

November 10, 2009

A newsletter

from the Lawrence School Parent-Teacher Organization

Calendar

- 11 **November (Wednesday)**
SCHOOL CLOSED
Veterans Day
- 12 **November (Thursday)**
•Mr. Porter leaves for Japan
•Grade 7 Overnight
•EARLY DISMISSAL 12:30 pm Grades K–6
- 13 **November (Friday)**
International Night
6–8 pm
- 16 **November (Monday)**
ECS Program Parent Info Meeting
8:15 am library
- 18 **November (Wednesday)**
•Reception/Display of Mrs. Lynch's Animal Books
7:45 am library
•Early Release Movie
•EARLY DISMISSAL 12:30 pm Grades K–8
- 19 **November (Thursday)**
Staff Appreciation Luncheon
- 20 **November (Friday)**
LSA winter registration deadline
- 22 **November (Sunday)**
Mr. Porter returns from Japan
- 25 **November (Wednesday)**
EARLY DISMISSAL 12:00 pm Grades K–8
- 26–27 **November (Thurs–Fri)**
SCHOOL CLOSED
Thanksgiving Break

International Night Is Here!

The best bang for your buck this Friday night is, without a doubt, Lawrence School's International Night. Musical group Canto Bolivia will provide entertainment during an eclectic dinner (6:00–7:00 p.m.), followed by more music and dance performances in the auditorium. It's not too late to get involved—bring a dish to share and have your child walk in the parade. Advance tickets will be on sale this week in the lobby (\$5 per person, \$20 per family of 4 or more). For information contact Pearl Singhakowinta (pearl.sing@yahoo.com).



Itterasshai Mr. Porter!

Fifth grade teacher Greg Porter will be in Japan November 12–22, through the support of the Lawrence PTO's SET-J (Sending Educators To Japan) program. He will travel to Hiroshima, Shizuoka and Tokyo, and will visit two schools, where he will interact with students and teachers, and tell them a bit about our school. Mr. Porter will also have a chance to visit with, and stay with, former Lawrence families. Details and photos of his trip will be posted on the lobby board. We wish Mr. Porter a wonderful trip, and hope that the entire Lawrence community will benefit from this unique opportunity for cultural exchange.



What is a Phonathon? Dialing for Dollars

On the evening of December 7, every Lawrence family will receive a call from a parent volunteer asking for a contribution to the PTO. **This Phonathon is our most important fundraiser of the year**, raising almost 50% of the annual PTO budget. Later this week, you should receive a letter in the mail with information about how to participate. *If we receive your Phonathon donation before December 5, you will not be called on December 7.* What a deal!



PTO funds are used to enrich every child's experience at Lawrence School. You may be surprised to know how much of what happens at Lawrence is a result of PTO funding. Some examples: classroom supplies and a field trip for every Lawrence teacher; performing arts programs presented to every grade; this weekly *PTO Paper*; books for our library; and before- and after-school sports to name just a few!

Your support is essential to the PTO's ability to bring this rich diversity of programs into the Lawrence experience. **So please answer the call, and make a (tax-deductible) pledge of whatever you can afford.** (If you work for a company that matches employee gifts to educational institutions, please get the matching gift form from your Benefits or Human Resources Office and send it to the PTO along with your check.) For more information about the Phonathon contact Melanie Marcus (mlmarcus@mindspring.com).

First Quarter
Report Cards for
Students in Grades 6–8
will be sent home Friday,
November 13.

Fantastic Food Fair



Thank you to all of the Japanese parents who made fabulous treats for this year's Japanese Food Fair. Special thanks to organizers Hiroko Wakai, Yuki Seto, Maiko Nosho and Miki Hosooka, who pulled off this event, as well as Carie Leung and Pamela Iguchi, who advised and worked for the vendors. We would also like to express our gratitude to Fugakyu for generously donating lunch box cases and chopsticks, and to Stop & Shop and Costco for donating materials. Please thank them with your business.

And of course, we are grateful to the Lawrence community members who came and bought our Japanese food. We raised \$1,293 for the PTO. We promise that we will prepare more space and more food next year!

Mrs. Lynch's Animal Books

Last June, in honor of Kathy Lynch's 22 years of service to the Lawrence community as Library Assistant, PTO parents and others contributed generously to a book fund. Wonderful books have been purchased with this gift—all animal books sure to be popular throughout the year, and extremely helpful for the 3rd grade's animal research project. Please join us for a morning reception and display of books on Wednesday, November 18, from 7:45 to 8:15 a.m. in the library. Mrs. Lynch will be the guest of honor! Also on display will be the set of six beautiful books that Mrs. Lynch and her husband, John, have donated to complement the collection.



Professional Development Day

Last Tuesday's Professional Day provided staff the opportunity to continue their professional learning. Over 85 workshops were offered. So what did we learn?

I participated in a workshop along with Lawrence teachers and special educators in grades 4–6 that is part of our ongoing partnership with Landmark School Outreach Program. Teachers began by reporting on strategies they had implemented in classrooms since our initial workshop in August, such as two-column note taking. Most of the day was focused on the teaching of writing, including strategies to help students use more elaborate language in their writing and organize their thoughts into coherent paragraphs. We examined samples of student writing taken from our classrooms, identified common strengths and weaknesses and discussed implications for how we teach writing across the three grade levels. We also began to identify a continuum of organizational and study skills for the upper elementary grades.

I believe all students will benefit from the school having consistent language and a coherent system for teaching writing and organizational skills.

Here is a sampling of other offerings attended by Lawrence staff:

- *Assessing Math Concepts—Linking Think Math to Kathy Richardson's AMC Assessments*
- *Cultural Competence in Pre-K–1*
- *Developing Oral Proficiency in World Language K–8*
- *Differentiated Instruction for First Grade Math*
- *English Language Learners: Assessing Listening and Speaking*
- *Historical Tour of Chinese Americans in Boston*
- *IMPACT Math (7/8)*
- *Responsive Classroom Introduction and Beyond*
- *Stephanie Harvey's Primary Reading Comprehension Toolkit*
- *Words Their Way: Word Study for Phonics, Vocabulary and Spelling Instruction*
- *Writer's Express—Using Writing to Close the Achievement Gap*

We are deeply appreciative of the opportunity to devote an entire day to our professional learning. One of Brookline's core values, "Excellence in Teaching" captures the spirit of the day well: "*We are committed to supporting a professional community that creates and sustains an atmosphere of intellectual excitement, innovative instruction and personal growth.*" Thank you to the community for making this possible.

—Rick Rogers

Principal's



Corner

Help Support the PTO—Send Your Child to the Early Release Movie Cartoon Double Feature: Tom and Jerry & Rocky and Bullwinkle

- Wednesday, November 18, 12:30 to 2:20 p.m.
- The cost/donation is \$5.00 per child.
- K–2 children will be escorted from their classrooms to the auditorium by upper-school chaperones.
- All other grades are welcome and should come directly to the auditorium.
- Pre-K students may only attend if they are picked-up at their classrooms and accompanied during the event by a sibling in grade 3 or higher. No exceptions.

It will be possible to pay at the door, however we prefer that you register and pay in advance. If you have not received a registration form, please pick one up in the school office. Completed forms, with payment, should be returned to the box in the office.

