

The Penguin Press

Benjamin J. Phelps Elementary School

February 23, 2010

Looking Ahead.....

Dates to Remember:

March 2 (5-9 PM)
Uno's Night

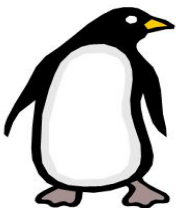
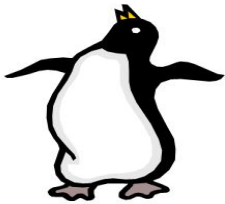
March 9 (7PM)
PTO Meeting

March 10
Early Release Day

March 18 (6-8 PM)
Ice Cream Night & Book Fair

Important Date Change

March 31
**Early Release
Parent/Teacher Conferences**



Principals Corner

Dear Parents/Guardians:

This month's topics of conversation will be MCAS testing and attendance. With the coming of March comes MCAS – the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System.

MCAS refers to a series of tests given to public school students in Massachusetts that are intended to measure students' progress toward meeting state educational goals. The tests consist of multiple-choice, open-response, and short-answer questions, plus a writing prompt for the English Language Arts composition. Teachers and students here at Phelps school have been working hard to prepare for these tests.

As oftentimes with the anticipation of taking these tests comes some anxiety, I am including some suggestions that can be used to reduce test anxiety. It is helpful if you can talk about the test in a positive way, assure your child that the test is only one measure of academic performance, emphasize that test scores do not determine a person's worth, and encourage best efforts.

Here are some tips to help your child prepare for the tests –

- Make sure that your child is well rested and eats breakfast. This should be occurring daily not just the day of the test(s).
- See that your child arrives at school on time and is as relaxed as possible.
- Encourage your child to do his/her best and to have a positive attitude.
- Encourage your child to listen/read carefully to all test-taking directions and to ask question if the directions are unclear.
- Remind your child not to get stuck on any one item. Assure them that it is fine to move on and come back to that question.
- Encourage your child to check answers for accuracy.

It is very important that your child be at school on the dates of testing and to be on time. The testing schedule is as follows:

ELA Composition – Grade 4

Tuesday March 23rd

ELA Reading Comprehension – Grade 3 and Grade 4

Tuesday March 30th and Thursday April 1st

Math – Grade 3 and Grade 4

Tuesday, May 18th & Wednesday, May 19th

Attendance is important not just during MCAS but throughout the school year. Students that are frequently late and absent miss out on many important learning opportunities. Punctuality is important in many aspects of our life and it is established during these formative years. Being in class on time also demonstrates respect for learning for oneself as well as respect for the learning of others. Additionally schools are required to track attendance of every child in every classroom every day. Our attendance rate is part of determining whether we make "adequate yearly progress" according to the No Child Left Behind Act. Students need to be in school every day to stay on track.

Thank you for your support in preparing our students for learning as well as for MCAS,
Sincerely,
Teresa A. Urbinati, Principal

P.S. A couple of reminders –

Written notes from parents/guardians are required for any changes in your child's dismissal routine. If we do not have a note, your child will be dismissed as they are typically supposed to be dismissed. We also need a written note as to the circumstances of your child's absence.

During the month of March the D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) officer will be here conducting a program designed to give your child some of the skills necessary to say "NO" in the face of increasing pressures. Officer Karen Langevin will be presenting this program to all students K – 4.

Phelps PTO News



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Vice President
Treasurer
Secretary

Stacy Wieners 786-5039
Kellee Morello
Jill Grasso (appointed by Board)
Christine Patterson

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2010 PTO Meeting Schedule

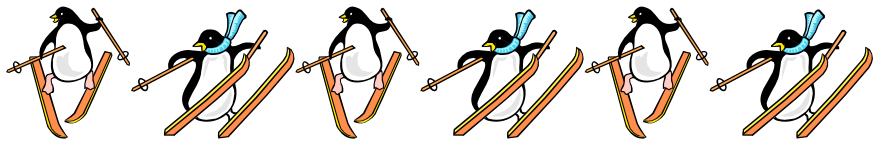
March 9th

Rest of the year will be posted soon! Keep your eyes open!

All meetings are held in the school cafeteria at 7:00 PM
7:30 in May.

The PTO would like to thank Tom Dobrowski for his service as treasurer to the Phelps PTO!

Nominations for Treasurer and President will be accepted at the April PTO Meeting.



Help Wanted



Volunteers are still needed to assist in organizing the book closet. Please contact Mrs. Aubrey or Mrs. Pass if you are able to volunteer any time.



The PTO is looking for someone to be the fundraising chairperson for the 2010-2011 school year. Please contact Stacy Wieners at stacyjaz@comcast.net with any questions.



School Spirit Shirt Suggestions needed. Last year's was "It's cool at Phelps School". Please email a suggestion for this year to phelpspto@yahoo.com.

Enrichment Corner

March 16: Picasso People (\$687 partially funded by PTO and Agawam Cultural Council)

April 13: Birds of Prey visits Grade 1 & 2 (\$620 funded by the PTO)

May 11: Teachers Creatures visits Kindergarten (\$400 funded by PTO)

PTO Question Corner!!

Have a question? Email it to phelpspto@yahoo.com and your answer will be in the next Penguin Press!





COME JOIN US

Thursday March 18th from 6:00-8:00pm

PHELPS FAMILY NIGHT

- *Enjoy shopping at the Book Fair in the Phelps Library
- *Make your own sundae! Ice Cream compliments of J.J.'s Softserve
- *Meet and greet with Clifford in the auditorium.
- *Have fun with other Phelps families!

Please send this form along with a fee of \$1.00 per person for your tickets for ice cream.
Tickets will be sent home with your child.
Money to purchase tickets due by Friday, March 12th. Must have ticket for ice cream.

Please make checks payable to PHELPS PTO.

Yes, we will attend family night! # attending _____

Child's name _____

Room # _____

Volunteers needed: _____ Scoop ___Set-up _____ Clean up

Name _____ Phone _____

Final Spring Soccer Sign Ups

In-Town Spring Soccer registration will take place for Pre-K (4 yrs.) through U12

Monday March 1st 5:00– 7:00 PM
@ The Agawam Public Library



\$75 Pre-K (child can not turn 5 years old prior to Aug. 1, 2010
and must be 3 years old by April 1, 2010)

\$75 Kindergarten (Can not turn 6 prior to Aug 1, 2010)
\$85 U7 – U12

Registration form is on reverse side or at www.agawamsoccer.org
On-line signups can be done @ www.agawamsoccer.org

Do you have any questions?
Contact Cindy Drummond at cdrummond@wavespan.net

Season begins on April 13th and ends June 13th.
Games will be played on Sundays Only!

Pioneer Valley Soccer News

Agawam Soccer Association is currently looking to fill the following positions:

Coaches Needed



- U13B Girls Soccer Coach
- U14B Girls Soccer Coach
- U9 Boys Soccer Coach to begin in the Fall 2010 season
- U9 Girls Soccer Coach to begin in the Fall 2010 season

Players Needed

- U13B Girls
- U14B Girls

Do you have any questions? Contact Bill Scherpa at
bscherpa@witchenterprises.com