

EDUCATION EXPRESS

Volume I, Issue 3

Winter 2010

The Educational Fund Committee has generously provided a grant for the production and mailing of this newsletter.

The Educational Fund Committee is appointed by the Medway Board of Selectmen and is charged with distributing donations made to the fund to benefit students and schools. The committee reviews and grants requests made for schools by principals.

Current committee members are: Heidi Anderson, Joann Bruce, Marion Cole, Lou-Ellen Maiorana, and Mindy Peden.

Donations to the fund may be made directly or through the form provided by the town with tax bills.

For further information about the Educational Fund, please contact:

Dr. Judith Evans, Superintendent,
at jevans@medway.k12.ma.us.

Funding our Schools in a Tough Economy

By Jeff DeVolder, Medway School Committee

Your Medway Public Schools (MPS) are responsible for educating and developing the 2,600 K-12 students in our community. This enormously important work is carried out by our 300 dedicated and caring teachers, administrators and support staff. In order for this group to do their vital work the School Committee and MPS must develop and obtain Town Meeting approval of our annual budget. Work has already begun on the budget for FY11 which begins July 1, 2010.

In the current fiscal year ending June 30, 2010, the MPS budget totals \$26 million. As indicated in the

chart below, funding for the budget is comprised primarily of the town appropriated budget, food service and other fees (e.g. kindergarten tuition and student athletic fees), and grants.

Medway received \$1.4 million in Federal "stimulus" funding in FY10 as Massachusetts chose to use a portion of its allotment of stimulus funds to provide districts with aid they were due under the Chapter 70 program while holding state funded Chapter 70 budgets flat. The receipt of this "stimulus" money funded a \$600,000 increase in the MPS budget, enabled Town funding for the MPS to be

reduced \$300,000 and covered a \$200,000 reduction in state reimbursement for Special Education expenses.

The table on page four provides a 5-year history of the town appropriation for MPS split between Chapter 70 State Aid amounts and the town appropriation for MPS beyond Chapter 70 aid.

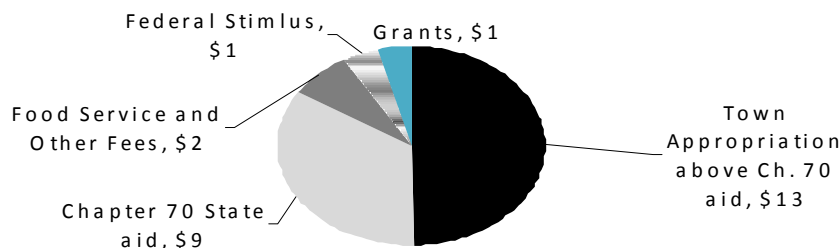
Chapter 70 aid is provided to each town according to a set formula administered by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The formula requires DESE to calculate an estimate of the cost to provide an "adequate education"

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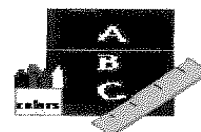
Funding of Medway Public Schools Total FY 10 Budget (\$ Millions)



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HELP ME HELP OUR SCHOOLS!

When directed by my clients, I contribute \$500 of my commission to the Medway PTO or Home & School Association for every home in town I sell or help buy.
(See website, www.GaryBerset.com, for details)



Math is a Blast at Medway Middle School

Mette Schwartz, Math/Science Instructional Coach

Active Learning in Math

Many students across all four grade levels have been actively engaged in their math learning since the first day of school, thanks to the creativity, dedication and hard work of the Medway Middle School Math Department and special educators. Many math classes at Medway Middle School include at least one game, participatory activity, or small group work in which every student is engaged and involved. This level of engagement helps students take ownership of their learning. Research has shown that students in middle school learn best when they are actively engaged in their learning, instead of absorbing information passively and recording notes (as many of us did when we were in middle school and high school). These research results have driven the development of more active curricula, and have underscored the need for material to be presented and processed differently in middle school.

Fortunately, our staff members have a wealth of resource in this area and our collective “bag of tricks” supporting active teaching and learning is growing all the time. Active learning strategies

are essential in the diverse classroom, as they can frequently be tailored to the spatial and kinesthetic learner as well as to the auditory and visual learner.

But perhaps the most compelling argument in support of active teaching and learning in middle school has to do with how children make meaning of their experiences. In order to attach deep meaning to concepts, children need to experience these concepts themselves. As the ancient Chinese saying goes, ‘Tell me, I forget. Show me, I remember. Involve me, I understand.’

Big Fun with Everyday Math!

Fifth and sixth graders are having a great time with the new Everyday Math program. Because the bulk of the skills practice provided by the program is built into the Everyday Math games, it’s very important to play the games frequently. The 5th graders had a great time before winter break with games like Angle Tangle and Polygon Capture, as they finished up the Geometry Explorations as part of the American Tour. During the next unit, we’ll keep playing our old favorite Name That Number, and introduce Division Dash, and Divisibility Top-It. Both of these

games are card games that can be adapted and played at home with a regular deck of playing cards.

In 5th grade Everyday Math we will also be learning to find distances on a map. The 6th graders are playing Spreadsheet Scramble, the Credits/ Debits Game, and Scientific Notation Toss to work on a variety of Numbers and Operations goals, as they build the foundation for their more formal introduction to algebra next year in the 7th grade. They will move on to a variety of fraction games like Fraction Capture, Fraction Action Fraction Friction, and Frac-Tac-Toe (both decimal and percent versions) as they learn about expressing rational numbers as whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percents.

On the whole, teachers, students and parents are enjoying working with Everyday Math. Many students have become so comfortable with new computation algorithms that they have abandoned the traditional ones. That’s exactly what Everyday Math is about - there are many correct ways to solve a problem. As long as a problem-solving method can be shown to work, it’s just as good as any other method!

Fun and Helpful Mathematics Websites

Calculation Nation

(created by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics) at

<http://calculationnation.nctm.org>. Students have to register and create screen names, but it’s free.

MathMovesU, created by Raytheon, is also a terrific website. The

address is: www.mathmovesu.com

Math is Fun, also free, is full of great games and projects to explore, as well as a fabulous trainer to practice your multiplication facts. The web address is www.mathisfun.com



Medway Middle School Students Get It Write!!

By Michele Mullen

As a vehicle to motivate kids to write, students were introduced to the annual Boston Duck Tours Essay Contest. This contest, sponsored by the Bostonian Society and Boston Duck Tours, promotes an appreciation for our state's history. Students throughout the Greater Boston area submitted essays of 300 – 500 words (grades 5/6) and 500-700 words (grades 7/8) on a National Park in Massachusetts.

We are pleased to announce that eighth grader Dan McCormick placed first in the state for his award-winning essay and wins a Duck Tour as well a trip to the New Bedford Whaling Museum for his entire English class. In addition, 6 students received Honorable Mention certificates. They are Rachel Hall, Ada Chang, Joshua Nardine, Maggie Mansfield, Vi Pham, and Devan Murphy.

These students were acknowledged

for their outstanding essays with an awards ceremony. Guest speakers included Mr. James Healy from the Boston Duck Tours and Ms. Emily Prigot from the New Bedford Whaling Museum. While the contest and the possibility of winning are important



to the students, it was the challenge of finding an interesting National Park that allowed these students to shine.

“The kids responded to the challenge. They were excited to research and find something interesting to write about,” said instructional coach Michele Mullen. “They knew they had an audience and that judges would be reading their essays. Their writing is so much better when they realize they have a voice and when they know people are listening.”

**Medway High School
Solar Photovoltaic
Renewable Energy System
Commercial Operation
February 2010**



Second Grade Pen Pals Build Friendships with NJ Students

By Patricia Ward

Ms. Ward's second grade students in Room 8 have begun a Pen Pal correspondence with 21 students in Ms. Nicole Fear's second grade classroom at the Dr. Albert Einstein Academy in Elizabeth, New Jersey.

The Scholastic Book web site offers opportunities to talk to other teachers about exchanging pen pal letters. We were able to contact Ms. Fear and determined that her students would write to Medway students first. Our children would each be assigned a partner pen pal in New Jersey to whom they would respond.

Our little writers were very excited when they received their letters and were asked questions about weather, heritage and culture. This project fits seamlessly into our second grade curriculum in which the students are studying their own heritage. When they received the first letter, the children were excited to learn that Ms. Fear's children represented a wide diversity of cultures for them to explore.

They were eager to begin their part of the correspondence and began writing immediately after receiving the first group of letters from their pen pals. They mailed off their return package and are impatiently waiting for the next

package to arrive. This project has provided an authentic incentive for the children to produce their best writing.



Openings available for children
In 3rd, 4th, 5th or 6th grade.
Call Amy Boulter at
508-533-7395 for
information
or to enroll.

Funding our Schools in a Tough Economy

(continued from page one)

The following table provides a 5-year history of the Town Appropriation for MPS split between Chapter 70 State Aid amounts and the Town appropriation for MPS beyond Chapter 70 aid.

Medway Public Schools Town Appropriated Budgets FY 06 through FY 10

\$ millions	FY 06	FY 07	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10
Chapter 70 State Aid	\$6.3	\$7.4	\$8.2	\$9.2	\$9.2
Town appropriation ex. Ch. 70	\$13.5	\$12.6	\$12.5	\$12.9	\$12.5
Total appropriated MPS budget	\$19.8	\$20.0	\$20.7	\$22.1	\$21.7

based on each Town’s student count and profile. The estimated cost is called the “foundation budget”. After calculating the foundation budget, the DESE subtracts the town’s required contribution (which is based on real estate values, income and government revenue) to arrive at each town’s Chapter 70 State Aid for education. Towns are required by law to have their school spending at or above the level of the foundation budget and face significant penalties if they fall below their foundation budget level.

In times when neither the town nor the state are in financial crisis, the typical 2.5% increase in town property tax receipts, coupled with increases in state funding for K-12 public schools, enables maintenance of similar staffing and service levels from year-to-year. However, a direct result of the financial crisis is that the State of Massachusetts tax receipts fell \$2.6 billion, 12.5%, in the year ended June 30, 2009 vs. the prior year and may fall again in FY10. The dramatic reduction in state revenue means that Education and other Local aid funding from the state are uncertain.

The current state crisis falls just a few years after Medway’s own local financial

crisis. After cuts required by the Town’s financial challenges earlier this decade, Medway’s spending per pupil is lower than 308 of the 328 of Massachusetts public school districts --- said differently, 94% of Massachusetts school districts have higher spending per pupil than Medway. While funding is only one aspect of a successful public school system, it is an important one. I am hopeful that we will be able to avoid any further cuts to our school staffing and support resources.

The next two key events for the establishment of the MPS funding level for FY11 are as follows.

Late January: Governor Deval Patrick proposed his FY11 budget, which level-funded local aid and Chapter 70 aid. This is the first official view of the levels at which the state leadership plans to fund Education and Local Aid for FY11.

February: The School Committee and all Town Departments will deliver their first budget “impact statements” to the Board of Selectman (BOS). The MPS impact statement will explain the ramifications of the

budget proposed by the BOS in terms of our ability to fund the staffing and programming required to meet our mission of preparing the 2,600 students in our community to be productive adults in the 21st Century.

After it receives the impact statements, the BOS will finalize their recommended budget to be presented at Town Meeting, which is planned for June 2010. Their recommendation will include the amounts, if any, they determine are appropriate to spend in FY 11 from the Town’s FY09 “free cash” and the \$800,000 set aside as an Operational Reserve at the Annual Town Meeting in mid-2009.

Stay tuned for further updates as we all work together to arrive at the most beneficial budget for our students and community that fits within our collective means.



Comprehensive Preschool Program

Medway Public Schools is pleased to announce that the Medway Comprehensive Preschool Program, located in the Burke School, is now open to children of faculty and staff of Medway Public Schools. In order to meet the evolving needs of our students and families, we are now offering additional schedule options to our preschool program. The integrated program is accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children, and is taught by Highly Qualified teachers who are licensed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Our preschool teachers have training and expertise in both early childhood education and special education. Our curriculum is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks for

preschool-aged students. Our program features music classes, a library program, field trips, and activities planned and facilitated by our speech-language pathologist, occupational therapist, and physical therapist.

For the 2010-2011 school year, we will offer a two-day (Tuesday/Thursday), three-day (Monday/Wednesday/Friday), or five-day program. Each program will run from 8:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. with the option for students who pre-register to stay until 1:30 p.m. Tuition rates for the 10-month school year are as follows:

Tuesday/Thursday (2 days)
 8:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. \$1150.00/year
 8:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$2000.00/year

* Monday/Wednesday/Friday (3 days)
 8:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. \$1675.00/year
 8:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$3000.00/year
 * Monday-Friday (5 days)
 8:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. \$2625.00/year
 8:45 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. \$4500.00/year

Registration is going on now through March 19, 2010. Typically, developing children three and four years of age are selected through a lottery system. Children must be three years of age by August 31, 2010. Registration forms can be obtained at the Burke School office between 9:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. Please call the Burke School office at 508-533-3242 for more details.

National Guard Thanks Medway for Use of Facilities



Major D. Sanders-Udo and First Sergeant S. Kelsch present MHS principal Richard Pearson, facilities secretary Marie Cowles, custodian Patrick Cole, and AD Rob Pearl with a certificate of appreciation for use of the MHS fields for training purposes.

Burke/Memorial Students Raise Funds for Habitat for Humanity



Trane Energy Savings and Solar Panel Programs Completed

The district embarked this school year on two exciting and innovative energy projects: the Trane Energy project and the MHS solar project, completed by Broadway Electric.

Both projects have been substantially completed and have been highly successful. The Trane project enabled the school department to install energy efficient heating and lighting in school buildings. Not only was the \$4,000,000 project fully funded through utility budget savings, the learning envi-

ronment in classrooms and workspaces has been vastly improved, with better air circulation and better heating controls.

The partnership with Trane has been extraordinary, as has the district's work with Broadway Electric on the solar project.

The high school roof has had 660 solar panels installed and we are pleased to see that these panels have already begun producing very low-cost electricity for the

high school. These panels were installed at no cost to Medway taxpayers.

Medway students will have an opportunity to learn more about the science of solar energy through a planned model panel installation. They will also have an opportunity to learn more about the Trane project energy savings through the use of computer monitoring devices and educational software provided by Trane.

Medway High School Peer Counselors Support Classmates

Elizabeth Schroeder and Billy Lambert , MHS Students

The Peer Counselors are a group of regular kids who have a selfless passion to help their fellow students! They mainly exist to provide another outlet for peers who want to talk to someone other than a teacher or counselor. There is always a Peer Counselor in the Peer Counseling room ready and willing to chat with anyone who needs their support. They do not judge and everything said to them remains completely confidential.

Even if no one seeks out a conversation with one of the Peer Counselors, they are always there to encourage peace and harmony in the school. On Tuesdays, they wait in front of the doors and wish people a merry morning as they enter the building. However, many people are not in the mood to deal with overly cheery tie-dye-wearing Peer Counselors at 7:30 in the morning, there is always at least one person whose day they make with their greetings.

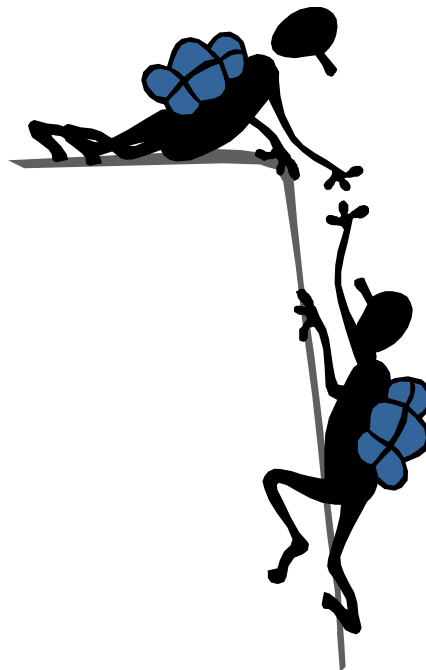
The Peer Counselors are also in charge of rewarding people to Random Acts of Kindness in the school. There is always a box set up in the Peer Counselor Room where people can report any act of kindness that they witness. The nominees receive a relatively small prize, but it is the promotion of kindness that is the important result.

These junior and senior students reach out to the newly-arrived freshman and try to help them out as they adapt to their new environment. As people who vividly remember what it was like to be a freshman, they can easily guide and understand their concerns and questions.

When the cold, dreary, winter months roll around, the Peer Counselors begin

this characteristic activity called "Warm Wednesdays". They decorate the school, dress up, and bring all kinds of goodies in order to uplift and inspire the student body.

Finally, the Peer Counselors take their influence outside the school zone with the Peer Pals program. This optional program allows for each Peer Counselor to have his or her own "peer pal" to hang out with for a short while on certain days of the week. Although primarily beneficial for the younger pal who receives an elder role model with a large amount of life experience, Peer Pals also serves as a great activity for the counselor as he or she learns responsibility, patience and charity. When brought together, all of these activities combine to form the bulk of what the Peer Counselors generally hope to provide: an atmosphere of kindness, compassion and fun.



One Call Phone System Now in Operation

To ensure the safety and well-being of our students, we have instituted the One Call telephone notification system in the Medway Public Schools.



This system allows principals and the central office staff to send both telephone and e-mail messages to families to notify them of important events and weather-related delays and cancellations in the district.

Exciting Spring/ Summer Programs for All

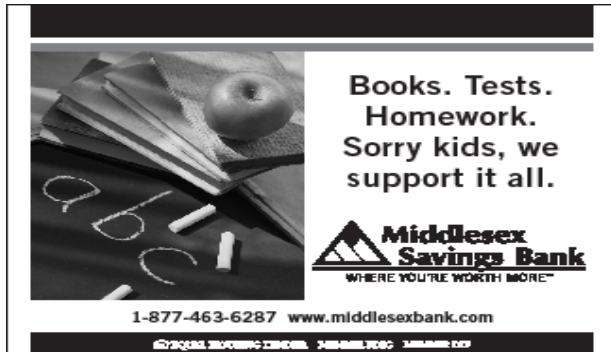
The Community Education Department is preparing next seasons' brochure for distribution in mid-March. This brochure will contain all spring and summer offerings for children and adults. Many new and innovative programs have been added and we continue to offer the large array of classes that are enjoyed by so many. We will once again offer our very popular full and half-day Summer Adventure one-week themed programs throughout the summer.

Please look for our Community Education brochure in your mail. Our brochures can also be found on the school website: medwayschools.org. Call our office with any ideas for classes or questions at 508.533.3222 ext. 2200.

Community Supporters

Your ad could appear here!

Advertising revenue helps offset our printing and mailing costs. A \$125 contribution will enable you to put a business card advertisement in this space. For more details, contact Carol Villa at villa@medway.k12.ma.us.



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