



MMSA NEWS



Volume XII, Issue II

November 2006

From the Principals

Dear Parents,



It's already the end of the first marking period. We hope that the report card that came home with this newsletter will generate some good conversation between you and your child about how the school year is going so far.

We hope that the report card indicates good academic progress, positive relationships with teachers, good effort and good work habits. From several years of reviewing MMS report cards, we know that most of them reflect this sort of progress. If your child's report card matches this description, your conversation with your child will be a pleasure. You can focus on ways to maintain motivation and perhaps consider a different activity or area of the school for your child to explore during the next marking period—a new after-school activity, the library media center or the Interest Center, for instance.

If the report card indicates that there are some areas that need improvement, this is a good time to review your child's learning habits. We often speak with students about being *active* learners. We have reminded students that their active participation is required in order for schoolwork to be meaningful. Here are some examples of active participation: keeping up-to-date on assignments, listening carefully and asking questions in class, and making connections between class work and what they learn outside of school.

If there is a need for your child to read more or to be more engaged in class or to be more responsible about completing assignments, the report card's message can be a motivator to establish some new habits. We know that short-term, attainable goals work best. Set a schedule for reading and studying, and help your child to keep to it.

At school, teachers will review their students' progress thus far. Teaching teams and individual teachers will assign X-Block time for extra help and studying for students who need more direction in their schoolwork.

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Upcoming Events

- MMS Book Fair: November 14th-17th.
- American Education Week: November 14-17th
- The Wizard of Oz: November 16th—18th, 7PM, November 19th at 2PM.
- Make-Up Photo Day: December 4th
- MMSA Meeting: Tuesday, December 5th, 7pm, RM 99

Please join us for American Education Week!

You are invited to join your child in school during the week of November 14-17 to get an informal look at life at Mansfield Middle School. This is an annual event for us, and many parents tell us they look forward to the visit.

Each grade has selected two days for visits to help us control parking. We welcome you to join us whether it's for just one class or for a whole day. If you have more than one child at MMS, you may wish to visit more than once. We have no ceremonies planned and want you to enjoy the time with your child in regular classes.

- Grade 5 – Thursday and Friday (November 16 and 17)
- Grade 6 – Tuesday and Wednesday (November 14 and 15)
- Grade 7 – Tuesday and Wednesday (November 14 and 15)
- Grade 8 – Tuesday and Thursday (November 14 and 16)

The complete flyer about American Education Week was sent home in October. It can also be found at <http://www.mansfieldct.org/schools/mms/staff/cryan/HomePage.htm>.

Visit our website at: www.mmsnet.org

Link: *Mansfield Middle School Association*

From the Principals (continued)

Sometimes study habits that were adequate in earlier grades are no longer enough as assignments become more frequent or more complex. Teachers will want to work with your child to teach approaches and habits that will help them to become more successful.

Naturally, there are many requests at this point in the year for conferences with individual teachers and teams. If your child has had a successful start, you will find it easier to schedule a conference if you wait until next month. Our priority in scheduling conferences between now and Thanksgiving is to address the needs of students and families who need to establish a more successful approach. With each teacher responsible for 55-110 students, we hope that you will understand this priority as you call to schedule your appointment.

If you have questions about an assignment or a class, please call at any time (429-9341). Each teacher's phone/voicemail number is in the MMS Calendar/Handbook.

Please try to make time to visit us during American Education Week, from November 14-17. A flyer went home in late October with the dates scheduled for each grade. The flyer is also posted on the school website at: <http://www.mansfieldct.org/schools/mms/staff/cryan/HomePage.htm>.

And now it's second marking period – a clean slate, a new beginning, new chances to explore and to be actively engaged in all that MMS has to offer.

Sincerely,
Jeff Cryan
Principal
ryanj@mansfieldct.org

Candace Morell
Assistant Principal
morrellcv@mansfieldct.org

Fall Happenings at MMS

It was a busy fall for many students, parents and staff at MMS. Here are just a few of the events that took place:



On September 17th, students from Mr. Rock's art classes displayed the giant "M" they created at the Mansfield Festival on the Green.

On Wednesday, October 11th, Dr. Tony Wolf spoke to MMS parents about ways to better communicate with our middle-school aged children.





On Thursday, October 12th, the Mansfield Board of Education honored its Teacher of the Year, Tom Remeaka. Tom, who earned a master's degree in special education at the Neag School in 1981, has spent the last 16 years teaching at the Dorothy C. Goodwin school, and this year joined the staff at MMS. The MMSA congratulates Mr. Remeaka on this honor and welcomes him to our school.



Open Gym Night 2006

The Wizard of Oz

The Mansfield Middle School student production of "The Wizard of Oz" will be held on Thursday, November 16th, Friday, November 17th, and Saturday November 18th at 7:00PM and on Sunday, November 19th, at 2:00PM in the MMS Auditorium. All tickets are \$5.00. Tickets are available at the door, in the MMS office or by calling 429-9341. More than 100 MMS students will be acting in this



MMS Book Fair

Come to the MMS Book Fair during American Education Week. We are open from 7:30—3:00pm starting on Tuesday and ending on Friday. We'll also be open for 45 minutes on Thursday night prior to the school play, "The Wizard of Oz". Cash or check only. We'll have a variety of children and adult books available and the ability to order any book you want from the UConn Co-op Bookstore. The proceeds will be used to buy new books for the library.



From the MMSA President

Dear Parents,

I read a statement recently that I think speaks to the philosophy of the MMSA – “We’re not in the business of fund raising, but we fund raise so we can do our business”. Thanks to your support, the MMSA CAN do its business of supporting the school and its staff, its parents and its students.

This year is already off to a great start! The MMSA has made its annual grant contributions to several worthy programs. This year grants are funding things like supplies to allow more students to participate in after-school activities or a program to build hydrogen fuel cell cars. One grant will go towards a special science program for the 5th and 6th grade; another will allow the purchase of a DVD Camcorder to enhance the “Readers Theater Program”. The goal of these and other approved grants is to enrich and improve the educational experience for our MMS students.

In October the MMSA sponsored a speech to parents by Dr. Anthony Wolf, who gave parents some insightful and often humorous advice on how to deal with and communicate with our teenage children. Dr. Wolf’s anecdotes were familiar to us all and parents came away from the evening with some guidance and practical communication tools to use at home.

On November 3rd the MMSA and the MMS Physical Education Team sponsored an “Open Gym Night”. While the turnout was lighter than expected, those who did come had a good time playing games like basketball, badminton, and volleyball in the gym.

Thanks to all you who supported our recent Gift Wrap Sale. Coming up next is the annual MMS Book Fair. Proceeds from this event go directly to the Library/Media center. And once again the MMSA will be selling refreshments during the performances of “Wizard of Oz”. So while you’re enjoying a beverage or a snack during the intermission, thank you in advance for helping to support the MMSA and it’s future endeavors!

Sincerely,
Mary Sikand,
MMSA President



Open Gym Night 2006

Volunteer Opportunities

If you didn't have a chance to sign up at the Open House, the following committees are looking for volunteers for these upcoming events:

MMS Book Fair—runs Tuesday Nov. 14th through Friday Nov. 17th; volunteers help sell books to the kids—morning or afternoon hours. Call Natalie Miniutti at 429-0595, or Stacey Fulton at 456-2143

Chairperson needed for 8th Grade Closing Ceremony—Calling all 7th grade parents—we need you for the night of the 8th Grade Closing Ceremony to set up and serve refreshments. For more information or to sign up call Mary Sikand 423-1127.

MMSA 2006-2007 Board Members and Committee Chairs

Executive Board

President	Mary Sikand	423-1127
Vice-President	Sheryl Lambert	429-3088
Secretary	Susanne Davis	429-3638
Treasurer	Lisa Drzewiecki	423-3942

Committee Chairpersons

Book Fair	Natalie Miniutti	429-0595
	Stacey Fulton	456-2143
8th Grade Closing	<i>Open</i>	
Gift-Wrap Sale	Pam Cheney	450-1900
Grants	Jean Phillips	429-0692
History Day	Laura Smith	429-8735
Hospitality	Diane Briody	429-1585
Magazine Drive	Stacy Geist	423-0529
Membership	Cari Vincente	429-2497
Newsletter	Lisa Smith	465-9207
Orientation	Mary Sikand	423-1127
Plant Sale	Sondra Boyer	487-5812

Grade Representatives

Grade 5:	Shamim Patwa	429-4321
	Anne Wiant-Rudd	429-4469
	Sherri Lee	456-9552
	Cari Vincente	429-2497
	Kim O'Keefe	429-6711
Grade 6:	Diane Briody	429-1585
	Jean Phillips	429-0692
	Therese John	429-4220
	Kate Cox	429-3844
Grade 7:	Charlie Dainton	456-2073
	Sue Kaeser	423-7264
	Doreen Simonsen	456-1871
	Jane Moynihan	429-9225
Grade 8:	Sondra Boyer	487-5812
	Susanne Davis	429-3638
	Stacey Fulton	456-2143
	Susan Mostowy	429-1107

Teacher Representative:

Wayne Trembly 429-9341

Your Kids Need You!

Double A Transportation is looking for safe drivers to join its family of school bus drivers. What a great job for "stay at home moms or dads" who want to get out for a few hours each day and work in their own community!!

Driving a school bus is one of the few part time jobs that allow you to bring your children to work with you. Double A Transportation offers competitive wages, great benefits, including 401K and health insurance. We will train qualified candidates at no cost to you. Call 1-860-563-3126 or 1-800-788-RIDE extension 225 today!



Fall Membership Drive

As the Parent or Guardian of a Mansfield Middle School student, you are considered a member of the Mansfield Middle School Association. The MMSA collects voluntary dues as a means of providing financial support of the Association. For this year the *suggested* donation is \$10; please consider making whatever contribution fits your budget. If we missed you at the Open House, here is a contribution form for your convenience. You may drop it off at the school office, or send it in the mail to: Mansfield Middle School, attn: MMSA Membership Drive, 205 Spring Hill Road, Storrs, CT 06268. Thank you.



News from the Mansfield Board of Education

Here are some highlights from the October Board of Education meeting (held on October 11, 2006):

- Tom Rameaka, Mansfield's 2007 Teacher of the Year, was honored in a special ceremony.
- The Building Committee reported that it will be reviewing site improvements and energy upgrades at the districts schools.
- Dr. Schimmel reported on the status of new bus drivers. After their training is complete problems with late buses should be alleviated.
- Rachel Leclerc, Director of Special Education and Student Support Services, discussed programs that Special Education is using to meet the needs of students who need special services.
- School administrators reviewed their current emergency procedures and plans for a security audit.
- Assistant Superintendent Fred Baruzzi gave a report on Group Testing

The next meeting of the Board of Education is Thursday, November 16th. All parents are invited and encouraged to attend.

Box Tops for Education



Now is the time to send in all those box tops you have been clipping. The MMSA will be sending in another batch soon and will receive \$.10 for each box top. This is an easy and painless way to earn money for MMS! Please place box tops in the marked container outside the main office. Thanks!

MMSA MEMBERSHIP FORM 2006 - 2007

Parent / Guardian Name _____

Student Name: _____ Grade _____

Student Name: _____ Grade _____

*If you would like to receive MMSA updates and information via e-mail, please list your e-mail address here:

Suggested Donation \$10

Thank you for your support!

Checks may be made payable to: MMSA