

A newsletter

from the Lawrence School Parent-Teacher Organization

Calendar

11 May (Tuesday)

PTO Meeting
7 pm library

19 May (Wednesday)

- Staff Appreciation Luncheon
- Grade 2-4 play
9 am and 6 pm, auditorium

20 May (Thursday)

Principal's Forum
8 am library

26 May (Wednesday)

Gr. 5-6 Track Meet

28 May (Friday)

Gr. 7-8 Track Meet

31 May (Monday)

NO SCHOOL
Memorial Day

1 June (Tuesday)

- School Council Meeting
8 am, 2nd floor conf room
- PTO Book Fair
- Town-wide Chorus/Orchestra
7 pm, Pine Manor

2 June (Wednesday)

- PTO Book Fair
- Town-wide 7/8 Band/
Jazz Band
7 pm, Pine Manor

Massachusetts' New Anti-bullying Law

Principal's



Corner

"As governor and as a parent, I feel strongly that no child should feel threatened or unsafe in our schools,"

Governor Deval Patrick said during the signing ceremony for Massachusetts' new anti-bullying law on May 4, 2010. I share the governor's strong feeling. Educators and parents should all take time to review the new law that can be found at this link: <http://www.mass.gov/legis/laws/seslaw10/sl100092.htm>.

The new law defines bullying and prohibits it on school grounds, as well as other locations, and includes cyberbullying. Schools have the authority to intervene in out-of-school incidents: *"if the bullying creates a hostile environment at school for the victim, infringes on the rights of the victim at school or materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school."*

Schools and districts are required to provide *"age-appropriate instruction on bullying prevention in each grade,"* using evidence-based curriculum and to develop a plan for bullying prevention and intervention that includes professional development for all staff and information for parents.

In February, I wrote about the language, suggested by the Anti-Defamation League, that

we have used at Lawrence this year when talking about teasing or bullying with students. We have focused on moving from "bystander" to "ally." An ally can **speak up** to the person doing the teasing or name-calling. An ally can **support** the student being targeted by offering to do something with him/her and moving away. And an ally can **report** repeated or serious problems to a trusted adult. Reporting such a violation is getting help, not tattling. A recent *Boston Globe Magazine* cover article (May 2) entitled, "The Secret to Stopping a Bully?" suggested a focus on bystanders as one effective intervention: *"The real goal must be to boost the willingness-to-intervene levels among students" and helping them to act.*

The Lawrence school improvement plan for next year already included a goal to: *"Identify common language and practices to support a safe, just, and caring community and to promote social emotional learning."* Action steps include: identifying and implementing a social-emotional learning program to be used in the school, continuing a revised Advisory Program in grades 6-8, and continuing Lawrence Community Meeting (PK-5) with an increased focus on promoting a safe and caring community.

Earlier this spring, in anticipation of the legislation passing, Superintendent Bill Lupini formed a task force of administrators to begin outlining a plan of action for the district. Watch for additional information on district-level response.

To echo the Governor's words, *"No child should feel threatened or unsafe in our schools."* The Lawrence staff is deeply committed to working together with parents to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all our students.

—Rick Rogers

MCAS Testing Resumes This Week

Students in grades 3-8 will participate in MCAS testing for Mathematics this week. In addition, students in grades 5 & 8 will take the MCAS Science test next week. Please arrive at school on time. Testing begins at 8:15 each day. The MCAS schedule is as follows:

- May 11 & 12: Grades 3, 5, 7 Mathematics
- May 13 & 14: Grades 4, 6, 8 Mathematics
- May 18 & 19: Grades 5 & 8 Science

email your stories by friday 4 p.m. to newsletter@lawrencePTO.org

To download a copy of this newsletter go to www.lawrencePTO.weebly.com

Brookline Bikes!

Join your friends and neighbors at the Third Annual Brookline Bike Parade. It's Sunday, May 23 at 12:30 p.m. For experience bikers (over 10), ride the Beacon Street Loop. Young bikers can take the Cottage Farm circuit (1.5 to 3 miles). Both parades start and end at Amory Park. Want more information? Want to get involved or be a parade marshall? Check the website at www.brooklinebikes.org.

“Arigato” from Japanese Fun Fair

Thank you for the Lawrence community who came and enjoyed Japanese Fun Fair. Despite the sudden change of location for fear of bad weather, we raised \$1,066 for the PTO.

Special thanks to the dedicated organizers, Yuki Seto, Maiko Noshō and Hiroko Wakai, who pulled off this event. We are also most grateful to all of the Japanese mothers and children, who helped out. See you next year!



Thank you, Luci Lin



Students in grades 3-8 were treated to a very special performance on Tuesday, May 4, courtesy of Lawrence parent and BSO violinist Luci Lin who invited recently retired BSO harpist, Ann Hobson Pilot, to join her. In addition to

hearing pieces by four different composers, students learned about the origins and workings of the harp. Students in 3H wrote letters to the musicians afterwards to thank them, and here are some of their comments:

I can't believe the harp is a percussion instrument. Although concerts usually make me drowsy, in this concert I was wide awake because the concert was so good. --Annie

Thank you so much for visiting our school. I was surprised that a harp was inspired by a bow and arrow. The way you played together amazed me...I couldn't believe how quickly you drew your bow across the strings! The way you played made me want to start dancing! I loved your performance! --Caroline

You really do good music...The one I liked most was the tango. Thanks for coming! --Jon

Thanks as always to the PTO for sponsoring this event.

Missing Clarinet

Jared Swartz (6H) is missing his clarinet. If anyone has found it or mistook it for their own, he and his family would be grateful for its safe return to the office or to Jared directly. Thanks!

Meet the School Council Representatives!

Three parents submitted statements of interest for the three open school council representative positions. Below are their statements. We welcome them to the School Council and thank them (in advance) for their effort and hard work.

• Amy Kershaw

I am the parent of two young boys who attend the Lawrence School: Miles Finzi, (Second Grade) and Lucas Finzi (Kindergarten). I recently co-organized the Supporting Boys and Learning Parent Discussion Group and have a strong interest in promoting opportunities for greater movement and hands-on learning experiences for all our students. In my professional life, I have spent the past 15 years working in the public and private sectors on issues related to Pre-k through 12 education, child care and, most recently, child welfare. As a member of the School Council, I would look forward to using my personal interests and professional experience to work in partnership with Lawrence parents, administrators and faculty to continue making our school even better.

• Ann Turner

As a parent of a middle schooler, I am interested in helping to ensure that we obtain the very best of the K-8 school structure while at the same time giving the 6th, 7th and 8th graders the special attention they require in what can be a very challenging time academically and socially. I have 25 years of broad-based professional experience in the financial services world including project/change management. I am in the midst of a career change to the not for profit arena focusing on organizations who work with children, education and/or job preparedness. I served on the Brookline Community Foundation board for 7 years. I have served on the Lawrence Extended Day board (currently Co President) for 10 years and am Co President of the Brookline Extended Day Advisory Board. In addition to our son Nat (fifth grade), we have a daughter who will be a senior at Brookline High who attended Lawrence so have a long and very positive perspective on Lawrence School.

• Jan Nagler

I would like to serve as a member of the Lawrence School Council for the 2010-2011 school year. I presently have a daughter in fourth grade and a son in second grade. In the past, I have taught in both Acton and Lexington public schools as a first and second grade teacher. Currently, I am employed by Boston University. I teach classes relating to early childhood literacy and I am a supervisor for students that are completing their final student teaching practicum. I visit a lot of schools and observe in many classrooms, this has allowed me to learn a lot about school infrastructure and management. I feel that my background and knowledge will help me in serving on Lawrence School Council

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual authors only and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Lawrence PTO or Lawrence School.