

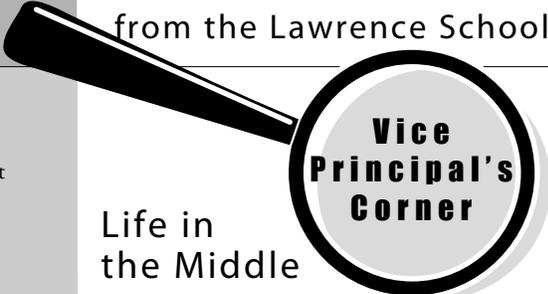
October 5, 2010

A newsletter

from the Lawrence School Parent-Teacher Organization

## Calendar

- 4-6 October (Mon-Wed)  
SET-J 1,000 Crane Project  
2:30-3:30 pm lobby
- 5 October (Tuesday)  
School Council Meeting  
8 am 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conf. room
- 6 October (Wednesday)  
• Car-free School Day  
• Magazine Drive Ends
- 8 October (Friday)  
Gr 6-8 Interim Progress Reports
- 11 October (Monday)  
SCHOOL CLOSED  
*Columbus Day*
- 12 October (Tuesday)  
PTO Meeting  
7:00 pm library
- 13 October  
Town-wide Cross Country Meet
- 18 October (Monday)  
School Photo Day  
NOTE NEW DATE!
- 21 October (Thursday)  
Principal's Forum  
8:00 am library
- 22 October (Friday)  
Japanese Food Fair
- 26 October (Tuesday)  
• School Council Meeting  
8 am 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conf. room  
• Superintendent's presentation:  
National Common Core  
Standards, 6:30 pm  
Brookline Main Library
- 27 October (Wednesday)  
ECS (Enrichment and Challenge  
Support) Parent Meeting  
8:15 am library
- 2 November (Tuesday)  
SCHOOL CLOSED  
*Professional Development Day*
- 8 November (Monday)  
Gr 7 Farm School Trip



### Vice Principal's Corner

#### Life in the Middle

Our middle school students and faculty are off to a great start this year as we begin the process of becoming a community within the larger K-8 structure. Life on the third floor is bustling with sixth, seventh and eighth grade students learning their schedules and meeting teams of teachers. They are continuing to learn and practice skills and behaviors that will enable them to become independent, responsible students who are positive members of the community.

#### New Structures

##### Community Building

*"... the Developmental Designs (DD) approach offers an array of strategies designed to keep young people safe, connected, responsible, and engaged in learning. The DD approach is based on our research-grounded belief that healthy, enjoyable relationships are the foundation for success in school." (www.originsonline.org)*

As we continue to focus on our goal of making sure that every student feels connected to at least one adult and to his or her peers, we are very excited about our new advisory structure. All nine advisory/homeroom teachers are committed to using advisory as the vehicle to build smaller communities in which members learn and practice skills that meet the basic student needs of autonomy, competence, relationships and having fun. Five of the nine advisors and I were trained in Developmental Designs this summer. We met with the remaining four advisors before the start of school to share what we learned. We discussed the needs of our students and began to design the structure of advisory, which now meets three times per week for

30 minutes. Teachers will meet throughout the year to continue their collaboration.

##### Staffing

With the addition of another section in eighth grade, we now have 3 sections in grade six and 6 sections in grades seven and eight. A full teaching load is defined as teaching 5 sections. We are pleased to have Ms. Avakian teach the 3 sixth grade sections of English Language Arts as she continues teaching ELA to one section in grade seven. The three other teachers in grade six are teaching a seventh grade section in their own discipline (Math, Science and Social Studies) as well. We believe this structure is better for students than having multiple part time staff. It is also a welcome change for faculty, as they now have a colleague with whom to collaborate within their discipline. Ms. Myers and Ms. Muendel are sharing the other seventh and eighth grade ELA classes.

##### Curriculum

There is a new Math Challenge Option for all students in grades seven and eight. An informational discussion was held at the 6-8 Open House, and a letter went home to seventh and eighth grade families from K-8 math coordinator Angela Allen, which included the following highlights:

- Brookline seventh and eighth grade math is already academically rigorous. The Mathematics Challenge Option will be even more demanding, with a greater depth of content and skill development.
- The Mathematics Challenge Option is open to every student at the beginning of each quarter with a two-week trial period.
- Students who engage in the Mathematics Challenge Option will receive an acknowledgment of their efforts on their report cards each quarter.

*Continued on page 2*



# Wednesday is Car-free School Day!

Please bike, walk, carpool or take public transportation.

## Important: Please Return Back-to-School Paperwork

Please return the forms sent home in a manila envelope two weeks ago. Families who don't return consent forms will NOT be listed in the PTO Directory. The following forms must be returned to your child's homeroom teacher:

- Student Data Card (Yellow)
- Health Card (Green)
- Parental Consent Card (Pink)
- Handbook Notification Sign-off (Salmon)
- Affidavit of Residency (If your address has changed, you must include a copy of your deed or lease.)
- Student Insurance envelope
- Free/Reduced Meal Application (if eligible)

## Big Gym Fun

Grades 3 – 8  
Tuesday,  
Wednesday,  
Friday  
mornings,  
7:00 – 7:50 a.m.

## Outdoor Fun

Grades 3 – 8  
Friday  
afternoons,  
2:30 – 3:30 p.m.

This is a free opportunity for students to come be active and have fun! In the mornings, we'll jump rope, do Double Dutch, play floor hockey, basketball, and more. Friday afternoons we'll play games like flag football, outdoor soccer and ultimate frisbee. Join us! For information contact [Judith\\_Ellis@brookline.k12.ma.us](mailto:Judith_Ellis@brookline.k12.ma.us).

*Continued from page 1*

**Health** is now part of the seventh and eighth grade program of studies town-wide. Each seventh and eighth grade section will have two periods per week of Health. Jon Mastrianni is teaching the seventh grade health classes, and Carlyn Uyenoyama is teaching the eighth grade classes. We are also fortunate to have Mr. M and Ms. U as our PE teachers along with Judith Ellis.

### Communication

Although parent meetings, the wiki, and missing work posts aren't new, they are an integral part of home-school communication. I know from professional and personal experience that middle school students are not always in the mood to share what they are learning and working on in school. That is why the homework wiki ([lawrence6-8.pbworks.com](http://lawrence6-8.pbworks.com)) and the missing work posts are helpful in filling in the

blanks. Parents/guardians can email a teacher at any time to ask individual questions. The email is the same for all staff: first\_name\_last\_name@brookline.k12.ma.us. Parent meetings can also be requested at any time by contacting a teacher directly or by contacting me.

As I shared at the Open House for grades 6–8, I am thrilled to be at Lawrence with your children, the faculty and staff and Mr. Rogers. I have worked in middle schools for many years and feel a strong connection to children this age. They can be challenging, but they are wonderful to work with since they are at a time in their lives where they are beginning to seek independence, but require adult support. I approach every day as the opportunity to make a difference in their lives.

—Monica Crowley, Vice Principal

## Lawrence **ART** Displays

**B**e sure to check out the wonderful student artwork on display in the hallways. Happy viewing!

### Kindergarten Murals

*2<sup>nd</sup> floor outside Art Room*

Kindergarteners learned that artists can be creative together, share ideas, and help each other in making a picture. Can YOU remember what you made on your very first day of Art class?

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Response Drawings

*2<sup>nd</sup> floor near Auditorium*

Students were asked to create a drawing using an empty mind. The goal was not to use a preliminary plan, but rather develop the drawing by responding to each mark as it's made. They were amazed at their inherent ability for organization and picture planning.

### Grant Wood

*Main Lobby*

This year's lobby boards show a Grant Wood-inspired landscape made with pastels and construction paper collage. I love that the focal points on such a large space are two tiny houses and three animals. How unexpected!

## Coming Soon

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Art Wall

*2<sup>nd</sup> floor short hallway*

Based on the current MFA exhibit "Signs and Symbols," the Art Wall project asks students to pair a personal message with associated images in a carefully designed layout. Some chose to use their message to educate others, while others chose to be humorous or share a part of their personality. (For more about the exhibit, visit <http://www.mfa.org/exhibitions/sub.asp?key=15&subkey=9935>)

### 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Notan Collages

*2<sup>nd</sup> floor short hallway*

Notan is a Japanese design concept where one tries to bring the colors black and white into balance. Like the Yin Yang symbol, black and white are two powerful and symbolic colors that can be combined to create many dramatic designs. Students have considered composition, negative and positive space, and symbolic meanings like good and evil.