dance*

*Dec. 15—Coop School Board Meeting*

*Dec. 17—PTSA Meeting (8:30-10:00am)*

*Dec.21—Seventh Grade Concert*

*Dec. 22—Eighth Grade Concert*

*Dec.24-31—Holiday Recess*

## PTSA NEWS

Thank you to parents, students and teachers who have joined the Middle School PTSA this year!! Your support is greatly appreciated. We are still accepting memberships, so if you have not had a chance to join yet, please go to our web site and print a form. Speaking of our website, have you noticed we are in a new location this year? The HBMS PTSA web site is: [www.hbmsptsa.org](http://www.hbmsptsa.org).

Spirit Wear orders were delivered this week! Watch for our next order which will be delivered in time for the Holidays. Scrip (shopping/gift cards) is the PTSA's primary fundraiser. The Scrip program works like this: you buy gift cards at face value (a \$25 Home Depot card, for example, costs you \$25 and is good for \$25 in the store, same as cash). There are no expiration dates on any of the cards. Each merchant decides what percentage they will donate back to the school. Some are as low as 1.5% (gas cards), and some as high as 18% (L.L.Bean). Most average around 4-8%. We order cards once a month (except 2 times in December). The PTSA offers an extra incentive to families for ordering. 1% of the FACE VALUE of cards purchased is saved in a separate account to be used towards the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Washington DC trip in March. Our software tracks each family's sales so we can keep track of each student's balance. If a student does not go to DC, the funds can be used toward other end-of-year 8<sup>th</sup> grade activities, or a family can designate the funds be used for DC scholarships. We can save in any student's name, even if they are in elementary school. Finally, we continue to collect Box Tops and Hannaford Helps Schools slips. Please turn these into the front office.

Congratulations to Emily R. for winning the Directory Design Contest! Directories were delivered last week. There are a few extra copies available in the office, if you still need a directory.

Upcoming events:: Nov 18<sup>th</sup> – is our teacher appreciation luncheon. Please contact Rachana Suchdev at [rsuchdev@yahoo.com](mailto:rsuchdev@yahoo.com) if you are able to help that day, or contribute to the event.

Nov 19<sup>th</sup> – next PTSA meeting in the HBMS library at 8:30AM. All are welcome!

## **Please Support the American Medicine Chest Challenge!**

**When:** Saturday, November 13, 2010, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**Where:** Hollis Police Department, 9 Silver Lake Road, Hollis, NH 03049

**Who:** Residents of Hollis

**What:** Unused/Expired Medications (UEM's), including prescription, non-prescription medications and other pharmaceuticals.

**Why:** The Town of Hollis is conducting a UEM disposal day. The intention of this event is to not only help residents properly dispose of medications they no longer need, but to also raise awareness about the hazards of keeping UEM's and what damage can be done to water supplies and the ecosystem by improperly flushing them into the waste stream.

**How:** Bring your medications, in their original packaging, with medication information intact (whenever possible), to the event and the trained attending staff (pharmacists, police, and disposal technicians), will properly handle the UEM's and seal them into storage containers to be hauled to an incineration facility. All UEM's are handled under strict, controlled, tamper-proof protocols to ensure secure passage from the event to the incinerator right up until they are destroyed. You will be asked to fill out a voluntary, anonymous survey regarding the medications you are dropping off. There is no fee required to participate.

### **FAQ:**

#### **Why is it a bad idea to hang onto my old medications?**

The growing trend in drug abuse by teens and adults is taking and using prescription and over-the-counter medications, that were not prescribed for them, for the purpose of getting high. By eliminating them from your household you eliminate the risk to you, your family, your children and other members of the community.

#### **Why can't I just flush UEM's down the toilet when I don't need them any longer?**

Many of these medications do not break down when they come into contact with water. They persist in the environment (whether you have a private septic system or are on public sewer systems), dangerously building up in ways scientists are only just beginning to understand. Currently there are no consistent protocols for testing "leftover" medications in water supplies. UEM's that are improperly flushed could ultimately and inadvertently be present in our drinking water.

#### **What about my private information on prescription bottles?**

All medications will be dropped off in the constant presence of police officers, sorted by licensed pharmacists, and sealed in tamper-proof containers prior to being shipped to an incineration facility; your information will be safe. However, if you are more comfortable, you are welcome to cross out with a black marker your name, address and customer ID/Rx number. In order to improve sorting time and appropriate disposal of UEM's we ask that you **do not** black out the name of the pharmacy, name of medication and dosage strength.

#### **Why should I fill out the survey?**

Beyond providing an event that helps resident's dispose of their UEM's, one of the goals of this project is to better understand the nature of surplus meds. This anonymous information will be used solely for data research and will not trace back to individuals in any manner.

#### **How safe is it to drop off my items at this event? How will they be kept safe after I leave?**

Dropping off your medications is a very safe activity. The medication drop off is taking place at the Hollis Police Department and there will be police officers present for the entire event. All medications are managed under the protocol of "chain of custody" which is the same system of actions that ensures that crime scene evidence is secure and un-tampered with. The chain of custody will be maintained from the time you give over your medications until the sealed containers are incinerated.

#### **What if I don't have my original packaging?**

We very strongly request that all medications be turned in within their original bottle or packaging. However, if that is not possible we ask that you best identify what the medications are via a notation clearly written on the container you are using to hold the loose medication. If you are unable to identify what the medications are we will still take them. For proper disposal we will have to identify what each medication is and the more information you can provide us the more streamlined this process will be for everyone.

#### **What if I cannot make it to this event?**

A secondary goal of this project is to host future events like this at least once a year. We are also researching the possibility of installing a permanent drop box, in a secure location, where medications can be dropped off year round in our communities.

#### **Who do I contact if I have any other questions?**

Please contact Master Patrol Officer Tracy Dunne at 603-465-7637.

## **DRAMA CLUB**



• Drama Club began with an information  
• meeting on Tuesday, October 19 from  
• 2:30-3:00. Anyone interested in learning  
• about or participating in Theater activities  
• could attend. The Club will meet every Tuesday  
• from 2:30-4:00, until November 30<sup>th</sup>. Attendance  
• is not mandatory, nor is it required for  
• participation in the spring play.

• Choices of the spring play will be announced during  
• the first week of December. Auditions for the play will  
• be held on December 7<sup>th</sup>. A read-through is scheduled  
• for Tuesday the 14<sup>th</sup> and rehearsals to be held on  
• Tuesdays and Thursdays from 2:30-4:30, beginning in  
• January.

• Performances are scheduled for Friday and Saturday,  
• March 18 and 19, 2011.