

NARRAGANSETT MIDDLE SCHOOL
NEWSLETTER
MARCH - APRIL
2010

**FROM THE DESK OF THE
PRINCIPAL**



As the principal of the Narragansett Middle School I am interested in an overall picture of our students' successes. The staff of NMS painstakingly examines the strategies they are incorporating in the classroom and make adaption's throughout the year so all students have the opportunity to be successful. One area of concern this year is the growing number of students who lack the self-responsibility to complete homework assignments. Homework completions link students' comprehension of class techniques and give teachers a daily understanding of student learning. A large percentage of students who are failing classes do not complete daily assignment; therefore, they do poorly on quizzes and tests. Students must make homework a priority throughout their school years. Responsibility of self goes beyond thirteen years of education. It continues onto post-secondary school and the work place. Many students at NMS have shown determination and developed the

necessary study habits to be successful, and I am proud to state 12.5% of the student body made Principal's Award (straight A's) and overall, 35% of NMS students made the honor roll for the second quarter. Unfortunately, we often spend an extraordinary amount of time assisting the percentage of students who lack the internal motivation and effort to be successful, and not enough time celebrating those students who meet the daily expectations set forth by the MA Department of Education. I am very proud of the students of NMS. All students have the opportunity to make the Honor Roll. I hope that together, we as educators and parents can set goals for the success of the children of NMS and next quarter, I hope that the Honor Roll increases dramatically.

FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE



New Screening Requirements

Growth screenings will begin this year for all students in grades 1, 4, 7 and 10. Parents of these students will be notified by mail with the results of the screenings. Attached is a letter regarding these screenings at the middle school.

Any student planning on participating in school sports this spring needs to have a current physical exam on file. Please check with Mrs. Scott if you have any questions.

It is very important that all of our students have a balanced diet, get plenty of sleep, and dress appropriately for the weather in order to stay healthy and have a productive day at school. Please call the Health Office (939-2113) if you have any questions or concerns.

MCAS testing will begin in March. Studies show that test scores and school performance improve greatly when students have a healthy, well-balanced breakfast. Please encourage your child to start each day, especially on MCAS days, with a good breakfast.

PARENTS OF 6TH GRADE STUDENTS

Now is the time for you to schedule an appointment for a physical exam for your sixth grade child. All students entering 7th grade need to meet the immunization requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and have a Tdap booster before the beginning of school in August. Most physicians require a few months notice to book appointments, so please contact yours as soon as possible.

GUIDANCE NEWS



Eighth grade students are beginning to plan for next year. The Narragansett

High School Guidance Department will be talking to students about class placement for next year in the near future. Class selection sheets will be completed by students and sent home for parental signature. Questions about 9th grade may be directed to Mrs. Patty Weiss, NHS Guidance Counselor, 978-939-2020. The Monty Tech application process has been completed at Narragansett Middle School by Mr. Martin, Guidance Counselor. Sixty-two applications were submitted to Mr. Jim Hachey, Dean of Admissions at Monty Tech. Mr. Hachey interviewed students on 2/1 and 2/2. The interview sessions went very well.

Mr. Martin and Mrs. Baker are hard at work planning the March-April MCAS Testing. MCAS testing is scheduled for Monday 3/22 – Friday 4/9. The 7th grade is taking the English Composition on Tuesday, March 23rd. **Make-up test day for the 7th grade English Composition is Wednesday, April 7th.**

Fifth – Eighth grade students will be taking the Reading Comprehension test as follows:

5th grade: 3/29, 3/30

6th grade: 3/22, 3/24

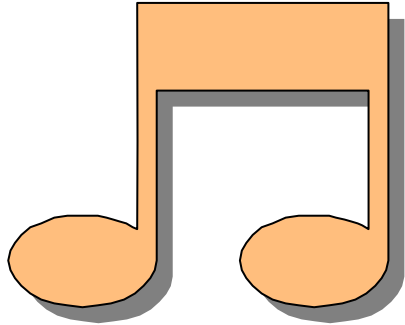
7th grade: 3/25, 3/26 (ELA Comp is 3/23)

8th grade: 3/22, 3/23

MCAS testing is a critical time period when students need to be in school. Teachers have been working with students all year to prepare for the MCAS tests this spring. Please help us by making sure your child is well rested, has a good breakfast, and is in school during the scheduled test time for his/her grade level. MCAS tests will also be given May 10 – May 21, 2010.

The Homework Club continues to meet on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays after school in the library. Students, with parental permission, are welcome to attend to complete homework.

MUSIC



Grade 5 General Music

Grade 5 Music classes have been on a musical journey through “Expressions of Freedom.” During the time of slavery in America, African American slaves used musical expression as a means of escape from mental, physical and economic abuse. Many of the spiritual texts were used as *codes* for escape to the North. We read about Harriet Tubman and studied and sang songs about the Underground Railroad.

A typical day in a Grade 5 Music classroom included, dramatic reading to set up the historic background of spirituals, singing and the sounds of “catchy” rhythms being played on percussion instruments. We added Orff style accompaniments and included speech ostinatos to add to the joy and interest to those who performed these spirituals. The students listened to the Gospel style singing of spirituals done by others as well as performed percussion and danced with a World Beat percussion

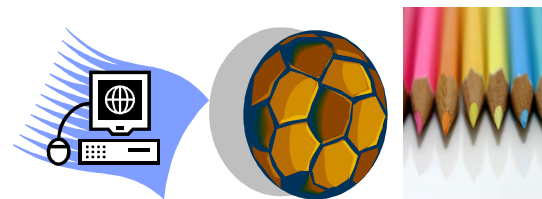
ensemble. We finished our unit with the drawing of Ezekiel’s vision, which was the historical connection to one of our favorite spirituals.

Quabbin Valley Music Festival: N.M.S Musicians Participating in Music Festival

Eleven students from NMS performed in the Quabbin Valley Music Educators Music Festival on February 27th in Palmer. They practiced and performed with other seventh and eighth grade students selected from twenty different schools from central and western Massachusetts.

Congratulations to Julia Donarumo, Lauren McMilleon, Emilee Decarteret, Nicole Goguen, Roger Anctil, and Stephanie Williams for representing our instrumental program. Jacquelynn Rodriguez, Nicole Denis, Kyle Strom, Delani Savoy and McKenzie Savoy were selected to sing in the chorus.

EXPLORING THE EXPLORATORIES



There will be a special event on April 14, 2010 from 5:30 until 7:30 p.m. at Narragansett Middle School. We are celebrating the exploratory subjects – art, music, foreign languages, physical education, computers, and technology education. The work of students in these areas from 5th through 8th grade will be showcased. We are asking some students to volunteer their skills in these subjects to demonstrate their knowledge and talents for other students and visiting

parents. Artwork from all students will be on display and light refreshments will be made and served by World Language students. Come and listen to our talented NMS musicians and see what is happening in Technology Education, Computers and Physical Education. **SAVE THE DATE AND JOIN THE FUN!!!**

GRADE 5 NEWS

Parents will be glad to know that some of their students will be participating in a new language program at recess. Karis Fonseca is a certified Sign Language Interpreter and is teaching some students American Sign Language on Thursdays after lunch. "I am so excited to see the enthusiasm of the kids in this program," says Ms. Fonseca. "It is rewarding to teach children these visual communication skills." The topics for the class are animals, numbers, simple conversation starters and simple requests. Ms. Fonseca teaches students who have no disability so they can reach out to students who do not have the ability to use spoken language. The class is optional and is open to all. "Communication is something we all take for granted", says Ms. Fonseca. Hopefully students will take the time to converse with others who use sign language using the skills Ms. Fonseca has taught them.

Homework Update

It is the third quarter and some students are starting to relax with their homework duties. Parents are asked to check their children's agenda often and write notes to teachers in them if they have questions. Teachers rely on parents to see that the work at home is being done and that time

is set aside each night to get work done. While some students do get their homework done in school it is still important to use the agenda as a tool to discover what is going on in class. Parents who talk to their kids about school help to reinforce what is taught during the day.

Make up work

Students who are absent are forgetting to ask their teachers for their missed assignments. Teachers need students to take on more responsibility for themselves and their education. Simply asking what was missed is all that it takes. Students will then have less missed assignments which will count against them when progress reports come out next week.

Staying after school

5th grade students must bring a written note from parents if they are going to stay after school for extra help. Without this safe guard, much missed communication occurs. Students do not get off the bus when expected and parents are worried unnecessarily. A frantic call to the school from parents is avoidable. Staying after school is commendable but we all need to keep kids safe and accounted for. A little note, an some planning ahead, are all it takes!

GRADE 6 NEWS

The 6th grade will be hosting a pizza/movie night on March 4th after school from 2:45 – 5:00. Permission slips will be sent home with students.

On April 13th the 6th grade will be attending the play *Mulan* at noon at Mount Wachusett Community College. Many students are having difficulty completing homework. Please encourage

your child to stay after school for the homework club which meets on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

GRADE 7 NEWS



The final payment for Ferry Beach is due on March 1st. We're hoping to send out the final payment the first week in March. We have approximately 85 students attending, along with nine chaperones. Packing guides were sent home before February vacation. Baggage check will be on Thursday April 1st from 4-7:30 p.m. It will take place in room 25. We cannot check bags on Monday morning; there is too much going on. Please be on time for baggage check. If you cannot make it at those times, please contact Mrs. Cote so that alternate arrangements can be made. Souvenir forms are available from Mrs. Cote. If you'd like to purchase your child a t-shirt or field guide, please get a form and send it back two weeks before the trip, by March 12th. Items are pre-ordered and will be given out on Monday April 5th to the students at camp.

The Uncle Jerry's T's fundraiser was a big success. We sold over \$3000 worth of shirts and other items. Those will be in by the 26th and will be going home with students as soon as they arrive.

We'd like to say congratulations to the students of the quarter for second term.

They are: Brad Ladeau, Jared Merritt, Melissa LeBlanc, and Micayla Davis. Great job guys! Our students of the quarter are not only good students, but they are also good people, involved in various activities.

The ELA department is wrapping up their study of Mythology, which concludes with a pretty important exam. We will be writing another essay, moving into poetry and then a study of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

GRADE 8 NEWS

The 8th grade is sponsoring a book fair for students from March 1 – 5. Students will visit the book fair with their teachers. The next Washington, D. C. payment of \$125.00 is due March 13th. If you're not sure how much you owe please check with Mr. Hannula. The final payment is due April 15th.

We are still looking for volunteer chaperones for the trip. If you are interested please send a note to Mr. Hannula. The cost of the trip is \$532.00. We are sponsoring a Yankee Candle sale to off-set some of the cost of the trip. The sale will end on March 17, 2010. Summer is just around the corner.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Feb 22 – March 17 – Yankee Candle Sale
March 6 – Haiti Clothes Drop off
March 15 & 18 – Almost Spring Concert
March 22 – April 12 – MCAS
April 5 – 9 – 7th grade Ferry Beach
April 14 - 16 – P/T Conferences
April 19 - 23 - Vacation

Date: February 22, 2010

Dear Parent/Guardian,

This letter is to let you know about the Body Mass Index (BMI) Screening Program that will take place at your child's school.

A Body Mass Index, or BMI, is a measure that is used to show a person's "weight for height for age." It is calculated using an individual's height and weight. Just like a blood pressure reading or an eye-screening test, a BMI can be a useful tool in identifying possible health risks.

The purpose of the BMI Screening Program is to give you information about your child's weight status and ideas for living a healthy life style. At Narragansett Regional School District, we address our children's health and wellness with a comprehensive approach that includes health screenings as well as physical education and nutrition education. Our district has also developed a Wellness Policy that addresses guidelines for our Food Service Department to follow along with guidelines for vending machine items, classroom food, and fundraising activities. This policy is available for review on the district's website www.nrsd.org.

We are very interested in making sure that all of our students are healthy. This year, we will be doing the annual state mandated BMI screenings in grades 1, 4, 7, and 10 during the month of March. Students in these grades will have their height and weight measured and will have their BMI calculated. The school nurse will supervise your child's screening and will make sure your child's privacy is respected at all times. The results of your child's height, weight, and BMI measurements are strictly confidential- the results will be kept in your child's school health record and sent to you directly by mail.

A BMI does not tell the whole story about your child's health status. BMI does not distinguish between fat and muscle. For example, if your child is very athletic and has a lot of muscle, his/her BMI may be high even though he/she is not overweight. That is why we encourage you to share the results with your child's health care provider. Your child's doctor or nurse is in the best position to evaluate his/her overall health and can explain the results of the BMI screening. They can also talk with you about whether there are steps you can take to encourage healthy eating and physical activity.

Please feel free to call me with any questions you may have about the screening. Additional information about children's wellness and fitness is available upon request or you may access the state's resources at www.mass.gov/massinmotion.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Scott R.N.

School Nurse

Robert Rouleau

Principal