

# Bulldog Barks

A publication of the T/E Middle School PTO

November 2009 [TEMS PTO Website](#)

Visit [TEMS School Website](#) for more school information!



## Happy Thanksgiving

Hello TEMS Families!

It is hard to believe that we have put Halloween behind us, and are staring Thanksgiving in the face! As we approach this festive time, we hope you are enjoying the fall season and staying healthy.

At school, we have been busy with the Yvette Lewis and Tony Vacca Cultural Arts programs, the 5/6 grade fall mixer, the Scholastic Book Fair, and with fall conference scheduling. Thank you to all parent chair people & volunteers who help to make these programs run so smoothly.

Looking ahead, there are fall conferences, Thanksgiving recess, winter concerts, and the 7/8 grade winter dance. Hopefully you and your students are enjoying every busy minute!

At this time of thanks and reflection, we would like to thank you for being an important part of our TEMS community.

Warmest Wishes,

*Margaret MacKenzie*

PTO President; on behalf of the PTO Board

*\* For volunteers (or those considering it) the district "Guidelines for Volunteers" is reprinted on page 9 of this newsletter. Additionally, a copy is always available in the PTO file folder in the main office.*

**YOU can subscribe online...** If you received a paper version of this newsletter, but are able to read it online (or print it yourself), please consider subscribing to the online service via our website: [www.temsppto.org](http://www.temsppto.org). Then send a quick email to [temsppto@gmail.com](mailto:temsppto@gmail.com) so we know to stop mailing you the Bulldog Barks each month.

**Alternately – if you receive this in paper version, you still might want to subscribe to the PTO Blast Email service.** There are emails distributed that are not specifically Bulldog Barks. Visit [www.temsppto.org](http://www.temsppto.org)



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## Winter Sports Update!

Winter sports teams for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students include: boys' basketball, girls' basketball and wrestling.

- Participation paperwork is in the main office or on our sports website, due to the main office by Monday, November 23.
- There are two sets of forms – (1) one for students who did not play a fall sport and (2) one for students who played a fall sport.
- Informal sign-ups for students begin November 11 in the cafeteria.

### Wrestling...

- All interested wrestlers need to have their weight certified after school on either Mon or Tues, 11/16 or 17 in the health room.
- Information and permission slips for weight certificates are in the main office and on our [sports website](#).
- Practice for wrestling begins November 30.



### Boys and girls basketball...

- Tryouts begin November 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Tryout schedule is on our website in the sports section and posted on the bulletin board outside the main office.
- Schedule is posted on the school website, but is subject to change, check the daily hotline at 610-240-1250 or the blog at [www.temsinfo.blogspot.com](http://www.temsinfo.blogspot.com).

## Ode to the Parent Social!

*Make sure to mark your calendar because Feb 6<sup>th</sup> is the night,  
And the place for the gala is the Farmhouse at People's Light.  
It is the TEMS' Parent Social so at 7pm you must be at the door,  
To enjoy cocktails, dinner and the auction to be sure!  
This is a celebration to benefit our children, because we care,  
So join with old friends, meet new ones and "Buyers Beware"!*

**We Need Your Help!** Do you have a special talent, service or item you could donate to our Auction? Could you join with neighbors or friends to donate an item? Please email Nicole Brennan, [ntbrennan@verizon.net](mailto:ntbrennan@verizon.net).

Proceeds from this event benefit enrichment programs for our kids and smart boards for their classrooms. Invitations and Event Website to follow!

## PTO Introduces *What a Life!*

What a Life! is an exciting new program for the middle school this year. Each year, the program will focus on a specific theme. The program will have events throughout the year, which may include mini-programming, contests, independent work, group projects, and an "action day". The events will lead up to a culminating speaker or assembly day in May.

Through the program, we hope to make an impact on our children that will last a lifetime. *What a Life!* aims to ENCOURAGE kids to do their personal best, EMPOWER them to dream big and strive for those dreams, INSPIRE kids to achieve and excel, and GIVE them hope and motivation for their futures.

The working theme for this year is "Social Responsibility." To get involved with this exciting committee, or to help as a parent volunteer, please contact Jeanne Dechiario at [jdechiario@yahoo.com](mailto:jdechiario@yahoo.com) or 610.647.4692.

## Dates for the Calendar!

View current [TEMS Weekly Bulletin](#)

### November:

Nov 11	Picture Retakes
Nov 13	<b>TEMS Jazz Band</b> performs w/Tony Vacca, 7:30 pm @ VFMS – view event <a href="#">flyer</a>
Nov 18	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – Parent Conferences
Nov 19	½ <b>DAY</b> (11:33 am dismissal), Parent Conferences <i>The Middle School has a full day of school on Friday, Nov 20. Only K-4 has ½ day on 11/20.</i>
Nov 26-27	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – Thanksgiving

### December:

Dec 8	5/6 Grade Winter Concert, 7:30pm
Dec 18	7/8 Grade Winter Concert, 7:30pm
Dec 24-Jan 1	<b>NO SCHOOL</b> – Winter Recess

### 2010 *EEK!*

Jan 19	MLK Day Casserole Drive
Feb 6	Parent Social, Peoples Light 7pm

Visit the Master [TESD Activity Calendar](#)





# HEALTH ROOM NEWS

## **Breakthrough Chickenpox**

All children beginning school in Pennsylvania are now required to be protected against chickenpox disease by either having had the disease or by receiving the varicella vaccine. Parents should be aware, however, that children who have had the vaccine can still develop chickenpox disease.

The vaccine manufacturer anticipates that as many as 10 percent of immunized children may develop breakthrough infections. These are cases of chickenpox disease that have developed even though the vaccine has been given. These breakthrough cases are usually mild infections, with few lesions, and little or no fever. Children who have breakthrough disease usually have only one to twelve lesions that resemble large insect bites. They may appear any place on the body, and often do not become the fluid filled blisters usually associated with chickenpox. In addition, the second wave of blisters, which is common to chickenpox, often does not occur.

Although breakthrough chickenpox is contagious, studies are inconclusive about how the infection is spread. The incubation period continues to be 10 to 14 days, but some studies indicate that infection is spread only by the lesions, and not by respiratory secretions. Parents of a varicella vaccinated child should be suspicious, however, if their child develops unusually large, strangely located, or long remaining lesions that resemble insect bites. If your child develops unexplained lesions or a rash, please consult your family doctor before sending your child to school.

## **Attention Acme Shoppers**

Thank you for sending in your Acme Receipts!

We have collected \$29,540.95 in total receipts from September 1st - November 5th. The school receives 1% of this amount, for a total of \$295.41. As you can see, this is a great way to raise money and it does not cost a thing! Please keep the receipts coming from all Acme stores. Just send them to the main office in an envelope marked "Acme Receipts". Keep looking in the future Bulldog Barks to see our progress. Our goal is to raise \$5000.00.

*Thank you, and keep on shopping!*

## **TEMS PTO Meeting Minutes: Nov 4, 2009 Meeting**

**Welcome** : Margaret MacKenzie at 9:05am. Special visitor, Coordinator of Volunteer Services, Pattie Littlewood from the TESD main office.

### **Monthly reports:**

Mark Cataldi, Principal, reported the 1<sup>st</sup> marking period will end on 11/6 and conferences will be held on 11/18 and 11/19. A special \$10 coupon redemption program put together by the TEMS administration is in use this week during the Book Fair.

There was a lengthy description and discussion regarding the Middle School Advisory Committee that will be meeting on 11/11/09. The committee will discuss potential schedule and program changes in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades. Among the changes being discussed in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade include de-teaming and leveling in other core classes in addition to math. Mark also reported on Keystone Exams and how they will relate to TESD children. Margaret advised all parents and interested individuals to actively inform themselves regarding these topics and spend time gathering info to assist them to become well informed. The TESD website is a great resource for this info: [www.tesd.net](http://www.tesd.net).

Karen Consalo, Treasurer, reported that Marcie Tierney has completed the audit of the PTO's books for the last school year 2008-2009. YTD (for this school year 2009-2010) net income is \$4886.59 and balance in all PTO accounts is \$23,804.20.

### **Representative Updates:**

**ARCH**: Gwenn Mascioli reported next program is 11/4/09. Go to [www.archcares.org](http://www.archcares.org) for more information.

**School Board**: Gigi Miller reported District calendar is out for this school year and the next school year and can be viewed on the district site: [www.tesd.net](http://www.tesd.net). TEMS enrollment is 1011; up by a total of 26 children. Dan Waters reported that "Goal One: Curriculum" from the new district strategic plan will be the current focus. TESD has approached Easttown Township to assume responsibility of the crossing guard at Bridge Ave. for TEMS. Again, please go to [www.tesd.net](http://www.tesd.net) for further details regarding the School Board meetings.

**BUILD**: Sherri Gartner reported there will be a meeting on Estate planning for families of children with special needs to be held at 7pm on November 12 at VFMS. Meeting planned for December 1 will cover the topic of therapeutic horseback riding.

[\*PTO Minutes continue on page 7\*](#)



# From the Classroom...



## 5<sup>th</sup> Grade News

The first marking period of the 2008-09 school year is underway! The fifth graders are adjusting well to the new routines, added responsibilities, and the sometimes hectic pace of middle school. Fifth grade classroom teachers continue to emphasize preparation for class, organization, and study skills, in their core classes. By now, students should be in the habit of using their assignment books regularly to record homework, tests, projects, and any other important items. The following are updates on the exciting happenings in the various curricular areas:

### Science

Fifth graders are continuing their study of living things; plants, cells and animals are the three major components of this unit. Seeds and plants such as radishes and lima beans have been used to observe roots and learn about the inside of a seed. Students have used microscopes to view onion skin and to compare plant and animal cells. They have observed, measured, and recorded data on their Wisconsin Fast Plants and will be reviewing their hypothesis and writing the analysis and conclusion when their plant experiments come to an end. Students should study their vocabulary and review the science material on an ongoing basis.

### Math

Students are finishing their study of graphing and data analysis, and will be focusing on place value of numbers, addition, subtraction, and basic algebraic concepts.

### Reading

Currently, students may be enjoying excerpts from award-winning authors, or the progression of a novel in class—such as *Maniac Magee*. While reading in class, they are learning how to appreciate various genres of literature and gain insight into the nuances of a writer's style, as well as developing strategies to help them find the main idea, make inferences, draw conclusions, and determine cause and effect in what they read.

### S.S.

Students are continuing their study of ancient civilizations with projects and activities related to ancient China, ancient Mesopotamia, ancient Egypt, and Maps and Globes.

### English

On a regular basis students will continue to complete spelling lessons and grammar assignments to practice skills that they can then implement in their writing pieces. In the near future, students will delve into writing a personal narrative, as well as several responses to various writing prompts.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade News

**Extra Help: Teachers** are available for extra help several times during the day. Students may see teachers at the following times: activity periods, before, or after school.

**Second Marking Period Blues:** Through the years we have noticed that the second marking period is often a time when students may lose their focus on schoolwork. The newness of school has worn off and there are so many distractions. At the same time teachers are expecting more of their students. Parents are encouraged to check assignment books to make sure their child is keeping up with homework.

**Reading:** During November, on-level students will complete the reading of *Hatchet*. The film version of the novel will be shown in class at the conclusion of the novel with comparisons made between the book and the movie. Following the reading of *Shipwreck at the Bottom of the World*, above-level students will view part of a film about Shackleton and also make comparisons between the book and the film. Students will also write a reflection about their reaction to this amazing story.

In December, all classes will read an adapted version of Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*. The students will also learn about living conditions in Victorian England and study child labor conditions of that time.

**English:** Students have been working on a mini-unit about plagiarism and summarizing. This will help them when they write research reports later in the year in Social Studies and science class. Later in the month, we will be reviewing the correct form for a friendly letters and writing one.

In December, through the Family Traditions Report, students will learn about the similarities and differences of their classmates. Students will be responsible for an oral presentation explaining how their family enjoys a special time together. The presentation will focus on one favorite activity and a written report will be part of this assignment. Spelling and grammar will continue throughout November and December.

**Social Studies:** During the Months of November and December, the sixth grade students begin the study of the United States. Students will need to know the location of all fifty states and their capitals and will be writing an in-depth report combining their knowledge of the Five Themes of Geography and the study of Canada. The TEMS Library, the Internet, and other non-text sources are introduced at this time and are integral to the Social Studies program for the remainder of the year.

[6<sup>th</sup> Grade News continues on page 6](#)



## 7<sup>th</sup> Grade News



The seventh grade teachers and students are looking forward to our field trip to Bird in Hand, Pa. on Monday, Nov. 23rd (Team A), Tuesday, Nov. 24th (Team B) and Wednesday, November 25<sup>th</sup> (Team C). The purpose of this trip is to give students first hand experience with the lifestyle of the Amish. This is part of the combined unit of study in Social Studies and English class to discuss the colonization of Pennsylvania, and William Penn's desire to provide religious tolerance for everyone. The Amish are an example of religious groups who came to Pennsylvania seeking religious freedom. A "family style" lunch will be served. We leave T/E at 7:45 A.M. and will return by 2 P.M. Students will be able to take their regular transportation home. We hope this will be an enjoyable day for everyone.

Also in honor of American Education Week all parents are invited to attend a Science presentation. Team A's presentation will given by Mr. Marchiondo on Wed, Nov 11 in room 108 from 10-10:45 am. Team B's presentation will be given by Mrs. McCarrin on Tues, Nov 10 in room 107 from 9- 9:45am. Team C's presentation will be given by Ms. Wilson on Wed, Nov 11 in room 221 from 10-10:45 am.

### Classroom Highlights

**English** ... In November English classes will be focused on the issues of diversity, tolerance and understanding. Given that the United States is an inherently heterogeneous society it is important for students to consider the myriad factors that affect how people view the world in which they live. To that end students will be analyzing an assortment of sources about the issue of tolerance including pictures, movies, short stories, interviews, and novels. Students will be considering the various ways that personal background affects the way that individuals understand the world. The unit will also present continued opportunities to focus on reading, writing and thinking skills.

**Mathematics** ... In the month of November, Math 7 will be studying decimals and decimal word problems. The students will review the four operations with decimals and practice estimation concepts. Pre-Algebra will be finishing equations with integers and working on decimal equations. In this unit, the students will review decimal computation and then apply the concepts to solving equations. Algebra I will be graphing linear equations and inequalities. They will learn to calculate slope algebraically and using a graph. Geometry will be studying congruent triangles with an emphasis on proof.

**Science** ... With the new marking period some classes will transition from the "Diversity of Life" to a study of "Energy and the Environment". Students will study earth's energy resources and the environmental impacts of harnessing these resources and human lifestyles. Many students will need assistance from home with the Junk Mail lab and the Living History Interview when assigned. Students completing biosphere observations will write letters to next year's students and then move into a unit on animals, their

behaviors, and adaptations. Students are encouraged to continue the study habit of incorporating twenty minutes each evening to review and reinforce science concepts to sustain maximum success.

**Social Studies** ... Classes are studying the establishment and development of the original 13 English colonies in the New World. Political, economic and religious reasons for settlement will be examined and differences in regional lifestyles will be studied and discussed. Highlighting our study of the Middle Colonies will be a field trip to the Amish country for a hands-on examination of their unique lifestyle and its impact on early Pennsylvania colonial history.

*The seventh grade team wishes everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!*

## 8<sup>th</sup> Grade News

### ENGLISH:

In **English** classes students participate in an activity in which they can say "I object" with their teachers' approval! As a culminating exercise to the Of Mice and Men unit, each class is separated into two legal teams; the prosecution and defense teams compete against the opposition teams from other classes. Each team is responsible for preparing testimony for witnesses, presenting opening and closing arguments, conducting cross examinations of opposition witnesses, and serving as a jury to render a verdict. The novel is the only source of information for all testimony admitted into court (large group room) and all participants must adhere to legal proceedings determined by Judges Baker, McCarthy, and Ferenchick

### MATH:

**Pre-Algebra** has begun a unit on number theory. We will spend most of November in this unit and then move into the study of spatial thinking.

**Pre-Algebra/Algebra 1A** students will begin a unit on Plane Geometry and then move on to study area and volume.

**Algebra** classes are beginning the exploration of graphing linear equations, both with and without the use of graphing calculators. Students will need graph paper (1/4 inch preferred) during this unit.

**Geometry** students just finished a unit on parallel lines and planes and are beginning a unit on Congruent Triangles. Students will continue to work with incorporating new theorems into proofs throughout the first semester.

**Algebra 2** is completing the study of matrices. Extensions to pre-calculus were explored along with graphing calculator applications. The next unit explores quadratic functions, their graphs and applications.

*[8<sup>th</sup> Grade News continues on page 6](#)*



### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Continued from page 4

**Science:** Students continue to study the unit, Earth's Waters. Our next topic of study will be freshwater resources. Students will also work on various lab activities that prompt them to think about balancing water needs in modern society. The important topics of pollution and conservation will key ideas for analysis and discussion.

#### Math On-Level:

Students have completed their graphing and statistics unit. Currently they are working on an algebra and arithmetic unit. First, students will review reading and writing large numbers and ordering large numbers. Next, the pupils will explore exponents and learn vocabulary words such as base, exponent, factor, power, squared and cubed. We will finish the unit with a study of the order of operations and explore simple one-step algebra equations. Before the calendar year is over they will complete their 3<sup>rd</sup> unit of study on decimals.

Please continue to review basic facts with your children at home. This is an invaluable skill.

#### Above-Level:

Students have just completed their algebra unit and have moved on to the decimal and fraction unit. Students will first review decimal computation and solve one- and two-step decimal equations. Other decimal topics to be covered are estimation, scientific notation, and ordering decimals. After completing study of decimals, students will explore how decimals connect to fractions and begin the background for the fraction unit.

#### Pre-Algebra:

Students have completed the unit on integer equations and will use that knowledge as they move on to Chapter Three and the study of decimal equations. Students continue to apply the rules of integers and balanced equations they learned in the previous two chapters. Next up: continuing and connecting those same skills with fractions.

**Did you know:** *The United States uses about 346,000 million gallons of fresh water every day.*

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Continued from page 5

#### SCIENCE:

Students are continuing their study of weather and climate. In the first two chapters of our Weather and Climate textbook, we investigated the structure of the atmosphere, how air pressure and temperature vary in the atmosphere, and weather factors like incoming solar energy, heat transfer, winds, moisture content, and types of precipitation interact to produce weather. Over the next few weeks students will construct their understanding of weather patterns, climate and climate change. They will use the Riverside Scientific weather modeling programs, Cyclones, Winds, and Clouds. Students will study storms, weather safety, and weather forecasting. Students will get more practice reading weather maps. Climate topics such as climate regions, long-term changes in climate, and global changes in the atmosphere will lead us into our upcoming study of Geology.

#### HISTORY:

In **American history** classes, students are concluding their study of the executive and judicial branches of the government. They are also completing individual reports on the 27 amendments and how these rights affect lives. Analyzing the impact of Marbury v. Madison and other significant cases on judicial power are also topics for discussion.

## Green Piece...

With the holiday season approaching, retailers will want you to buy new electronics. But what should you do with your old electronics to keep them out of landfills?

Here are a couple of suggestions of what to do with cell phones, computer equipment, televisions, MP3 players and more.

- First, right in our area the non-profit group Tredyffrin & Easttown Care accepts donations of used but working computer equipment (especially towers and thin monitors). These donated computers are cleaned up and given to students who do not have a computer at home, something most of us take for granted. Check out ALL the details at [www.tecare.org/computers](http://www.tecare.org/computers).
- Second, the website [www.Earth911.com](http://www.Earth911.com) allows you to search for a recycling location for anything by zip code or address. It also has lots of interesting information about recycling.

If you have any questions or ideas you'd like to share, please contact Julia Fisher at [jjfish3@verizon.net](mailto:jjfish3@verizon.net).

tredyffrin & easttown  
CARE



Earth911.com  
Making Every Day Earth Day™



*TEMS PTO Meeting Minutes continued from page 3*

### **Old Business:**

- Approve 10-7-09 meeting minutes: motion to approve by Kristin Schappell, Karen Consalo seconded. All in favor: yes.
- Thanks to all volunteers to date by Margaret. Ongoing effort to recognize all the help the PTO receives.
- Milk Crate Mailbox: reminder that it is in the main office near Mark's door and is a resource for forms and distribution of PTO information.
- Keep signing up for the newsletter!
- Save & send in grocery tapes!
- **"What a Life!"** (New Lives Well Lived Program) savings account will remain as a separate PTO bank account to be used in the future to help fund the program.

### **New Business/Upcoming Events:**

- **Scholastic Book Fair**—this week! Breakfast event held before school hours on 11/4 has approx. 20 shoppers and parents attending.
- **Upcoming Fundraising Efforts/Parent Social:** Kristin Schappell reported the TEMS eblast last week highlighted the Parent Social. The committee's current focus is auction items and invitations. Kristin commented that the focus for the monies raised is on smart board installations and

enrichment programs for students; funded by the PTO. Mark reported that the staff is responding well to his request for their auction items. The 5/6 Social is in the planning stages; final budget number to be voted on in the winter when we have firm number from the committee.

- **MLK Day Casserole Drive** is planned for 1/19/10. Mary Schwartz is chair of this community outreach event. Food is distributed to local shelters and churches.
- **Cultural Arts budget review:** Margaret explained need for additional \$2725 to support all programs for this school year. Kristin S. made a motion to approve the increase and Karen C. seconded. All in favor: yes.

**Wrap-Up: 10:05am: meeting adjourned/Next meeting: February 3 (2010!) @ 9:00am**

*Important Dates/Events printed in Calendar on page 2*

### **Link to TESD**

- [October School Board Committee Meeting Summaries.](#)
- [Action Line](#) a recap of Oct 26 School Bd Meeting.

## **Curriculum Study: Looking Ahead**

The T/E School District is in the process of examining its curricular program in order to consider program changes to meet the strategic planning goal of preparing students with the skills and knowledge to be leaders and contributors in the 21st century.

**Possible Program Modifications:** During the 2009-2010 school year, the District will review the current 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade programs to consider changes that would better equip students with essential skills. The social and emotional well-being of 7th and 8th grade students will continue to remain the paramount focus in any discussion about middle school program change. If the middle school program can support revisions that would enable students to earn high school credit for successful work, additional opportunities will open for these students as they progress through high school.

The District will also study whether Conestoga students are better served with a 7 period schedule, resulting in increased time per instructional period, or through the current 8 period day with increased opportunities for small group mentoring or instruction. A review of the high school schedule is needed to determine the degree to which it can facilitate new learning environments and opportunities.

The District middle school program was implemented for grades 5-8 in 1993, and the current high school schedule was implemented for grades 9-12 in the fall of 1992. While the

schools have evolved to incorporate new educational research, federal and state mandates, and District strategic initiatives from 1996, the essential design of the middle school and high school schedules has remained intact since 1992-1993. An examination of each program structure is essential to determine whether or not the current programming can address emerging needs.

In addition, all non-mandated programs, including Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) and the world languages program, will be studied to determine the degree to which the initial goals of the programs have been achieved. The District will also discuss opportunities for incorporating science and other special area subjects into the elementary school day. As with any potential program modification, the District will review the financial implications of the changes as part of the decision making process. However, the recommendations from these studies will be based on District strategic initiatives and options for students that will best prepare them for college and the workplace of the future. These considerations are the result of three factors: strategic planning initiatives, new electronic learning environments and state testing requirements for student proficiency.

*Continued on page 8*



*Curriculum Study: Looking Ahead. Continued from page 7*

**Strategic Planning Process:** In 2008, the T/E School District completed a strategic planning process that created a mission for the District to inspire a passion for learning, personal integrity, the pursuit of excellence and social responsibility in each student. The plan emerged after approximately 900 instances of involvement of students, parents, community members, Board members, teachers and administrators through planning committee work, brainstorming sessions, focus groups, interviews, and action teams. The Committee recognized the importance of preparing students for anticipated and unanticipated challenges that lie ahead through the development of 21st century skills and creative learning experiences. These 21st century skills and experiences center around global and community partnerships, social responsibility, and boundary-less classrooms that use technology for creating problem-solvers, critical thinkers, self-directed learners and collaborative workers.

**New Electronic Learning Environments:** With each passing year, new technologies create exciting opportunities to learn in ways that transcend classroom walls. Electronic learning courses promote education that does not only take place within the walls of a school or during an eight-period day. Chronicle Research conducted a poll of colleges about on-line learning. One-third of respondents predicted that by 2020, students will be taking up to 60% of college coursework on-line. The state of Michigan currently requires an on-line learning experience as a high school graduation requirement.

Learning environments without physical boundaries present great opportunities for students in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades. Currently, Conestoga students have the opportunity to participate in an exploratory on-line coursework pilot for courses that would otherwise have been canceled. In the near future, students may have the additional opportunities to gain experiences in areas that may include, but are not limited to:

- Expanded opportunities to earn college credit on university campuses, at Conestoga or electronically.
- New opportunities to take electronic courses for high school credit.
- Independent study. Students develop a topic to research or study and work with a teacher to meet learning goals.
- Expansion of established internship programs and the addition of year or semester long career explorations. Students could gain work experience and earn credit through established partnerships with local businesses.
- Service learning projects. Students could design and deliver community service initiatives to earn high school credit.
- Entrepreneurships. Students could work with a teacher to develop a business plan and manage a self-started business to earn credit.
- Other experience-based learning opportunities discovered by teachers and students. Many programs such as these are already in place in schools across America. For students to take advantage of these enriched opportunities, they will need to demonstrate proficiency in core academic subjects in Gr 7-10.

**State Testing Requirements:** In August 2009, the State Board of Education voted to approve final regulations that will change high school graduation requirements for Pennsylvania students. These regulations introduce a new series end-of-course tests called Keystone Exams. The regulations are in the final form pending approval by the State. If these new requirements are enacted, students will be tested for proficiency in 10 continued on page 3 courses: Algebra 1, Geometry, Algebra 2, Biology, Chemistry, World History, U.S. History, U.S. Government, and 2 exams in English Literature and Composition. Passing scores must be earned in six of these courses to qualify for a high school diploma. Many of these required courses are administered to students prior to 11th grade.

For years, middle school students have experienced success in courses with high school rigor. For example, a majority of students in the T/E School District take Algebra 1 while in middle school. In addition to math courses, all students study two years of world languages in middle school and are able to begin studying high school curriculum in the third year of language instruction. Beginning as soon as the 2010-2011 school year, many of these students will take an exam required for graduation while in middle school.

**Looking Ahead:** On September 21, 2009, Superintendent Dan Waters addressed the School Board and the community during a presentation on District Goal 1: Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment. In his presentation he stated, "If we continue to do things in the same manner... I don't think we will be doing [students] a service in preparing them for the 21st century. We are at that decision point at this time."

The curriculum study and possible recommendations will be discussed at School Board Education Committee meetings. Please visit the T/E School District web site at [www.tesd.net](http://www.tesd.net) for upcoming meeting dates, agendas and updated information. An eleven minute video of Dr. Waters' presentation on Goal 1 from the September School Board meeting is also available on the TESD web site at [www.tesd.net/goal1.htm](http://www.tesd.net/goal1.htm).

As part of a global community, T/E students must attain and develop skills that allow them to participate in collaborative relationships within and beyond our community. We will work to prepare our students for jobs that demand critical-thinking skills, problem-solving skills and the ability to adapt to new experiences and new technology. We invite your comments as we study our curricular program and look ahead to building a 21st century learning environment.

*Prepared by the Tredyffrin/Easttown School District  
Public Information Office October, 2009*



## Student Council Letter

**By: Jake Scott, Student Council President**

The beginning of the year for the 2009 Student Council has hit hard!

With loads of work that needed to be done, I think our gifted group of young over-achievers have put in their all. The first event we sponsored at TEMS was the Welcome Back Dance. This dance, held in late September, was quite a success because the music was superb, the decorations set the fall-like scene, and the dancing was off the charts.

The next major event sponsored by Student Council was our 6<sup>th</sup> annual Pink Day. As always, it was a huge success. We raised vast amounts of money for the American Cancer Society by selling pink t-shirts, ribbon and stickers along with soft pretzels and pink lemonade. In all, we raised \$3,130 dollars for the American Cancer Society in just one day! I think TEMS should be very proud of our efforts and satisfied with our contributions to the very worthy cause.

Another major school-wide event that we sponsored this year was our annual Magazine Drive. By selling magazines, students from TEMS raised money to help fund our many student activities throughout the school. This is our only school wide fundraiser held all year. In return for their fundraising efforts, many students earned prizes like roomerangs, Kanye sunglasses, radios, and even iPods. The culminating event was a dunk tank, in which students who had sold 6 or more subscriptions could try to dunk a teacher of their choice in the dunk tank. There were MANY wet faculty members at the end of it!

October was a busy month for us, because after the magazine drive we also had the annual 5/6 Mixer. This party provided 6<sup>th</sup> graders and their underclassman 5<sup>th</sup> graders a chance to mingle, eat, and hit the dance floor. We entertained the young students with many games to play. For example, the Guess-The-Weight-of-The-Pumpkin, limbo contest, costume contest, and dance competition were a few hits. The food was outstanding, the students were smiling, and the enjoyment of the mixer was in the air.

Along with these three major events, Student Council has run a couple of spirit days. In addition to all our events, we have been planning to make the school and its future occurrences more fun for our students. Our next two big events are the Canned Food Drive collection in early December and the annual Snow Ball, a semi formal dress up dance for 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders on Friday, December 18<sup>th</sup>. There will be more information on both those events out soon. So far, I think we have been doing an excellent job fulfilling these duties and look forward to the rest of the year!

## Guidelines for Volunteers

Volunteers play an important role in the quality of life in all Tredyffrin/Easttown schools. The assistance and support they offer to staff and students is invaluable and their contributions are part of what make our schools special. The following guidelines have been developed to assist you in serving in this unique function. Offering to volunteer in any district school assumes your understanding and agreement with these guidelines.

### CONFIDENTIALITY:

Information you may see or hear can affect the lives and futures of individual students. Volunteers must respect the privacy of this information and maintain the same in strict confidence. This same standard of confidentiality applies to policy statements, school procedures and district reports.

### RELATIONS WITH STUDENTS:

Volunteers are viewed by students and parents as representatives of the School Board and the School Administration, and are perceived by students as authority figures. When issues or a personal or controversial nature are raised by students, volunteers are placed in a difficult position. While working in a volunteer capacity in school or at school-related activities however, volunteers must refrain from debating, discussing or imposing their opinions on students on personal or controversial issues.

### RESPONSIBILITY FOR STUDENTS:

Teachers bear the ultimate responsibility for the welfare of students during school activities. When working with students, or chaperoning field trips or school activities, parent volunteers must report all incidents of inappropriate behavior or situations in which students might be in danger to the teacher in charge of the activity.

### ATTENDANCE:

School personnel depend upon and plan for the assistance of the volunteers on a regular basis. Volunteers are encouraged to notify the various personnel with whom they work as far in advance as possible if they are unable to help in their regular time slot.

*Concerns or questions about the guidelines or volunteer assignments should be referred to the Coordinator of Community and Volunteer Services at (610) 240-1913.*

## ***B.U.I.L.D. invites you to: Planning for the future: Estate Planning for Special Needs Students***

- Presented by: Randy Hope Steen, JD, Director of Estate & Business Analysis, Karr Barth Associates/AXA Advisors
- Thursday, November 12 at 7pm at Valley Forge Middle School
- RSVP now to: Wendy Brooks: [wenobrooks@aol.com](mailto:wenobrooks@aol.com)

*Save the date! **Tuesday, December 1** for a presentation on **Therapeutic Horseback Riding** by Marie Lewis and Mark Comyns of Hope Springs Equestrian Therapy*



Visit the [T/E Bulletin Board](#) for all sports and community information!



## Bulletin Board Sampler as of 10/9/09...

- ☑ [Conestoga Youth Boys Lacrosse Registration, Grades 1-8](#)
- ☑ [Valley Forge National Historic Park Free Movie Nights in November](#)
- ☑ [New Eagle Elementary School Sports Equipment Drive](#)
- ☑ [Conestoga Theatre Presents, "Radium Girls", 11/19-21](#)
- ☑ [Tredyffrin Township Winter Recreation Program](#)
- ☑ [Tredyffrin Library's Kids Talk Books Club for Grades 4-6](#)
- ☑ [Valley Forge National Historic Park Educational Programs](#)
- ☑ [Health Career Showcase for High School Students, 11/10](#)
- ☑ [PA Dept of the Treasury 529 College Savings Plan Sweepstakes](#)
- ☑ [Pioneer Quix Stix Spring 2010 Registration Begins 10/1](#)
- ☑ [YMCA Teen Dances for 2009-2010 School Year](#)
- ☑ [Youth Football & Cheerleading League Challenger Division](#)
- ☑ [Valley Forge Basketball League for Boys in Grades 8-10](#)
- ☑ [YMCA Afterschool Club For Kids Aged 10-14](#)

Visit the [T/E Bulletin Board](#) frequently!

## Volleyball for 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade girls

Ka-Hoots is a recreational volleyball program (formerly the TE half of the Gryphon program) for 5th-8th grade girls who are interested in learning the sport of volleyball or want to improve their skills. The program runs from 12/1/09 - 3/6/10.

We will hold our practices and game play at Conestoga High School. Practices will be Monday nights from 5-7pm. Players will be broken up by age and will practice from 5-6pm or 6-7pm depending on their group. Match play will be held on Saturdays from 1-3pm. We will be playing against the Radnor program some days and will travel to Radnor for some Saturday scrimmages. Times may change due to events at the high schools.

The program will be run by the head Varsity and JV coaches from Conestoga High School. The cost of the program is \$150 and all checks should be made out to CHS VB boosters.

- To receive a registration form, contact Diana Felker at [dk@grantspark.com](mailto:dk@grantspark.com).
- Registrations are being accepted now.

## Spring 2010 Boys Lacrosse Registration

Conestoga Youth Lacrosse, the boy's lacrosse program for residents of Tredyffrin/Easttown in grades 1 through 8, is currently accepting registration for new and returning players.

Registration for the 2010 Spring Season is **ONLINE ONLY** and is OPEN NOW. Please visit our website at: [WWW.CYLAX.COM](http://WWW.CYLAX.COM) to learn more about the program and register. If you would like to talk to a coach prior to registering or wish to be guided through the registration process, please send an email to [cylax@comcast.net](mailto:cylax@comcast.net) and we will contact you personally.

Online registration closes on Sunday, Jan 17, 2010.



# School Board Update



Summaries of School Board Committee Meetings for **October 2009**

Visit [www.tesd.net](http://www.tesd.net) and click on 'School Board' for meeting dates, agendas and minutes.

## Education Committee, Chair: Debbie Rollins

*Prepared by: Committee Liaison*

*Reviewed by: Committee Chair*

The Education Committee received a report on the 2010-2011 School Calendar. The Committee recommended the adoption of Draft Calendar I, which will be presented to the full Board at their October 26, 2009 Regular School Board Meeting. Since Labor Day is late again with the holiday falling on September 6, 2010, the Committee recommended a calendar for the 2010-2011 school year with school beginning for students on September 1, 2010. This calendar configuration provides a schedule that allows school to end on a reasonable date in June 2011 and also incorporates the holidays of Martin Luther King Jr. Day and President's Day. The 2010-2011 calendar is currently available on the T/E School District web site at [www.tesd.net](http://www.tesd.net).

The Committee received a report on Preliminary Staffing Allocations. The Committee recommended proceeding with the budgeting process based on straight line around the target sectioning with additional enrollment positions funded from the contingency fund.

Lastly, the Committee received a report on Special Education.

## Facilities Committee, Chair: Pete Motel

*Prepared by: Business Office*

*Reviewed by: Committee Liaison*

The Facilities Committee met on October 16. The Committee heard from community members who thanked the District's grounds crew for the fine work they completed at all of the schools over the summer. The Committee briefly discussed the facilities and infrastructure plan, how they were created and how and when they are used.

The administration provided a status report on the District's construction projects. There were no change orders for the month and all of the 09-10 projects are in the punch list phase. The Committee also discussed the possibility of taking down a large tree located next to T/E Middle School that is unbalanced and diseased. The Committee asked the

administration to continue evaluating the status of the tree before a final decision is made.

The Committee then heard a presentation on the Districts network. Information was provided concerning the network's current ability to provide single cast for video streaming and the possibility of providing multi-cast in the future. The Committee then discussed the possible future need for multi-cast service and the cost to provide that service. The Committee requested a 3 to 5 year plan for the network, similar to the District's infrastructure report. The plan should be updated annually.

The District architect presented the most current version of the infrastructure report. The latest version of the report listed activity for each year through 2018. The Committee also received the architect's fee schedule for the 2010-2011 projects that the

Committee agreed to send to the Board on the consent agenda.

Next, the Committee discussed the green roof project. The administration informed the Committee that personnel from Valley Creek are attempting to confirm with the roof manufacturer that the existing warranty will remain intact after the HES green roof project is completed. The Committee noted that the District should wait until the Committee's questions have been answered before holding meetings with the neighbors surrounding the school.

## Finance Committee, Chair: Kevin Mahoney

*Prepared by: Business Office*

*Reviewed by: Committee Chair*

The Finance Committee met on October 12, 2009. The Committee heard a report from the administration summarizing the District's finances through the first quarter of the 2009- 2010 fiscal year. The administration highlighted revenue items that need to be closely monitored since the collections of those revenues have been below the monthly budgeted amounts. It was also noted that the ARRA IDEA revenue will be higher than the budgeted amount. Using the percent of monthly budgeted revenues collected the administration provided a projection of total revenues for the



year. These revenue projections are being examined weekly and will be updated each month.

Next the administration presented a report showing the 2009–2010 through 2012-2113 projected revenues and expenditures. The Committee discussed the projections and the reasons for some of the significant changes in the projections compared to the current budget.

The Committee reviewed a report showing last year's Act 1 referendum exceptions compared to this year's Act 1 referendum exceptions. The Committee discussed using all or a portion of the exceptions as a way to fund state and federal unfunded mandates. The Committee agreed that it is too early in the budget process to certify that we will be able to stay under the index and to use or not use the exceptions.

The Committee discussed the Capital Source and Use report. The Committee discussed using fund balance and or debt to fund the projects listed on the report. The Committee also asked that Michael Wolf, from Boenning & Scattergood, Inc. be invited to the next Finance Committee meeting to discuss possible debt options.

The Committee finished the meeting by briefly discussing old business concerning copyright and trademark issues and the Tredyffrin Township's winter recreation program. The Committee asked the administration to develop a list of items or wording to be trademarked or copyrighted.

### **Policy Committee, Chair: Liane Davis**

*Prepared by: Committee Liaison  
The Policy Committee met on October 1<sup>st</sup>.*

The Committee recommended that the following revised policies be sent to the full Board for a second reading at the October 26<sup>th</sup> meeting: Draft Policy 1131, Parent Organizations; Draft Policy 7100, Gifts and Bequests to the District; Draft Policy 5332, Student Publications; Policy 5113, Procedures for Enforcing School Attendance; Revised Policy 5342, Public Performances and Community Services by Students; and Draft Policy 5343, Contests and Other

Competitions for Prizes Involving Students. No policies were sent to the Board for a first reading.

The Committee discussed, suggested revisions and will review the following policies at their meeting on November 5<sup>th</sup>: Policy 5228, Awarding of Diploma to WWII and Korean War Veterans; Draft Policy 5400, Students' Rights and Responsibilities; Draft Policy 5420, Unlawful Harassment of and By Students; Policy 5414, Restrictions on the Use of Electronic Devices (Students); Policy 5422, Student Accident and Injuries; Policy 5436, Reporting Suspected Child Abuse.

### **Public Information Committee, Chair: Pat Wood**

*Prepared by: Public Information Office*

The Public Information Committee met on October 8<sup>th</sup>. The Committee received an update from the administration on the communications plan for 2009-2010 draft goal 1, curriculum planning. Information on goal 1 will be communicated through on-line video, programs on T/E TV, articles in the T/E Insight and PTO newsletters and web site updates. All information will also be communicated through the District's community email notification program. The Committee also reviewed a draft document, *Curriculum Study: Looking Ahead*, that will serve as the basis for communication on goal 1. The Committee's suggestions were incorporated into the document and it will be sent to the full Board for input.

The Committee discussed the development of a policy on requests to access T/E students. The Committee's comments will be sent to the Policy Committee as they begin the development of the policy on requests to access T/E students.

The November *T/E Board Talk* program will feature a segment on goal 1, curriculum planning, and a segment on safe practices for Web 2.0 technology.

Finally, the Committee reviewed topics for discussion at an upcoming community civic association meeting.