



## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MILTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02186

MARY C. GORMLEY  
Superintendent of Schools  
(617)-696-4808/09

JOHN P. PHELAN  
Assistant Superintendent  
For Curriculum & Personnel  
(617)-696-4811/12

MATTHEW J. GILLIS  
School Business Administrator  
(617)-696-5041

To: Milton Public Schools Parents, Guardians, Faculty & Staff  
From: Mary C. Gormley, Superintendent of Schools  
Re: E-Update, Tuesday, October 13, 2009

### From the Office of the Superintendent

*October has arrived, and by now, students and teachers have settled into their routines. October also brings our annual MCAS test results, which every family with children in grades 4-10 should have received in the mail. Please contact your school if you have not received these scores. Our MCAS scores are not only significant to each student, but they also affect entire districts. School systems are also evaluated by several different criteria, such as:*

- *Student/Teacher Ratio*
- *Enrollment Data*
- *High School Graduation Rate*
- *MCAS*
- *SAT*
- *Advanced Placement (AP) Offerings and Results*
- *Per Pupil Expenditure*
- *Music and Art K-12 Programs*
- *Athletic Program*
- *Percentage of High School Graduates Accepted into Two and Four Year Colleges/Universities*
- *College/University Acceptances*
- *Facilities*

*At last Tuesday night's School Committee Meeting, I presented Milton's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) based on our MCAS scores for each of our schools, grade levels and the district.*

*Our administrators, teachers and staff are responding to the AYP issues and targeting instruction for those students who scored in the Warning, Failing and Needs Improvement categories. We are also working with our teachers in staff meetings and professional development sessions to fully align Milton's curriculum with the Massachusetts State Frameworks. Each of our principals will be detailing their individual school's AYP and MCAS data at evening meetings for parents within the next month.*

*There is a high correlation between high student achievement and parent involvement and engagement in a child's school. I want to strongly encourage each of you to attend the MCAS presentations given by your children's principals and make every effort to attend your child's November conferences. These first term conferences are valuable vehicles through which you can meet individually with your child's teacher(s) and establish a method of communication which can be maintained throughout the school year. – Mary C. Gormley*

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## School Committee Update

**October 6:** Our most recent school committee meeting began with a number of people participating in Citizens Speak in order to voice their concerns about large class sizes in many first-grade French Immersion classrooms. A statement was read aloud to the committee, detailing parents' concerns and individuals spoke on this issue as well. SC members expressed concern about the large class sizes and reiterated that budget constraints do not allow for classroom aides at this time, but they are exploring other ways to handle larger classes at all levels.

For the Superintendent's Report, we heard from head nurse Margaret Gibbons about H1N1 preparedness. She urged parents to get their children vaccinated with both seasonal and swine flu vaccines when it becomes available. She also asked that parents make sure their Emergency Cards are properly filled out with contact information. It is critical that nurses are able to reach parents, guardians or emergency contacts in the case of a sick or injured child.

Guidance Department Head Ken Aubert presented updated results of our Advanced Placement (AP) program at Milton High School. Mr. Aubert detailed the growth of this excellent academic program, which allows high school students to experience college-level coursework. Successful completion of the AP exams can earn college credits for most colleges and universities. In the spring of 2009, Milton High offered 19 different AP courses, with 248 students participating. Both the number of students and the number of course offerings have grown significantly in the past several years. A complete AP report can be viewed on our website at <http://www.miltonps.org/documents/AP.pdf>

We also heard from Assistant Superintendent John Phelan, who presented Enrollment Data. This data was broken down into two groups – a three-year analysis and a longer-term look at seven years of enrollment numbers. In both cases, Milton Public Schools has seen steadily increasing enrollment. For the 2009-2010 school year, the Milton Public Schools broke the 4,000 student mark. A complete breakdown of enrollment data is available on our website at <http://www.miltonps.org/documents/EnrollmentDiversityDemographic.pdf>

A summary of events that are taking place at the schools was presented by Yolanda Beech, Assistant Principal at Milton High School. Mrs. Beech detailed programs from each of our six schools on how they embrace diversity. She discussed the relationship between Milton Public Schools and the Citizens for Diverse Milton and spoke about this year's goal of teacher engagement. This report is also online at: <http://www.miltonps.org/documents/DiversityCommitteeHighlights.pdf>.

Next, we showed a presentation on Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), a measurement of year-by-year progress of student achievement of both individual schools and districts based on MCAS scores. Collicot and Glover schools entered "Improvement Year 1" category; Tucker entered "Improvement Year Two" and Pierce Middle School entered "Restructuring, Year One."

Full explanation of what these categories are and how to interpret the AYP data can be found at: <http://www.miltonps.org/documents/AYPRepSchComm.pdf> In addition, we will be presenting more MCAS findings at our next school committee meeting on Oct. 20<sup>th</sup>.

I reiterated that we are looking to convene a group of parent volunteers to work on a World Language Program committee. This committee, being formed at the request of the school committee, will assess the status of both French Immersion and English/FLES programs, as well as evaluate the current integration of French and English students in Grades 4 and 5. The committee's report would be presented in February of 2010. Interested volunteers should contact [bquinn@miltonps.org](mailto:bquinn@miltonps.org) by October 20.

### **September 22:**

This meeting was cancelled.

### **September 8:**

As part of the Superintendent's Report, Milton Police Sgt. Jack Richman presented information on the BeSafe program. Funded by a donation from Janet and Gerard Lorden, representatives from BeSafe Technologies will come to the Milton Public Schools to take photographs, locate utilities, determine emergency access points, and offer digitized floor plans. These floor plans will give the Milton Police Department (and the Milton Fire Department) instant access to important information in the event of an emergency. SC members voted to accept the donation.

Opening day of school went smoothly; it was reported, with 106 new students in the Milton Public Schools this fall. John Phelan, along with Chief Richard Wells, will be preparing methods to investigate residency issues.

There was a presentation on the School Choice issue, which would allow students from other districts to attend MPS, with their home district reimbursing the town for the expense. Traditionally, Milton has not participated in this program. The presentation is posted on our homepage and on the School Committee site.

<http://www.miltonps.org/documents/MicrosoftPowerPoint.pdf>

A court case involving monies stolen from the Milton Public School Lunch Program by a former employee was recently tried. A total of \$83,000 was stolen from the lunch program over the period of September, 2004 to April, 2007 by former employee. The defendant pled guilty to two out of three counts and was ordered to repay \$47,000 to MPS within the next five years.

Finally, there was an update on the Facilities Rental Coordinator position. Though this position was eliminated in the Spring 09 budget cuts, the Copeland Family Foundation has offered to restore and fund this .5 position.

### **Curriculum Information**

As I mentioned in the School Committee summaries above, we are convening a committee of parents, teachers and administrators to look at issues related to World Language instruction in our schools. This panel would examine how the Milton Public Schools can more efficiently and effectively use our resources and address the following issues:

- Single Strands in both English and French Immersion at the Elementary Grades
- French Immersion Student Assignment: Partner Schools Strands and/or Continuum Strands (Elementary Grades)
- Special Education Services (French Immersion First and Second Grades)
- Class Size (English and French Immersion all Elementary Grades)
- Class Size Educational Assistants
- Grades 4 and 5 Math and/or Language Arts Integration (English and French Immersion)
- Middle School Foreign Language Offerings
- FLES (Elementary Program and Elementary to Middle School Transition)

If you would like to volunteer to serve on this Committee, please e-mail Bev Quinn at [bquinn@miltonps.org](mailto:bquinn@miltonps.org) by Tuesday, October 20, 2009. All meetings will be scheduled in the early evenings and the committee would convene through mid-February.

### **Open Houses**

Each of our schools has held their annual open house event, during which parents meet their childrens' teachers, visit the classrooms, learn about the curriculum and tour the school. We hope that you were all able to attend; however, if you were not able to make your schools' Open House, we encourage parents to email their children's teachers directly for a quick review and for the opportunity to sign up for conferences.

### **Conferences**

Parent-Teacher Conferences will be held in November. There will be a half-day of school on **November 18** to allow for conferences during the afternoon and in some cases, evening hours. Please be sure to sign up for a 15-minute spot with your child's teacher if you have not already done so.

Milton High:	Wednesday, Nov. 18	12:30 to 3:30 p.m.
	Thursday, Nov. 19	2:30 to 4:30 and 6:30-8:30.
Pierce	Tuesday, Nov. 17	2:30 to 4:30 and 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.
	Wednesday, Nov. 18	12:30 to 2:30 p.m.

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Cunningham	Wednesday, Nov. 18	12:50 to 2:50; 3:30-5; 6-7:50
Collicot	Wednesday, Nov. 18	1 to 5 p.m.; 5:45 to 7:45
Glover	Wednesday, Nov. 18	1 to 5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m.
Tucker	Wednesday, Nov. 18	1 to 5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m.

### Upcoming Events

Be sure to mark your calendars for the upcoming presentation of *Music Man*. This musical has been cast and rehearsals have begun. It will be presented at the Milton High auditorium on **Friday, November 13** at 7 p.m. Two additional performances will be held on **Saturday, November 14** -- at 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

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The Milton Public Schools have had a long-standing relationship with Primary Source, a non-profit organization which promotes history and humanities education by connecting educators to people and cultures throughout the world.

Primary Source will be holding its 20th anniversary "Gala for Global Education" at the Charles Hotel in Cambridge on **Friday, October 23**. A group of educational leaders, along with myself, and community members from Milton will be attending this event. Any Milton parents and educators who are interested in supporting global education are welcome to purchase tickets and learn more about an organization which has benefited many Milton educators for more than a decade - <http://www.primarysource.org/gala>

### Fundraisers

A family who has done a great deal for the Milton Public Schools will be hosting a fundraiser at their Milton home later this month. Susan, Donald and Julia Monack, founders of the Gregory B. Monack Foundation, are planning an event on **October 24** to raise money for the foundation.

Last year, this group donated \$10,000 to the Milton Public Schools to help support the athletic department. The foundation is named for the memory of their son, a Milton resident who loved both sports and music. They hope to raise money, through the foundation, to support athletic and music-related activities in the community.

Tickets are \$50 to the event, which will include hors d'oeuvres, desserts, a range of beverages as well as high-spirited music, a professional wine and cheese tasting, and silent auction including Patriot's tickets, Comcast Center tickets, and other exciting items. Please visit the following link to help support this worthy cause.

<http://gregorybmonackfoundation.org/index.html>

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I would like to give many thanks to all those who participated in the Walk-A-Thon at Brooks Field recently. More than 150 students were involved in raising more than \$8,000 for high school sports, clubs and activities. Our students did a great job in showing their school spirit. I'd like to give a special thank-you to Laura Kessler, who helped to organize the event along with Don Jones and Kristen Bagley Jones.

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Don't forget about our upcoming Swing for Sports Tournaments to benefit our sports, clubs and activities. On **October 19**, we will be hosting the Swing for Sports 18 Hole Scramble Golf Tournament & Doubles Tennis Tournament at Wollaston Golf Club. For more information contact Golf Chair John Davis [jdavis@cahilldavisgroup.com](mailto:jdavis@cahilldavisgroup.com); Tennis Chairs: Kara Russo & Laura Phelan [rkrwgg@comcast.net](mailto:rkrwgg@comcast.net) & [tkoll@comcast.net](mailto:tkoll@comcast.net). For sponsorship information, contact Kevin Walsh at [781-389-0233](tel:781-389-0233) or Tournament Coordinator Karen DeLuca at [k.deluca@comcast.net](mailto:k.deluca@comcast.net)

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## Milton Foundation for Education

Our friends at the Milton Foundation for Education have also been busy planning their annual fundraisers. The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual **Monster Dash** will be held on **Sunday, October 25** at Cunningham Park on Edge Hill Road. Organizers of this fun, festive 5K run promise a good time for all along with special children's events. For more information, please visit the MFE website at: [www.miltonfoundationforeducation.org](http://www.miltonfoundationforeducation.org). Ever wonder where the money raised goes? Here are just a couple of things going on in the schools, thanks to the Milton Foundation for Education:

- Milton High School is teaching a biotechnology class for the first time ever in the Biotechnology Lab funded by the 2006 Celebration for Education.
- At Pierce Middle School, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students will be building structures then testing them out on a Trembler Table which simulates earthquakes.
- Sixth graders are studying engineering with the "Everest Trek" curriculum co-authored by Tufts and the Museum of Science. Both the curriculum and the Trembler Table were purchased with MFE grants.

Finally, don't forget to "Save the Date" of **November 21** when the MFE holds its annual Celebration for Education. For information on sponsorships, please email [MILTONCFE2009@gmail.com](mailto:MILTONCFE2009@gmail.com)

## News Around Town

Another successful Celebrate Milton event took place recently, despite the inclement weather. Thanks to all who participated in this wonderful town-wide celebration.

We were very pleased to learn of the selection of three outstanding representatives of the Milton Public Schools, who were among this year's Community Builders.

Beirne Lovely of the Milton School Committee was recognized for his 25 years of service to the town as both an elected and volunteer official. Mr. Lovely was also honored for his work in writing the Milton School Committee's Diversity Policy.

Two Milton High School seniors, David Corbett and Graham Strang, were also given the Community Builders Award for their long-time commitment to the Milton Food Pantry, including countless hours of volunteer work.

We would also like to congratulate the award's other recipients, Dr. Bob Chen and Lori Bilewicz. This annual award recognizes efforts to make Milton a more open, attractive and interactive community. The award is given to organizations and/or residents who have brought individuals together from all across Milton and made the town a better place to live. The award also encourages the development of new initiatives fostering social justice and community interactions.

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Milton has a new online information resource, MyTownMatters, a portal to all things Milton. MyTownMatters compiles news headlines about town from local news sources, publishes a comprehensive calendar of events, provides commentary, analysis and interviews with town officials and key members of the community, and promotes civic responsibility and participation in the community. You can find it at <http://02186.mytownmatters.com>. This site encourages responsible citizen journalism and welcomes submissions (photos, articles, event notices, etc.) from all residents. Please email submissions to [editor@mytownmatters.com](mailto:editor@mytownmatters.com)

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Now that flu season is upon us, we strive to keep our schools healthy. One way to keep students healthy is to prevent parents and caregivers from becoming sick. The Milton Board of Health will be administering seasonal flu shots or flu mist vaccines to Milton residents ages 9 and older during the month of October. For a complete schedule, locations of clinics and payment information, please visit the town website: [http://www.townofmilton.org/Public\\_Documents/MiltonMA\\_BBoard/026A1219-000F8513](http://www.townofmilton.org/Public_Documents/MiltonMA_BBoard/026A1219-000F8513)

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The month of October is a great time to explore the Blue Hills Reservation. While you're there, consider a visit to the Blue Hills Weather Observatory -- the nation's oldest weather observatory. Staff members will be giving tours of this historic building on weekends through the fall for a minimal fee. For more information or directions, visit

[www.bluehill.org/events.html](http://www.bluehill.org/events.html)

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Sustainable Milton would like to help your family save money. On Wednesday, **October 14** at 7 pm at Milton High School, this group will hold a practical presentation on how to save money on our bills while reducing our carbon footprint. Organizers say that Milton families who have followed the program currently save between \$350 and \$700 annually thanks to the changes they have made. Come and find out how!

<http://www.sustainablemilton.org/>

### Athletics

The Wildcats are off to a great season. With a dozen teams competing for Milton High, there's a game, meet or match nearly every day. Please come to cheer on our student athletes.

[http://www.miltonps.org/documents/AthleticSchedule\\_001.pdf](http://www.miltonps.org/documents/AthleticSchedule_001.pdf)

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The Milton High School Athletic Hall of Fame will be inducting its next round of honorees on Saturday, **October 24** during a ceremony at Milton High School, followed by a banquet at Lantana's in Randolph.

Tickets to this event are \$60 per person and can be purchased by contacting Mike Goodless at [mgoodless@miltonps.org](mailto:mgoodless@miltonps.org) or call (617) 462-2028.

This year's inductees include three teams, 17 individuals and one Chairman's Award. Following is a list of the inductees. For more detailed biographical information on each of the coaches and athletes, please visit [https://www.edline.net/files/1198ad2949b85a573745a49013852ec4/Microsoft\\_Word\\_-\\_2009\\_Updated\\_Inductees\\_Bios\\_2\\_.doc.pdf](https://www.edline.net/files/1198ad2949b85a573745a49013852ec4/Microsoft_Word_-_2009_Updated_Inductees_Bios_2_.doc.pdf)

Congratulations to the MHSAHOF Class of 2009:

**The 1974 Baseball Team:** Steve Poelaert (Captain), Kevin Blake, Paul Bortollotti, Norman Brattlie, Jim Curley, Steve Cunningham, John Davis, Tom Desmond, Jim Finn, Joe Glynn, Bill Griffiths, Gerry Kelley, Ken Krazy, Ken Lloyd, Doug Maiden, Dave McLain, Ed Morris, Jim O'Dea and David Stoller. Coach Paul Dorsey, Ass't Coach Norm Tardiff.

**The 1988 Boys' Basketball Team:** Chris Curran, Sean McDonough and Joe McMann (Captains); Brendan Burke, Chris Clark, Driscoll DoCanto, Jon Duggan, Chris Edwards, John Edwards, Bill Gibbs, Rich Homan, Anson Joyce (Mgr), Paul Joyce, Matt Loftus, Greg McTigue, David Pesiri and John Shea. Coach Michael Goodless, Ass't Coaches Dennis Duggan, Greg Burke, Tony Green, Athletic Director Dick Ryan, Trainer Kathy Blake.

**1990 Girls Basketball Team:** Kerry Curran and Michelle O'Toole (Captains); Elizabeth Bendell, Sheila Berry, Christine Bligh, Kathleen Bunstein, Jennifer Burke, Elizabeth Caldonia, Jessica Collins, Kristen Joyce, Sayaka Matsuo, Caroline McCarthy, Tara Murphy, Michelle Neville and Kamara Price. Coach Jack Sullivan, Ass't Coaches Susan Hennessey, Peter Larsen, Trainer Dennis Brogna.

**Individual Inductees:** Matthew Bianculli, 1995; Ray Blake, 1963; Solomon Demeke, 1996; Coach Paul Dorsey; Jackie Langley Driscoll, 1973; Cathy Eldridge, 1987; Coach Dick Fitzhenry; Dick Gallery, 1951; Tom Giatrakos, 1992; Coach Michael Goodless; Clinton Graham, 2002; David Marad, 1963; Paul "Ezra" McGonigle, 1950; Lisa Bent Stirling, 1989; Mark Sullivan, 1982; Neil Wallace, 1953; Francis "Inga" Walsh, 1944. **Chairman's Award:** Beirne Lovely.

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## Ambassador Page

*At the end of each of our E-Blast updates, we highlight students, teachers, parents and members of the community whose hard work deserves recognition. Please read about some of their outstanding accomplishments below:*

### Milton High School

**Teachers:** Three Milton High School teachers have been selected to present at the state level for Mass Insight. Kara Yifru, Tom Shaw and Barbara Plonski attended a week long training session in Dallas, Texas, as part of the program to teach science for grade 6-12. These teachers will, in turn, train other middle- and high-school teachers in order to reinforce state and national frameworks with the goal of making the AP curriculum accessible to more students. Mass Insight Education & Research Institute is an independent non-profit that organizes public schools, higher education, business, and state government to significantly improve student achievement, with a focus on closing achievement gaps. We are very proud of our outstanding educators who have been chosen for this honor.

**Students:** MHS Senior Felicia Iyamu is currently serving as Governor of Girls State for Massachusetts, a role to which she was elected in June by a group of 200 girls from high schools across the Commonwealth. Felicia was chosen, along with classmates Liana Gineitis and Alison McIntyre, to attend Massachusetts Girls State at Westfield State College after completing their junior year. Girls State is a program run by the American Legion since 1937. Congratulations to Felicia!

### Pierce Middle School

**Teacher:** Stephanie Sherman, Pierce's new art teacher, won a second place prize for her painting at the 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Quincy Artsfest, held at Merrymount Park last month. More than 400 entries in painting, drawing and photography were included in the event, sponsored by Quincy Art Association. Congratulations!

**Student:** At this same contest, seventh-grade ACE student, Liz O'Connor, won a third-place award for her drawing, which was entered in the Young Artists' show. What a wonderful accomplishment!

### Elementary Schools

**Teacher:** Cunningham teacher and Collicot and Cunningham Librarian Josh Coben recently published a book of poetry. The book, entitled *Maker of Shadows*, won the 2009 X.J. Kennedy Prize and will be published by Texas Review Press in late spring or early summer of 2010.

**Students:** After auditioning for their roles, several elementary students have been cast in the upcoming production of *Music Man* at Milton High School. Congratulations to the following future stars: Nicholas Marinilli-Winthrop, Griffin McLaughlin, Benjamin Scott, Edward Taugher, Robbie Silva, Grace Varela-Amarillys, Allison Reed, Gracie Shinn, Bailey Cook, Sara Ford, Hannah O'Toole, Lilja Cormack, Stephanie Finnegan, Grace Finnegan, Annabelle McSweeney.