

JOYCE MIDDLE SCHOOL

NEWSLETTER January ~ 2012

Joyce Middle School Motto: Every individual in this school has the right to work in a safe, quiet, comfortable environment without fear, without humiliation, without destruction of self-esteem.

Our school newsletter is sent home to students, parents and friends of the Joyce Middle School. It is intended to celebrate the accomplishments of students, staff and alumni, to provide information about upcoming events, and to keep the community informed about the educational programs and extra curricular activities at the Joyce Middle School.

From Mr. Qualey - Principal

2012 MCAS dates

MCAS testing is a state mandated testing program that measures the academic progress of our students and school. It is extremely important that our students attend school every day during these tests. **Parents should not plan vacations during these times.** The spring 2012 testing dates are as follows:

March 20th – April 4th - English Language Arts – Grades 6-8
May 9th – May 23rd – Math & Science – Grades 6-8

MCAS Tutoring Program

The after school MCAS tutoring program begins next week for English Language Arts and the Math MCAS tutoring program will begin on Tuesday March 7th. Students were chosen based on last years MCAS scores and parents were notified by mail if the child was invited.

YES (Youth Engaged in Service)

Students in grades 5 and 8 and graduating seniors are eligible to receive community service awards at the end of the school year. For more information, visit www.woburnpublicschools.com and go to “Links for Parents” under “Resources” where you’ll find a link to the web site. You can also go directly to www.woburnpss.com/yes.

From Mr. Nebel ~ Assistant Principal

As we begin Quarter 3, I don’t have to remind you that we still have a lot of cold, winter weather ahead. This is a great time to review the Joyce dress code, found on page four of your handbook, and to keep in mind the following:

1. “Outerwear (i.e. winter jackets quilted vests, etc.) may not be worn in the classrooms.” Some classrooms will be colder or hotter than others, so students should have 2-3 light layers of appropriate clothing underneath their winter coats to keep comfortable in the school.
2. “Unacceptable clothing consists of...spandex pants or shorts (or any tight, form fitting pants), shorts or skirts higher than mid-thigh (no higher than the fingertips with arms hanging at side), clothing that causes undue attention to be called to the wearer. Pajamas or any other sleepwear, including slippers or other soft-soled shoes, are not permitted.” Most of the issues we see during the winter months involve “yoga pants” or similar form-fitting, soft-cloth pants. These types of form-fitting pants are acceptable only when covered by the appropriate length shorts or skirt. Tight jeans or slacks are acceptable.

Students without appropriate clothing will remain in the office until replacement clothing is delivered to the school by the parent.

Please also review our rules regarding late arrival to school, found on page two of your handbook, particularly the following passages: “Students are expected in their homeroom no later than 8:05 am. **If you are in the building, but not yet in your homeroom by 8:05, you are still considered tardy.** If you are late to school more than three times in a quarter without an acceptable reason (doctor’s note, for example), you will be assigned after school office detention. After five unexcused tardy in a quarter, **students may not be admitted to school until a parent/guardian enters the building and signs them into school.**

From Secretary ~ Mrs. Raymond

If your child has misplaced an item, have him/her check Lost & Found in the front office and also Lost & Found in the gym area. We have a collection of many items from gym clothes to hats, coats, etc.

Also, it is important that the school have updated phone numbers to reach you in case of an emergency. Please notify the office of any changes. Thank You

From Guidance

Eighth graders will be participating in course selection for Woburn High School in the third quarter. Course selection will begin on Monday, March 5th, 2012. Additional information will be sent home at that time. On Monday, February 27th, 2012, Woburn High School will hold a “Future Freshman Night”. Parents of eighth grade students should plan to attend to hear about the high school experience, including information on courses, which will be helpful in the upcoming course selection process. All students need to complete course selection paperwork for Woburn High School, even if they are planning on attending a private or vocational school. At the end of the school year, it is important that eighth grade students notify their guidance counselor if they are planning to attend a private or vocational school to ensure their records are forwarded to the appropriate school.

Guidance and health class are teaming up for a two class curriculum with the Eighth Grade Blue Team to learn about the SOS Program. The purpose of this program is to raise awareness about depression and suicide prevention. Prior to the program beginning, information will be sent home to parents/guardians. The Eighth Grade Green Team participated in this program in the first half of the school year when they had health class. If you have any questions regarding this program or need referral information, please contact Mrs. Roberts in guidance.

The Guidance Department continues to be available to offer support to students with emotional, social or academic needs. At times, students may need additional support and can be referred to our school based counseling program. We currently have two local agencies (Arbour Counseling and DCS Mental Health, Inc.) that offer this support at school. Please contact the guidance department for further information.

Mrs. Roberts (Grades 7 & 8) 781-937-8233 x 275

Mrs. Farrell (Grade 6) 781-937-8233 x 274

Grade Six Team News

As grade six teachers, we strive to help your child reach both academic and personal achievements throughout the year. We will be concentrating on both organization and responsibility during this school year. We are very glad to tell you that with your support at home we are seeing significant growth in these areas as the year progresses. Congratulations to all.

Academically, our students will soon or have already been working on projects, some teams on Social Studies projects while other teams are working on Science or Reading projects. You will also notice materials coming home for MCAS prep. Each sixth grade student will be given a review booklet for the May MCAS math test. This booklet will be both class and home assignments. You will also see review materials for the March

Reading/Literature MCAS test, as with the math. These will also be both class and home assignments. Please, feel free to review these materials with your child. It will give both of you a feel for the upcoming tests.

Ms. Cuniberti ~ Grade 6 ~ Spanish

Spanish class is now learning the school subjects and will be translating our Joyce schedule into Spanish this week. We will then be working on how to tell time and talk about our schedule in Spanish!

Mrs. Tourigny ~ Grade 7 ~ Math

Grade Seven Green Team students have been working hard reviewing their Algebra concepts. They are getting more proficient at "one-step" and "two-step" solving, order of operations, and applying their integer rules. During Term 3, we will also continue reviewing decimals, formulas, fractions, rates, ratios, percents, and proportions. All students should be bringing their calculators to class.

As you know, each spring our seventh graders have two MCAS exams (English and Math). Therefore, we are actively engaged in working in our Math MCAS packages in preparation for the cumulative Math MCAS "Final Exams" in May. Additionally, as part of our Term 2 MCAS review, all seventh graders were supposed to have completed **five** more Study Island MCAS *Blue Ribbons* (for a total of **ten**). **Term 3** requires students to complete another **six** Study Island MCAS *Blue Ribbons* (for a total of **sixteen**) by **Wednesday, April 4th**. Please encourage your young person to work on Study Island all year and remind him/her that this material counts as a **quiz** grade each term.

As always, students should continue making vocabulary index cards to help them study their Math vocabulary and redoing their Math homework "utilizing a utensil called a pencil" to refresh their memories before tests. Generally, "Purple Book" extra help is available on Monday and "Blue Book" extra help is available on Tuesday. Testing usually occurs on Wednesday or Thursday. Math textbooks should be covered and kept at home. If you have any questions about your student's academic responsibilities and test scores, remember you can check his/her Planner and "Deposit/Tracking" Slip daily. Finally, please have your student recite the "Fraction Rap" and explain why "Even-Steven" is so important.

Mrs. Noack ~ Grade 7 ~ Spanish

My seventh grade students have started to get better in vocabulary working with the online program **wordplay.com**. It is part of the program for the rest of the academic year. It is important that students also check our class in **schoolology.com** **daily**. They can see their assignments, discussions, online quizzes and materials to support their Spanish learning. For this third term we will answer back to our seventh grader pen pals from Bogotá, Colombia. We will be also using **eduglogster.com** for another long-term project. Thanks for your support!

Ms. Page ~ Grade 7 ~ English

Students in Ms. Page's English class have begun reading Alfred Lipsyte's novel, The Contender. This novel which centers on a teenage boy and his pursuit of boxing deals with many relevant themes in our students lives. A few of those themes include, fitting in, following through with what you start and the pursuit of dreams. Students will be reading this novel as well as continuing their preparation for the ELA MCAS test which is fast approaching in March. Students will be working on practice passages for their reading comprehension skills, as well as writing their open responses and continuing to perfect their descriptive writing for their seventh grade Long Composition. Students have homework nightly, so it's important to encourage them to keep up the hard work!

Mrs. McLean ~ Grade 7 ~ Math

Term 3 has started and so has our MCAS review. All students received their MCAS booklets and have completed the first two assignments. Seventh graders have two booklets to complete before MCAS. Term 3 "Blue Ribbons" for Study Island will be due the first week in May. This is an excellent way for the students to review. I hope everyone has a restful February vacation.

Mrs. O'Brien ~ Grade 7 ~ English

In an effort to improve reading comprehension skills, we completed a literature unit that included myths, folk tales, legends, and fables. The students read the stories, provided written answers to open response questions, and discussed their answers.

Every week a new vocabulary unit is introduced and studied. It is encouraging to see that many students incorporate these new words into their writing. In preparation for the Long Composition section of the MCAS, the students continue to write sentences, paragraphs, and five paragraph essays.

Thank you to all of the parents who continue to assist our students with homework and encourage them to work to their potential.

Mrs. DeSilva ~ Grade 7 ~ Science

We began the second term with life science. It was certainly a change from stars and galaxies. During the first couple of weeks students learned about the characteristics and needs of living things, and created posters illustrating the characteristics of living things. Currently, we are learning about the structure and function of animal and plant cells. This week we built cell models in class. We are planning to display our finished cell models, sing poems and raps about cells to our team at the end of the week. Students will be introduced to the microscope next week and they will explore the wonders of life under the microscope. Please stop by and enjoy the amazing cell models created by our students!

Ms. Maynes ~ Grade 7 ~ Science

Students in Mrs. Maynes' science class have been focusing on the structure and function of cells. We have used the microscopes to look at a variety of objects such as newspaper, onion cells and cheek cells. The students have also begun an in class project where they will compose an original song or rap that describes all of the organelles in a plant or animal cell. I am looking forward to seeing the creativity that comes from this class!

The second half of the term will be focused on the study of heredity and genetics. Students will observe the traits that make every individual unique. We will also be learning how to use a Punnett square to predict genetic probability.

As a reminder, students receive extra credit if they bring in science-related news articles. If you receive a newspaper or see an science article online or in a magazine, please share it with your child and encourage them to bring it in to class!

Mrs. Queenin ~ Grade 7 ~ Social Studies

Social studies classes have started a new unit on the rich and powerful civilization of ancient Egypt. The Greek historian, Herodotus, wrote, "Egypt is the gift of the Nile". Students will soon learn why this quote is so true. They will also learn many interesting facts about the pyramids, pharaohs, the Great Sphinx, mummification, and Egypt's gods and goddesses. Students will soon create illustrations and poems on Egyptian gods as well as make a cartouche in hieroglyphs displaying their own name.

Ms. Materazzo ~ Grade 8 ~ English

The eighth grade students are working hard on two on-going writing projects. The first is the profile project. As part of the assignment, students had the choice of interviewing a senior citizen, a veteran, and a long-life resident of Woburn or someone who has a fascinating job. Over the past few weeks, students transformed their interview notes into profiles with captivating leads, body paragraphs and conclusions.

The students are also working in groups to create children's books for Scholastic's Kids Are Authors contest. I've been impressed by the quality of their stories and by the students' creativity.

Ms. Beckwith ~ Grade 8 ~ Science

Blue team students typically find term two content to be the most challenging of the year's curriculum. It introduces chemistry concepts such as the general and specific properties of matter and then delves into the classes of matter (mixtures, elements and compounds). They do a variety of hands-on activities and labs – from working with a chalk and vinegar model to better understand chemical vs. physical changes along with acid rain's effects on limestone to making colored "mud." Yes, it was true that they made mud: a mixture of potting soil, water and food coloring which they then filtered to test the different kinds of mixtures present! They also wrote two full length lab reports in a standard format which they'll find useful in high school and beyond. In both their classroom work and their hands-on activities, they also learned to use quantitative problem solving techniques to find weights and densities to name two examples. And, we have already begun MCAS review for the upcoming May test! To complement their on-going work on Study Island, daily warm-ups will continue to drill students using past multiple choice questions and periodic open response practice should help improve their abilities in crafting four point answers!

Currently, students are studying states and forms of energy before moving on to heat and motion. After that concludes our studies in physical science, the balance of the term will expand upon earth science knowledge acquired in earlier grades, applying physical science concepts (like pressure and energy) to topics such as earthquakes. We'll conclude term three by beginning our review for MCAS of seventh grade content, largely in the life sciences.

Mr. Tropea ~ Grade 8 ~ History

Students began term two studying the adoption of the Articles of Confederation, our nation's first Constitution. They learned why the founding fathers created a weak central government, as the drafters were all too familiar with the oppressive rule of Parliament and King George III. With the War for Independence winding down, the growing pains of a new nation soon made it clear that a new plan for government would be necessary.

Students then studied the roles of the founding fathers at the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia. They discussed the major debates and compromises concerning the distribution of political power, the rights of individuals, and the rights of states. Once the Constitution was ratified and became the law of the land, the students became familiar with the various parts of the Constitution. They interpreted the Preamble, examined each article, and discussed the Bill of Rights.

Following our study of the Constitution, students became familiar with the purposes and function of government. They were asked to identify the role of the federal government, including public service, taxation, economic policy, and common defense. They also compared the role of state and local government to the federal government, and learned about the various powers of each.

Students discussed the rights and responsibilities of citizenship and how a democracy provides opportunities for participation through elections, political parties, and interest groups. They also learned about how decisions are made in a democracy, including the role of legislatures, courts, executives, and "We, the people."

At the end of term two students had just finished reading about the inauguration of our first President; George Washington. Over the next two terms, students will become familiar with the policies and administrations of fifteen more Presidents, and learn about the explosion of industry as the nation moved westward.

Ms. Carbone ~ Grade 8 ~ Spanish

In Spanish class, the students just took their Term 2 exam, which covered all of the material we covered in Term 2. They have also become more comfortable speaking in Spanish since we have incorporated our weekly "Conversation Days". On these days, we arrange the desks in a circle and have a casual conversation that practices the grammar and vocabulary studied in class, speaking entirely in Spanish.

In Term 3, we will learn even more complex grammar and vocabulary, including direct object pronouns, comparisons, commands, household chores, and healthy lifestyle vocabulary. We will continue to have weekly quizzes and the term will wrap up with a third cumulative term exam.

During Term 3, each student will also write a five paragraph comparative essay in Spanish. With practice from the short writing assignments given in class and for homework, the students will be well prepared to complete this type of assignment!

Ms. Lapolice ~ Grade 8 ~ English

Grade eight green's major Term 2 novel *The Giver* taught our students that we cannot live in a walled world. Through reading about a dystopian and futuristic society that shielded the community from pain and emotions, the students were able to value the choices, highs, and lows that are a part of real lives in our real world. The Holocaust is one of these harsh realities that we need to be brave enough to face. During our study this past term, we diligently worked on our writing through the five paragraph editorial and open response on Louis Lowry's Newberry Award acceptance speech. The students have had many writing workshops and many opportunities to reflect and grow as writers. We ended the term introducing foundational Holocaust topics to our Term 3 memoir *Night*. Each student was responsible for researching a related topic and orally presenting on it to the class. They also wrote a well constructed summary after many classes on summary writing, main ideas, and details. So far, the students have been extremely engaged and respectful in our study of the memoir. Every Friday in term three will be devoted to explicit MCAS preparation. The term ends with a new young adult novel *Speak* and an accompanying five paragraph literary analysis essay. Homework will remain a constant in this class every weeknight without fail. Vocabulary will continue to accompany the literature that we read. Finally, I encourage all my students to stay organized in order to be successful which for my class include a writer's journal, folder for each novel read, and an in class writing binder. I'm looking forward to a successful term for all!

Mr. Mills ~ Grade 8 ~ Math

The Island is getting busy – Study Island that is. Students are making great progress on this MCAS review program. Remember to look to see how many blue ribbons your children have. They should have twenty blue ribbons when we return from vacation. MCAS packets have been distributed to all students. They should average about five problems a night. As always, I am here after school on Thursdays for extra help. Please remember that the MCAS tests are given in May, so we ask that you do not schedule any trips/appointments during school time. We will be learning about linear equations and starting geometry. Please ask to see your children's homework every night. You do not need to be able to do the math to figure out how much effort they are putting into their homework. Is it written neatly? Is the answer clearly labeled? Can you follow the steps they took to get to the answer? These are the things I look for on their homework. If the effort is there, the answers will fall into place. As we come to the middle of the year, it is a good time to reassess whether or not your child needs a new notebook or more pencils. If you are looking for a great eighth grade review workbook, I recommend Math Achievement (grade eight) by Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company. You can find it in most educational stores, or it can be ordered on-line at www.carsondellosa.com, or by phone at 1-800-321-0943.

Mrs. Young ~ Foreign Languages ~ Grade 8

Grade eight Spanish students learned about the vocabulary and verb structure for daily routine and made daily routine books that topped all others! Now students are grumbling because they have to do chores at home. We are currently learning chores vocabulary and what better way to practice the vocabulary than offering to help out at home. Don't worry they are learning how to complain in Spanish, too.

Grade 8 French – France is known for its cuisine and we are deeply immersed in learning all of the foods, shops, table manners, etc. We even got to try some éclairs and crème puffs. This term we will be reviewing all verbs and learning some new ones so that we can begin to learn the past tense.

Best Buddies

We raised some money for Best Buddies by raffling off a beautiful gingerbread house, won by a Kennedy teacher Ms. Meagan and raffling off some unique prizes for students: Principal for the Day, First in Line at Lunch, etc. Best Buddies member Derek MacDonald won McDonalds lunch for himself and his friends. Derek treated his classmates and their buddies to lunch.

Students in Best Buddies have been meeting three times a week, twice during activity period and once a week at lunch. Last week we had a Where in the Joyce Activity? Buddies received pictures of various places around the school and had to go around in groups looking for these places. We also have been very busy with several other activities, crafts (snow measuring sticks) and kickball in the gym.

Please encourage and help your child to get together with his or her buddy outside of school. If you would like your child to have more contact with his or her buddy outside of school email me at jyoung@woburnpublicschools.com. Peer buddies should be going online www.bestbuddiesonline.org to do Friendship Updates the first week of each month.

Wednesday, February 15th is Movie Night for all Best Buddies in the Joyce Auditorium. The movie starts at 6:00 p.m. More details will be sent home in a newsletter. Curious Creatures: Date in March to be determined and will take place during school hours.

Ms. Stone - Science Grade 8 Green Team

Ms. Stone's classes are completing the study of Chemistry with its elements, compounds and mixtures. Although we have had fun making solutions, growing crystals, and watching Bill Nye's exciting "Chemical Reactions" movie, we will now embark on our voyage to the center of the Earth. As we travel through each layer of our Earth, we will learn about heat transfer, plate tectonics and Pangaea, the rock cycle, and the forces that affect us. We will also review some Life Science including the cell and its parts, the cell-tissue-organ-organ system connection, and the classification of living organisms. After that, we will find out why we experience day and night, the seasons, tides, and eclipses.

Ms. Freeburg ~ Music

The Joyce chorus has begun rehearsing for the annual Green and Blue. The theme this year is "Walking on Sunshine," which will include songs about summer and having fun. We are looking for a variety of student acts for the show. Auditions will be held on Friday, March 2nd and Wednesday, March 7th both beginning during activity period. Students are welcome to join the Green and Blue chorus for the event as well.

Ms. Maney ~ Library

The Joyce Library is now open Tuesdays and Thursdays, after school for any student that would like to stay and do homework or chose reading books. The late bus is available for both days.

Notes from the Health Desk with Mr. Guffey

The Joyce Ski and Snowboard Club is up and running and having a great time with some of the best skiing and riding in years.

Skiing is a great winter family activity, which offers a challenge to all ability levels. So shake off the winter blues and head out to the slopes with the kids. If you have not been on skis in years then this is the perfect time to start again and if you have never been you are never too old to learn. The new shape ski technology makes learning to ski a breeze. There is nothing like a day on the slopes to reenergize the body and mind.

Any parent of child on the ski trip is welcome to meet the kids at the mountain on February 1st and February 15th for a day of skiing at a discounted rate. The cost of the day is \$12.00 for a lift ticket. If you are looking to

rent, it is only \$18.00 more. If you are interested email me at Dguffey@woburnpublicschools.com and can give you the details.

Ms. Borelli ~ Art Teacher

Grade 6

Students just learned about self-portrait caricatures. They created charming “glow in the dark” and very funny, renderings of themselves. Also, in honor of our recent snow fall we made mixed media snowmen with lots of personality.

Grade 7

Seventh graders just completed a painting unit. They learned to mix primary colors to create secondary colors, when painting their own color wheel. We also learned how to mix tints and shades of colors which we used for highlights and shadows in paintings of hot chocolate mugs. Samplings of these delightful paintings are on exhibit in the café section of the Whole foods Market in Woburn. The public very much enjoy having your children’s art adorning their eating space.

Next up for the seventh graders will be the creation of a backdrop for this years Green & Blue. Topping last years chorus of Loonie Tune characters will be a challenge!!

Grade 8

The Green Team has been working on the eighth grade mural design, for competition. The front lobby mural was painted six years ago by eighth grader Jenisa Diaz, who is now attending Art College in New Hampshire. This is the year to paint over her work with a new creation. All students and faculty will able to vote on their favorite mural. Good luck eighth graders. May the best artist win!!

Mr. Tuzzolo ~ Geography ~ Grade 8

Congratulations go out to seventh grader Ray Pavone for winning our annual geography bee for the second year in a row. Ray will now await word on whether or not he scored high enough on the state test to qualify to represent the Joyce at the state geography bee finals in April. Great job competing to our other finalists as well! They are Matthew Burke, Mike Garcia, Dustin Ludwig, Jennifer Murphy, Andrew Crawford, Shane Crawford, Ryan Metters, Peter Lynch, and Nicholas Farfaras.

Student Council

The Joyce Student Council is preparing to help collect food and money donations for the Woburn Council of Social Concern. Students that donate 10 items or at least \$5 will be invited to ice skate at the O’Brien Rink on the Friday before February vacation. More details to follow.

Mrs. White Yelito ~ Band

The annual spring fest Band and chorus concert will take place on Wednesday, May 16th at Woburn Memorial High School. Just like last year, Mrs. White Yelito will be teaching an evening band class at the High School starting on March 15th. Please keep an eye out for signup fliers.

Please remember to check the band websites:

<http://woburnMSbands.wordpress.com> and <http://publicme.com/flutgrl>

Mrs. Daggett ~ Reading/Study Skills

Students continue to be engaged in both oral and silent reading exercises, centering on stimulating fiction and nonfiction stories. Reading with expression, volume, and fluency are modeled and encouraged. Through these instructional lessons, students strive to improve their reading skills and comprehension levels, specifically through identifying main ideas, understanding key inferences, locating essential details, identifying literary terms, expanding vocabulary, and last, but certainly not least, broadening their horizons to new and equally useful knowledge. (Students should be reviewing their literary terms for an upcoming test, as well as in

preparation for the soon approaching MCAS.) Improvement in written communication, an invaluable asset in today's competitive world and work force alike, continues to be reinforced by answering a variety of open response questions reflecting the John Collins Writing Program.

From Ms. Joyce

Sewing- Be on the lookout for gym bags and pillows. The eighth grade students are donating their quilts to an organization called Cradles to Crayons~ The Giving Factory. For more information you can visit cradlestocrayons.org/

Yearbook~ Students have been taking pictures and creating the yearbook. The cost will be approximately twenty dollars. Order slips will be available soon...Don't miss out!

ANNUAL MIDDLE SCHOOL TRACK CLINIC AND MEET

Clinic Tuesday, February 28, 2012 (3:00 – 5:00)

Track Meet Wednesday, February 29, 2012 (3:00 – 5:30)

Where: Joyce Middle School Indoor Track (gymnasium)

Hosted By: The Woburn Memorial High School
Boys and Girls Indoor Track Team

Events: **Sprint**

- 55 meter hurdles
- 55 meter dash
- 300 meter dash (2 laps)

Distance

- 600 meter run (4 laps)
- 1 mile run (11 laps)
- Relay (4 x 1 lap)

Field

- Shot Put
- Long Jump
- High Jump

Limits: Each student may participate in one running event, one field event and the relay

*Ribbons – Top three boys and girls in each event

*Trophies – To boys and girls MVP's

For Information Contact:

Coach O'Connor: 781-933-5171

Coach Curran: 781-646-0580 or cell 617-835-3712

