

THE

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PAPER

March 17, 2009

A newsletter from the Lawrence School Parent-Teacher Organization

Calendar

- 19 March (Thursday)**
- EARLY DISMISSAL
12:30 pm Grades K-6
 - School Committee Meeting, including budget update
7 pm Town Hall
- 20 March (Friday)**
- Bingo Night
6-8 pm small gym
- 24 March (Tuesday)**
- Principal's Forum
8 am library
 - Superintendent's Budget Forum
6 pm Hunneman Hall, Brookline Public Library
- 26 March (Thursday)**
- EARLY DISMISSAL
12:30 pm Grades K-6
 - Superintendent's Budget Forum
7 pm Devotion School Library
- 30 March (Monday)**
- MCAS testing period begins for grades 3-8
 - Eighth Grade Family BHS Orientation, Part 3: Life at BHS
7 pm at BHS
- 31 March (Tuesday)**
- Superintendent's Budget Forum
8 am Baker School Library
 - Open Comment SEPAC meeting
7 pm Devotion School Library
- 1 April (Wednesday)**
- Evening Parent-Teacher Conferences
- 2 April (Thursday)**
- Open Comment SEPAC meeting
7 pm Heath School Library
- 2-4 April (Thur-Sat)**
- PTO Play
7 pm auditorium
- 6 April (Monday)**
- LSA classes begin
 - PTO Meeting
7 pm library
- 7 April (Tuesday)**
- School Council Meeting
8 am 2nd floor conf. room
- 10 April (Friday)**
- SCHOOL CLOSED
Day of Low Attendance (Good Friday)

Important Budget Meetings This Week

- The March 19 meeting of the School Committee, at Town Hall, will include an opportunity for public comment at 7:15 p.m. and a budget update at 7:50 p.m.
- Superintendent Bill Lupini and Deputy Superintendent Peter Rowe will host a series of open forums to discuss the proposed FY2010 budget. Parents are urged to stay informed throughout the process. The FY2010 Budget Message can be viewed online at <http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us>. Forum dates are March 24, March 26, and March 31 (see calendar for locations and times).

Students and Teachers Working Together for a Stronger Community

Seventh grade students and their teachers recently engaged in an extended community meeting to identify and address areas of shared concern for students and teachers. Using an extended block created by an eighth grade assembly, teachers developed a protocol designed to give students a voice in finding solutions, while holding students and themselves accountable for being part of the solution.

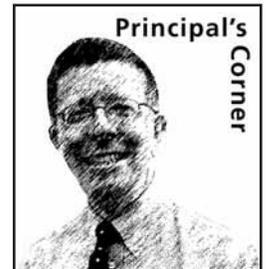
Taking advantage of the small size of the grade, all 45 students and their teachers gathered together in one room for an opening "Chalk Talk." During this protocol, students and teachers work in silence and write comments on the board. Participants also comment on items others have written—agreeing, disagreeing or building off them. One board contained comments about what was going well, and a second board was for things we would like to change. After filling both boards, the whole group discussed what emerged. From this discussion, eight major topics were identified. Students were divided into eight small groups facilitated by members of the 7/8 team and assigned a topic to discuss in more depth in a smaller, safer setting. The groups were charged with identifying strengths, how things could be better and specific action steps to make improvements. Action steps could be a teacher/administrator responsibility or a student responsibility.

I was very pleased with this process on several levels. First, the 7/8 teachers and specialists took the initiative to develop a proactive intervention. Second, students were given a voice in identifying issues and concerns and finding solutions. Third, the process reinforced our school's norms to be a safe, just and caring community. I was proud of our seventh grade students for their mature and thoughtful participation in this process, as well as our teachers for their commitment to making Lawrence School a stronger community.

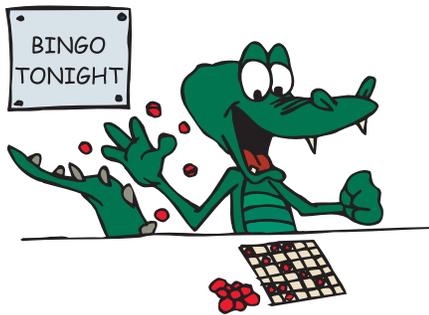
Principal's Parent Forum – Tuesday, March 24, 8:00 a.m.

Did you miss earlier presentations about school improvement work, the budget or class placement? Do you have other questions or concerns? Please join me next Tuesday morning for an open forum.

—Rick Rogers, Principal



email your stories to newsletter@lawrencepto.org. by Friday 4 p.m.
To download a copy of this newsletter go to <http://lawrencepto.weebly.com/>



BINGO Fun This Friday!

Family Bingo Night is here! The fun starts at 6:00 p.m. in the small gym (games start at 6:30). Popcorn, hot dogs, and beverages will be available for purchase. If you can sell cards, call out or track numbers, run the A/V equipment, sell refreshments, or help with setup/cleanup, please contact Laura O'Brien (lobrein186@msn.com or 617-734-6970).

Congratulations Mr. Porter!

Fifth grade teacher Greg Porter has been selected to visit Japan in November! The SETJ (Sending Educators to Japan) committee will be busy planning his trip from now through the summer, selecting schools for him to visit and contacting his former students in Japan. He will visit several schools and cities, and his experience will help the Lawrence community to better understand the culture of another country. For more information, please contact setj_lawrence@yahoo.co.jp.

School Council Needs to Hear from You

Families are asked to please respond, online or on paper, to the recently distributed Communications survey. The survey will help assess and improve the school's communication strategies. The deadline for responses is March 20. Find extra copies in the office or complete the survey online at <http://www.zoomerang.com/Survey/survey-intro.zgi?p=WEB228UWFKDHR3>.

Movie Follow-Up

While last week's after-school movie failed to meet the expectations of many of the 120+ children who attended, the PTO raised some much needed funds in the process. Thanks to parent volunteers Kay Kobayashi, Anne Turner, Carol Rosenstock, Satomi Takahashi, Amy Luster, Leslee Miller, and Vice Principal Monica Crowley. Special thanks to the eighth grade volunteers who helped manage the children during the event: Sakura, Nikki, August, Jono, Aden, Ramesses, Lance, Dan, John, Camille, Kentaro, Joon, Matt and Zev. You all did an excellent job. The money raised is roughly equivalent to six months of fish tank maintenance, three large special project grants for teachers, and one or two performing arts presentations. THANK YOU!

PTO Bee Proud!

The Lawrence PTO Spelling Team bested all of the other PTO-sponsored teams and emerged as the Bee-est spellers in their round at the Brookline Education Foundation's annual adult spelling bee on Sunday, March 8. Congratulations to Lawrence parent-spellers Lara Adamson, David Eber and Thierry Guedj for taking the Lawrence School PTO to the top. Congratulations also to our fabulous fifth grade spellers, Julia Shea, India Blake and Max Morganstern. Lawrence Loyalty!

Library Notes

❖ "Abraham Lincoln: Self-Made in America" is on view at the main branch of the public library through March 26. This traveling exhibition features archival-quality reproductions of documents, photographs and artifacts that tell the story of our sixteenth president. Take a tip from Rusty Browder: the exhibit is best if viewed with some familiarity with Lincoln's life, available from World Book Online or any number of good books for young people. For information about the exhibit and accompanying events, visit <http://www.brooklinelibrary.org/programs/special-events>.

❖ You may be aware that the Children's Room at the main branch of the public library has exhibit cases for children's special collections—trading cards, key rings, magnets—exemplifying young passions. Currently on display, through March 20, is Jesse (2N) and Caroline (KR) Viola's beach glass collection gathered from Cape Cod beaches. If your family would like to share a collection, contact the Children's Room at 617-730-2370; the wait time is about 18 months!

Thanks to Poetry Night organizer Tom Rubenoff, to Rick Rogers and Rusty Browder, and to the parents and students who came out to share and enjoy a wide range of poems last Thursday evening. Poetry Night was a great success!

Arts and Sports

Dust off those gloves and fire up those bats—baseball season is right around the corner! **Brookline Youth Baseball** registration is currently open to kids ages 7 and up. For information and to register, please visit <http://www.brooklineyouthbaseball.org>.

Around Brookline

The Children's English Language Institute (CELI), in its ninth year as a summer language enrichment program for non-native speakers ages 5–12, is now accepting applications. The program focuses on language acquisition skills and includes a daily art class. It will run from June 29 to July 24. All classes are taught by experienced Brookline Public School teachers. To reserve a space please contact Sima Kirsztajn (sima_kirsztajn@brookline.k12.ma.us or skirsztajn@gmail.com, or 617-969-3539).

The Human Relations-Youth Resources Commission of the Town of Brookline, with the cooperation of the Rotary Club of Brookline, will recognize and present awards to youths 18 years of age and under whose volunteer activities, and in particular volunteer leadership activities, have made our community a better place. Nominations can be made through April 15. For information contact the Commission (617-730-2330, TTY/617-730-2327, Fax/617-730-2296 or email steve_bressler@town.brookline.ma.us).