

# HWRSD School Committee E-Mail Newsletter

December 4, 2006

## Dates To Remember:

### **School Committee Meeting: December 7, 2006**

At this meeting there will be two important presentations:

The High School Study of the Athletic program  
MCAS results

### **School Committee Meeting: January 11, 2007**

The first hour of this meeting (from 7-8) will be a public forum to discuss the Athletic Study presented on December 7<sup>th</sup>

*Both meetings will begin at 7PM in the Buker School multi-purpose room*

## Announcements

Retirements effective the end of 2006-2007 school year

- Martha Cesarz, Principal Winthrop School
- Jan DeSantis, Principal Miles River Middle School

School Year Calendars for 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 are posted on the web site. Please refer to <http://www.hwschools.net> for more detail

## Current Deliberations

None

## This Month's News

### High School Athletic Study

Last spring, Principal Robert Krol and Athletic Director Don Doucette were charged to conduct a study of the athletic program. The charge to them was to determine, "What is the ideal athletic program for a school of our size?" taking into consideration (1) athletic practices and procedures, (2) facility needs, conditions, and availability, and (3) financial resources. Under the direction of Mr. Krol and Mr. Doucette, the School Council formed subcommittees to research and review the current program with the other Cape Ann League (CAL) programs and to develop recommendations for the future; specifically:

The findings from this study will be presented to the School Committee at the December 7th school committee meeting which will begin at 7 pm in the Buker School Multipurpose Room.

The School Committee will hold a public forum on the athletic program study and recommendations at the January 11, 2007 school committee meeting from 7 - 8 pm. At this time, the public will have the opportunity to share their thoughts about the report and its recommendations with the school committee.

The School Committee will vote take a vote on the athletic program recommendations at the January 18, 2007 school committee meeting.

Interested community members should attend the meeting on December 7<sup>th</sup> so as to be informed on the specific findings of the study. In the event that you cannot attend in person, copies of the presentation will be available at the High School, the High School website ([www.hwschools.net](http://www.hwschools.net)) and the meeting will be televised on cable.

The public is invited to share its views regarding the athletic study with the School Committee at the public forum on January 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm, Buker School Multipurpose Room.

### **MCAS Results**

At the December 7<sup>th</sup> school committee meeting Maryellen Duffy, Director of Curriculum will present the results of the 16 MCAS tests. Included in the discussion will be an update of where we stand with respect to AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) and the findings from the alternate MCAS assessments for special needs students. We will also touch on the forthcoming changes to the test and the implications.

### **Recruiting the Best**

The district has four searches that are currently underway:

1. Winthrop School Principal (retirement)
2. Miles River Middle School Principal (retirement)
3. Director of Student Services (resignation in late June; current director is an interim)
4. Assistant Superintendent for Finance and Administration (retirement)

As you can imagine this is a very intense, detailed process over a discrete period of time; it is our firm goal to end the school year fully staffed with new personnel in place. The recruitment timelines associated with each search will be available on the district website after December 12<sup>th</sup> <http://www.hwschools.net>

### **FAQs**

**A Time of Giving:** *During the holidays many families have made it a tradition to give gifts to staff members to show their appreciation. For those considering giving a gift there are certain guidelines you must follow*

#### **What is the district policy regarding gifts to staff members?**

Any gift made to a school staff member must not exceed \$50 in value.

**Why are their limits to the value of gifts?**

School staff members are public employees, and as such are subject to the State's Conflict of Interest Law (Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 268A) and State Ethics Committee Rules. The statute and Ethics Committee regulations state that "school employees may not accept any gift that is of "substantial value", that this, no more than \$50. This includes meals, tickets to events, services, airline tickets, or holiday gifts, among other things.

This statute was enacted to ensure that members of the public are treated equally and that no one has or might be perceived to have special advantages or influence. This applies even if the purpose of the gift is seen as a token of gratitude for a well-done job.

**Does this apply to group gifts?**

Yes. The \$50 limit also applies to groups of people with a common interest (for example, members of the same class, team, program, etc.). Therefore, families in the same class may not combine resources to purchase a gift for a school staff member valued at \$50 or more.

**Are there alternatives to individual gifts?**

Yes. You might consider making a contribution to one of the many groups which support the HWRSD in the staff member's name. Each of these groups will ensure that the teacher will receive notification of the gift made in his or her name. Remember that donations to support a school program, the Friends' organizations, the Hamilton-Wenham Edfund, Pro Musica, the Hamilton-Wenham Alliance for Athletics and Extracurricular Activities benefit the teachers and programs in the HWRSD.

**If I am unsure about whether a certain gift fits within these guidelines who may I contact?**

If you have any additional questions about this law and regulation, please feel free to contact your building principal or the superintendent.

***REMEMBER: Please pass this email newsletter to your friends and neighbors. And please ask them to subscribe to the newsletter. To do so, all they need to do is just send an email to [newsletter@hwschools.net](mailto:newsletter@hwschools.net) with the word "Subscribe" in the subject line.***