
Pollard Middle School Friday Bulletin

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Joseph Barnes, Ed.D.
Principal

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"Those who bring sunshine to the lives of others cannot keep it from themselves."

James Barrie

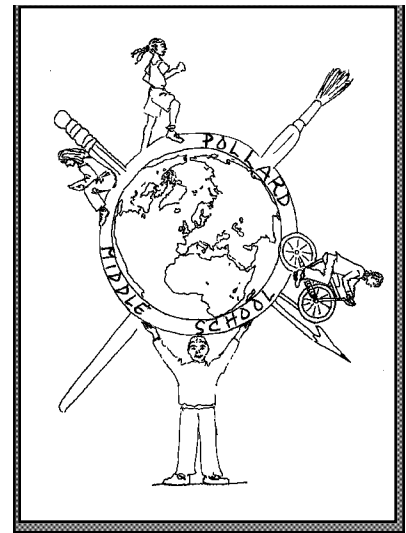
HOME/SCHOOL CONNECTION - Establish a Good Relationship With Your Child's Teachers: Children are more likely to succeed in school if their parents get involved. Here is what you can do:

- Establish a communications plan. Introduce yourself to your child's teachers and make it clear you want to stay on top of how he is doing. Ask for a phone number and a good time to call. Or, if you are online, ask if you can use e-mail.
- Attend conferences. If teachers express concerns about your child, ask for suggestions on how you can help. When they have good things to say, find out how you can continue to encourage your child.
- Share information. Your child's teachers will get to know him well, but they will never know him the way you do. Feel free to share anything you think will help them teach your child or relate to him in a better way. Teachers almost always find this input very valuable.
- Show, by your actions, that school is a high priority. Encourage good attendance. Help your child set a regular homework time and a way to track assignments. (Calendars and planners work well.) If your child must miss school, call and explain his absence. Ask teachers to send home any makeup work. *School-Savvy Parents*

MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD IS USING THE INTERNET WISELY

AND SAFELY: Chances are, your middle schooler relies on the Internet to do research for school assignments. But, if he does not know how to judge the bad sites from the good, he may end up wasting valuable homework time. To help him become an intelligent Web surfer, show him how to think critically about what he encounters online:

- Remind him to "consider the source" when looking something up. Is it a commercial site (in other words, is it trying to sell something or push an agenda)? Are there misspellings? Was the site last updated months or even years ago?
- Encourage him to do what journalists do: Verify his information through other sources. For example, if he discovers an outrageous "fact" about the solar system on one site, he should be able to find mention of it on another site. That is, if it truly is a fact. (And, when your child does cite an online source in his schoolwork, be sure he gives a complete URL, along with the author's and publisher's name, if available.)
- Take time to talk with him about something even more critical--online safety. Remind him to avoid chat rooms, not to disclose any personal information on sites requesting it; and most importantly, that online sources--and individuals--maybe less than trustworthy. *"Kids Need to Learn How to Sift Out Net Junk"*



From The Principal:

Welcome back! I hope you all had a safe and restful summer. With the days continuing to be warm and the nights cool, it feels as though we are back where we should be . . . in school and doing what we at Pollard feel we do best, educating adolescents. Like you, we have received the necessary "R & R" and are ready for the school year ahead.

A week ago Tuesday, we welcomed approximately 1,080 students through our doors and into our classrooms. This school year brings with it a number of changes both in our programs and in our "mode of operation."

We have introduced Interactive Math at Grade 8; have begun to offer Pre-Algebra to all students at Grade 7; and are identifying students with English/Language Arts and Math weaknesses and providing remediation, in a more defined way, in our ILB classes.

We also added a number of new faces to our teaching, administrative, and support staff at Pollard. Due to retirements, relocations, and leaves, there are over twenty new Pollard staff. By now, your sons and daughters have met the new classroom and support personnel.

You will have the chance to meet our new Grade 6 Administrator in the weeks ahead. We enthusiastically welcome Ms. Nancy Foot to our Pollard Community. As the Grade 6 Administrator, Nancy brings to Pollard experience and a proven track record of teaching excellence.

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THIS WEEK'S FOCUS: CLUSTER 6-1

SCIENCE with Mr. Wettstone: 6-1 science students are currently examining the stages of the Scientific Method and how they can be used to answer questions and problems in our daily lives. If you stopped by the classroom this past week, students could be seen experimenting with baked goods and practicing their observational skills. A discussion of the variables that affected the outcome of the baked goods followed, as well as a conclusion to summarize the learning. Armed with the correct problem solving skills, students should be well prepared for the experiments and lab experiences to come.

The Metric System will be the next unit of study, where students will prepare for the 4th annual Metric Olympics. Students will learn how to measure within the metric system using liters, meters, and grams in place of the US standard system of measurement. Events such as the "paper plate discus," the "straw javelin," and the "cotton ball shot putt" will test their skills of estimation and measurement. In the end, we will crown 4 individual class champions and one grand champion, erecting a wall shrine in their honor.

LANGUAGE ARTS with Mr. Nardone: L.A. class is off and running. We have been busy with our summer reading assignments. The first assignment was to create a postcard, written from the character's point of view. The piece included the who, what, when, and how about the book. Students also included a personal rating. I was viewing the projects today and was impressed with the summaries as well as student's creative art skills. This week, we are working on assignment number two--a timeline with images and text for the last summer reading book. I'm looking forward to the final product.

We will be setting up our yearly portfolios this week where all assignments will be kept for teacher, parent, and student viewing. Following that, we will begin working on helping verbs; and soon after, we will begin our month long unit on short stories. I'm looking forward to a successful and productive year with my new students.

SOCIAL STUDIES with Mr. McGowan: 6-1 social studies is kicking off the year with a unit on geography. Much of the curriculum for this year deals with the history of ancient civilizations; but before we can address these subjects, students must become familiar with the means by which historians approach the study of the past. A practical understanding of maps and geography is essential for this. To this point, much of our class time has been spent in the study of latitude and longitude and familiarizing ourselves with the coordinate system of absolute location.

Other topics of discussion have ranged from the reason for the change in seasons, to the recent establishment of a fifth ocean surrounding Antarctica, to a man in Boulder, CO who has memorized all 48,000 zip codes in the United States. (In the interest of current events, students are encouraged to look for "unusual" news stories to post on the classroom bulletin board.)

Next week, 6-1 geographers will put their new cartographic knowledge to work on a project in which they will be creating detailed maps of their own neighborhoods.

MATH with Ms. Meade: In Ms. Meade's math class, we are learning about factors. We have learned that a prime number is a number that only has two factors, one and itself. We also learned that composite numbers have more than two factors. Ms. Meade is very nice when she teaches us. She never yells but we still learn. She usually incorporates games into our daily learning. In Ms. Meade's class we either will have a raised hand discussion or a board discussion. Sometimes we even get candy! An example of a game that we play is we all divide into teams, Ms. Meade asks each team questions for points which we accumulate for correct answers. Through examples discussed above, you can conclude that Ms. Meade is both fun and teaches us a lot.

CLUSTER 6-1 CONTINUED

CONTINUED

OTHER HAPPENINGS

ACCESS THE POLLARD FRIDAY BULLETIN:

<http://fcw.needham.k12.ma.us/pollard.bulletin/>

ACCESS THE POLLARD DAILY BULLETIN:

<http://fcw.needham.k12.ma.us/pollard.daily.bulletin/>

ACCESS THE POLLARD HOMEWORK WEB SITE:

TO ALL STUDENTS: Lunch tickets will be distributed on Friday mornings only before or after homeroom period. Anyone who is late or absent on Friday may pick up their tickets on Monday at lunch time with a note from their Grade Level Office stating they were absent or late on Friday. Peanut butter and jelly with milk will be available for students who do not have a ticket or cash at lunch time. Other Entrees will be available for students with an allergy to peanut butter only with a Doctor's note. If you have any questions about this policy, please call 781-455-0480 Ext. 326.

THE YOUTH CENTER: The Youth Center is open most Friday nights from 7:30-10 p.m. Admission is \$7/event/student, and snacks can be purchased for \$1. This year, most events will be held at Pollard. All students must present their school ID and have a parent accompany them to the entrance. All students must be accompanied by an adult upon leaving. For carpooling purposes, one adult is welcome to chaperone a group of students. Please note that certain nights are grade specific and only students in that grade level will be admitted. Call (781-449-3464) or (781-444-4166).

HOW TO CALL SCHOOL: During the school year, should you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to call your Grade Level Office or the Main Office for assistance.

781-455-0480: Grade 6 x 229
 Grade 7 x 298
 Grade 8 x 332
 Nurse x 238
 METCO x 239
 Main Office x 299

TO VOLUNTEER: The Media Center is looking for parent volunteers again this year. If you would be interested please call one of the coordinators. Dawn Hill - 444-4537 or Susan Freeman - 453-0081.

METCO CELEBRATION Saturday, September 25, 2004, 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Franklin Park Zoo to celebrate one more step in METCO's march to equitable funding. For more information call 617.427.1545 ext. 11 or visit www.METCOinc.org

GREAT LITTLE JOB: The KASE Program is looking for a responsible person to help supervise the KASE children during their lunch. Hours are 11:00-12:00 at the Hillside School. Job sharing is possible. Please call Connie Leonard at 781-455-0400 ext. 214.

POLLARD PTC MAGAZINE DRIVE: It's that time of year . . the annual Pollard Magazine and Music Drive will begin on October 1st and run through October 15th. You can order new subscriptions as well as renew your favorite current magazines knowing that 40% of your purchases go directly to the PTC. This is the PTC's main fundraiser; raising approximately \$40,000 and accounting for 70% of the funds we earn to support many of Pollard's Creative Arts programs and enrichment grants.

As with any event of this size we need your help to make it a success. Please consider volunteering a few hours of your time on 10/6, 10/8 and 10/13 to tally orders; we need help in shifts from 8-11 and 11-2. Help is also needed on 10/7, 10/12, and 10/15 to hand out prizes to the students from 10:30 to 12:30. Volunteering is a great way to meet other parents and help your children's school at the same time!

Please email Linda Coffman coffman5@comcast.net (preferred) or call 449-6785 or Sharyn Greenstein sagreenstein@comcast.net (preferred) or call 444-3436 to volunteer. Thanks in advance for your support.

Important Pollard Dates:

Please refer to the 2004/05 Pollard School Calendar in your Student Handbook

Tues 9/21	Early Release - Pollard Dismissal this year will be at 11:45 am
Wed 9/22	Back To School Night for Parents Grade 6 from 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Thurs 9/23	Back To School Night For Parents Grade 7 & Grade 8 from 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Weds 9/29	School Picture Day
Thurs 9/30	Camp Sargent Parent Meeting, 6:30 pm

Important Youth Center Dates

Open to all M.S. students who live/attend school in Needham - Fri., 7:30-10pm. Cost: \$7. Prompt pick up. Permission Slips must be on file. Adult must accompany students upon entering and leaving the Center. Closed if school is closed. Pollard Student ID required. 781-449-3464 Location: Pollard

Sept 17	Grade 7 Dance ONLY at Pollard
Sept 24	Grade 8 Dance ONLY at Pollard

OTHER HAPPENINGS CONTINUED

FROM THE PRINCIPAL CONTINUED:

For seven years, Nancy was a Grade 5 teacher at the Broadmeadow school. This experience will certainly assist us as we look at transitioning students from elementary to our middle school program.

You may have already heard, via your children, the school wide commitments we have introduced this year. These commitments have been reviewed carefully and explained in detail in classrooms during the first week of school. They are:

- To communicate positively
- To keep Pollard clean
- To dress for learning
- To be on time and prepared to learn.

There is much that is new in the 2004/05 school year. I will review these briefly with you at our Back to School Nights scheduled for next week. Please plan to attend either Wednesday, September 22 (Grade 6) or Thursday, September 23 (Grade 7 and Grade 8). Your child will be bringing home a schedule giving you times and locations for the general session and the classroom assignments.

Thank you for your continued support and all of us at Pollard look forward to working with you this school year.

HELP NEEDED: Pollard is in need of three volunteers to serve on our School Council--a Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 parent. Please send a note of interest to Diann Casey at the Main Office by Tuesday, September 21. Meetings are held at 5:30 pm on the first Tuesday of the month.

JAPAN - Host Families Needed: With a higher than expected number of female students arriving in the group from Fujinomiya, Japan on October 23rd, we have a need for additional host families. These are 8th grade girls who are part of a 14 student, 3 teacher exchange that arrives in Needham every 2 years. If you are able to host a young lady for 4 days, and ideally have a female 8th grader at Pollard, please contact Dr. Barnes @ the Main Office or Lori Goldenberg @ ext. 312 at Pollard.

PTC NEWS: Welcome to the start of a new school year.

We are looking forward to another great year. We have a great group of energetic people on the PTC Board this year, many of whom have already sprung into action to get the year's activities under way. We encourage and welcome anyone who is interested in becoming more involved to join us, particularly the families of the new sixth graders. There are many ways to become more involved with the PTC - there will be sign-up sheets at the back-to-school nights for different opportunities, or please contact either of us directly. The PTC holds bi-monthly meetings in conjunction with the Principal's coffees. Our first Principal's Coffee/PTC Meeting is scheduled for October 13th at 9am. Please mark your calendars and come join us!

The annual magazine drive, which is a major fundraiser for the PTC, kicks off on October 1st. Please consider volunteering to help - we need lots of parent volunteers to make the drive go smoothly! Look for more information about the magazine drive and related volunteer opportunities in this Bulletin.

Look in your mailbox during next week for the Pollard Post, and the annual dues envelope. Please mail in, or send in with your child, your annual dues. PTC dues are only \$25 per family - a real bargain for all of the programs that the PTC funds during the school year! We appreciate any additional contributions that you may make to the PTC above \$25.

Don't forget that we are still collecting "Box Tops for Education" this year. The box is located in the main office. We will also be collecting used ink cartridges for recycling. Thank you to Amy Grief (brojor@comcast.net) and Ann Shuman (ann.shuman@hp.com) for volunteering to oversee these fund-raising programs this year.

See you at the back to school nights next Wednesday and Thursday!

Enjoy your weekend.

Tina Palmer (palmertt@comcast.net)
Dawn Nathanson (d.nathanson@comcast.net)

OTHER HAPPENINGS CONTINUED

PARENTING WORKSHOPS: Active Parenting of Teens Program for Parents: **The Needham Youth Commission offers a six-week program for Needham parents starting on Tuesday, October 12th (and meeting on Tuesdays through November 16th). The program offers proven techniques to assist parents in communicating with teens, in achieving cooperation, and in learning to solve problems together. Meeting in the evenings from 6:45 - 9:00, over the course of 12 hours, parents receive training and support to achieve a more fulfilling relationship with their teenager as well as creating a more harmonious atmosphere at home. Join group leader Merri Rubin, LCSW in exploring perhaps "the most important challenge you will face as a parent." Parents must have a child who is at least 13 years of age to participate. Cost of the program, inclusive of materials, is \$35 (waived in the event of financial need). Space is limited. To register and/or for scheduling information please go to the Needham Youth Commission website at <http://www.town.needham.ma.us/youth/YouthCommissionActiveParentingOfTeens.htm> or contact Merri Rubin at 781-449-0929.**

CAR SEAT INSPECTION: **Free car seat check sponsored by the Needham Police and Muzi Motors Friday, September 17, 2004, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Muzi Motors in Needham. Have your child safety seats properly installed by certified technicians. For further information contact Officer Jim Treggiari at 781.455.7570 ext. 289 or e-mail Triggernpd@comcast.net.**

FALL PROGRAMS: **Needham Park and Recreation Commission - Space still available for Fall Programs.**

Programs For Youth

Itsy Bitsy Arts, Ages 3-5

Ballet, Ages 4-7

Ice Skating Lessons, Ages 5 & up

Moms, Dads and Tots, Ages 3 year olds

Climbing Adventure Play, Ages 4-6

Seasonal Special Events

Spooky Walk * Turkey Hunt * Delightful Doorways

WALKTOBER new Walking Program for all ages

Adult Programs

Badminton * Basketball * Volleyball * Ice Skating Lessons *

Senior Programs

Bridge * Indoor Walking Club * Golf

To inquire about any of the programs please call (781) 455-7521 or stop by the Park and Recreation office located at the Needham Town Hall, second floor. You can also view the Fall Program Brochure on the Needham town website www.town.needham.ma.us scroll down to Park and Recreation and then click on current brochure.

OTHER HAPPENINGS CONTINUED

PRIVATE SCHOOL RECOMMENDATION

PROCEDURE: While we hope you are all enjoying your experiences with Needham Public Schools, we also know that some families will choose to apply to private schools as an alternative educational option. Part of the application process, as you will discover, includes a request from you that transcript and recommendations be completed and sent by appropriate Pollard staff (usually the English and Math teachers, as well as the Guidance Counselor). In order to accommodate all requests in a timely manner, we have outlined the following:

- 1. All recommendation forms and transcript requests must be submitted to the grade level office a minimum of one month prior to the application deadline.**
- 2. Whenever possible, please submit requests as early as possible so that proper attention may be given to your child's recommendation. Any requests received less than one month before the deadline cannot be guaranteed to reach the school before the specified due date.**
- 3. All recommendation forms must be accompanied with a stamped, addressed manila envelope for each school to which records and recommendations are to be mailed.**
- 4. All recommendations will be mailed directly to the school and not given to parents or students.**

OTHER HAPPENINGS CONTINUED
