



PUBLIC SCHOOLS

MILTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02186

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To: Milton Public School Parents & Guardians
From: Mary C. Gormley, Superintendent
Re: E-Update for September 26, 2008

FROM THE OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

The overarching goals of the Milton Public Schools are to raise the achievement of all of our students and to close the identified achievement gaps which exist among our student body. Our talented administrators, teachers and support staff are creative people who are willing to work hard to maximize the potential of each of our students.

We also know that getting parents more involved in their child's school helps raise achievement and close the achievement gaps. We are committed and working hard to improve communication and collaboration.

In my opening on the first day of school, I told our staff that we have challenges and that the stakes are high, but with their talent, creativity and willingness to work hard -- very hard -- with parents, school committee members, our students and the community, anything is possible for every student in the Milton Public Schools. – Mary Gormley

- The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education released an MCAS report on the state's overall performance on the most recent MCAS exams. Please keep in mind that these are statewide results. The data for the Milton Public Schools was released earlier this week and will be presented at the October 7th school committee meeting. For more information on the MCAS exam or to view the full statewide report, look online at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/
- Milton High School was named as one of the Best Public High Schools by Boston Magazine in their September edition. Our high school placed 23rd for cost efficiency, which measures academic performance against per-pupil spending. We also placed 41st for academic performance alone. More information about the results and the full ranking can be obtained at http://www.bostonmagazine.com/articles/the_best_schools_2008/
- Enrollment for Adult Education classes will begin next week. Walk-in registration will take place from 6 to 9 p.m. in the main lobby of Milton High School on Monday, September 29, Tuesday, September 30 and Wednesday, October 1st. More than 30 different courses are being offered in a variety of disciplines. To view the brochure, go to: https://www.edline.net/pages/Milton_Public_Schools and click on "Adult Education Fall 2008 Brochure" on the main page.
- The Milton High School Athletic Hall of Fame has released the names of the 2008 inductees, which includes athletes from MHS classes of 1949 to 2000. An unveiling ceremony will be held at the Copeland Field House at 5 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 24, followed by a cocktail reception from 6 to 7 at Lantana's in Randolph. The banquet and induction ceremony begin at 7 p.m. To buy

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tickets or for more information, contact Michael Goodless at 617-472-2028 or https://www.edline.net/pages/Milton_Public_Schools and click on “MHS Athletic Hall of Fame” for the list of 2008 inductees.

- Thanks to all who organized and participated in the Milton Boosters’ Swing for Sports fundraiser held at the Wollaston Golf Club on Monday. The Milton Student Activities Committee succeeded in passing last year’s total of \$26,000 in much-needed funds for our athletic department. Indoor and outdoor advertising banners are still for sale as part of this fundraiser. For more information, contact Lynn O’Sullivan at losullivan@miltonps.org
- We welcomed twenty eight new faculty members on the first day of school this year. Biography information on our new teachers can be viewed by visiting https://www.edline.net/pages/Milton_Public_Schools and clicking on “2008-09 New Teacher Biographies.”

A school committee meeting was held on September 16th. Among the issues discussed:

- MPS Athletic Director Steve Traister reported on participation levels for fall sports and the affect of user fees. Currently, MHS athletes pay \$200 per sport, per season, with a \$1,000 annual family cap. Mr. Traister emphasized that funding sources are available for families who are unable to pay the athletic fee. For more information about assistance with sports fees, please call the central office at 617-696-4470 x 5515. To see this fall’s athletic schedules, click here: https://www.edline.net/pages/Milton_High_School/Athletics
- The Milton Special Education Parent Advisory Council (PAC) invited the community to a screening of a documentary film titled “Including Samuel,” which will be shown on Wednesday, October 1st at 7 p.m. in the MHS library. The film examines the educational and social inclusion of students with disabilities. For more information, click this link: https://www.edline.net/pages/Milton_Public_Schools/Special_Education_Administration
- Enrollment figures for the 2008-09 school year were discussed. Among the findings:
 - A total of 160 students in grades 1 through 12 have entered MPS since the end of the 2007-08 school year. In addition, we enrolled 45 more kindergartners than last year. Factoring in students leaving the system, the result is 95 more students this year in the MPS.
 - From October 3, 2005 to September 8, 2008, the K-12 (in-district) enrollment has increased by 184 students.
 - The current student assignment plan has been effective at leveling class sizes throughout the district.
 - There are classes throughout the district, especially at Pierce Middle School and MHS, where class sizes are above the recommended class size caps.
- We are currently looking to hire a grant writer. This position is being funded by a generous grant from the Milton Foundation for Education. For more information or a job description, go to https://www.edline.net/pages/Milton_Public_Schools and click on “Employment Opportunities.”

The next school committee meeting will be held October 7th at 7 p.m. in the Milton High School library.

MILTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS AMBASSADORS PAGE

Starting this week, as part of our E-Blast, we will recognize teachers, administrators, students and parents whose hard work deserves recognition. Please read about some of their outstanding accomplishments below:

Teachers as Scholars

By Christine Charbonneau, Pierce Teacher

Ask any of the teachers who have been through the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification process, and they will probably tell you it was one of the hardest things they have ever done. A room full of wailing kindergartners? No problem. Twenty-five sullen teenagers? Bring'em on. But NBPTS? Whew, that'll make you sweat.

Of course, those same teachers will probably also tell you that the process was one of the most rewarding things they have ever done. (And teaching can be pretty rewarding, so that is saying something!)

The National Board's certification process takes teachers through a school year-long process of reflection, analysis, and writing about their teaching. The first component is a portfolio with four entries. All teachers, regardless of content area or grade taught, have to include a written analysis of student work, written analyses of a whole-class discussion and small-group discussions, and "documented accomplishments." These documented accomplishments fall into three categories: parent and community involvement, professional development, and collaboration with colleagues.

The second component of certification is a computerized essay test that focuses on pedagogical knowledge and content area knowledge. While the portfolio includes these as well, the computerized test offers them up in scenarios that may be unfamiliar, causing the test-takers to have to think quickly and apply many different areas of their knowledge of teaching. For example, teachers may be asked to prescribe a course of action for a sixth grade struggling reader, or to modify history instruction for an English Language Learner.

Only four out of every ten teachers pass the certification process their first time. Teachers are allowed to "bank" their passing entries and try again over the next two years to pass the areas where they were low. Though it can be discouraging not to achieve certification the first time, teachers still find that the process was well worth the effort. It is like holding a magnifying glass up against your teaching, and scrutinizing every detail. Pass or not, teachers know more about themselves and what happens in their classrooms than they ever did before.

The Milton Public Schools are proud to have four Nationally Board certified teachers. Owen McElhinney, Karen Slodden, Patricia Turner, and myself (Christine Charbonneau) -- all at Charles S. Pierce Middle School – who are certified. A number of teachers in the district are also currently waiting to find out if they have certified. Milton supports teachers in their endeavors to learn and grow professionally, and is pleased that the process is being considered by the district's teachers.

Student Highlights

By Maxwell Opara

Grade 12, MHS

This winter's indoor track season will be a thriller as two-year captains Paul Connor and Maxwell Opara try to repeat their sophomore year performance by going to Nationals in New York for a second visit.

"I believe that we can find the right pieces for the 4 x 200 relay team after the departure of seniors Craig Bennett and Imar Iyamu," said Opara.

Coach Chuck Ajemian is also feeling good about the upcoming season. He is going to need the captains and T-RACK (the team name) to work together to become successful.

Connor and Opara are hoping for a break-out season that will lead to athletic scholarships. Both have decided they will continue to participate in track at the collegiate level.

Career Highlights

Congratulations to **Jacqueline Morgan, Director of Food Services for MPS**, who was recently elected president of the School Nutrition Association of Massachusetts, a leading organization committed to educating and supporting school nutrition and food service professionals

Volunteer Highlights

**By Dr. Dore Korschun
Glover School Principal**

For more than ten years, **Joanne Fisher** has been a tireless volunteer for the Milton Public Schools through a State Employee Volunteer Program. She volunteered first at Cunningham School and now can be seen at Glover one day a month. With her pleasant personality and ever-present smile, Joanne takes on any project the school may have waiting for her. She can be counted on to jump in and help students and parents who are in need of assistance.

Joanne is one of life's blessings. A parent of two sons who graduated from the Milton Public Schools, she continues to give her time – and her energy – to the Milton Public Schools. Thank you, Joanne Fisher!

*** Please see calendar below: ***

Calendar Sept. 24 to Oct. 18

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	
				SEPTEMBER 24	25 Cunningham School Open House 5:30 – 7:30 pm	26	27
28 <i>!CELEBRATE MILTON!</i> 12-4 at MHS fields	29 Registration for Adult Ed courses in MHS lobby 6-9 pm	30 Registration for Adult Ed courses in MHS lobby 6-9 pm <hr/> Cunningham School Picture Day		OCTOBER <u>1</u> Registration for Adult Ed courses in MHS lobby 6-9 pm <hr/> Pierce PTO Meeting at 7 pm, PMS Library <hr/> Milton PAC presents "Including Samuel" at MHS Library at 7 pm	2 Collicot School Open House 6:30 p.m.	3	4 Collicot Closet Sale in Cunningham Hall from 10-2 pm
5	6 <hr/> Collicot PTO meeting, 6:30 pm <hr/> Adult Ed classes begin	7 School Committee meeting 7 pm at MHS library <hr/> Adult Ed classes begin <hr/> Tucker School Open House 6:30 p.m.	8	8 Adult Ed classes begin	9 Yom Kippur No School	10	11
12	13 Columbus Day – No School	14	15 <hr/> Cunningham PTO Meeting at 7:30, Cunningham library <hr/> PSATs for Grades 10 and 11	16 PMS/MHS Jazz Dinner/Concert at MHS auditorium at 6 pm	17 Cunningham Lantern Walk at Cunningham Park <hr/> Glover Fall Social at Hoosic Club 7:30	18	