



February 2010

Quaboag Regional School District News Letter

Decisions are made in the best interests of our students.



February signals that Valentine's Day is just around the corner and it also means that we are entering the *heart* of budget season. Our preliminary numbers from the state indicate that we have another tough road ahead of us for fiscal year 2011. In an effort to hear from all stakeholders of the community, the QRSD has scheduled several budget focus group meetings. **All meetings are public and I strongly encourage all members of our school community to attend these meetings.** To date, the QRSD administration has met with the W.B. finance committee. Our remaining budget schedule is as follows:

- Monday, February 1-** Budget focus group session **for parents** 7PM (QRMHS Library)
- Tuesday, February 2-** QRSD administration meet with Warren Selectman 7 PM (Shephard Bldg.)
- Thursday, February 4-** Budget focus group session **for parents** 7PM (QRMHS Library)
- Monday, February 8-** Budget focus group with QRSD staff 3:30PM (QRMHS)
- Tuesday, February 9-** W.B. Selectman's mtg. 7:30PM (W.B. Town Hall)
- Thursday, February 11-** Discuss budget with Warren Capital Planning 7PM (Shephard Bldg.)
- Friday, February 12-** Discuss budget with community 11:15AM (Warren Senior Center)
Discuss budget with QRMHS students 2:15PM (QRMHS Library)
- Tuesday, February 16-** Budget subcommittee mtg. 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)
- Monday, February 22-** QRSD School Committee mtg. 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)
- Tuesday, February 23-** Budget Subcommittee mtg. 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)
- Thursday, February 25-** Discuss budget with community 10:00AM (W.B. Senior Center)
- Tuesday, March 2-** Budget subcommittee meeting 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)
- Tuesday, March 9-** Budget subcommittee meeting 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)
- Monday, March 15-** Initial budget presentation 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)
- Monday, March 16-** Budget subcommittee meeting 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)
- Monday, March 22-** QRSD School Committee adopts a budget 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)

Working together, I am confident that we can provide a safe, supportive, and challenging learning environment for our students. As always, if you have any questions, comments, concerns, or suggestions please contact me at bkustigian@quaboag.org or 413-436-9256.

Brett Kustigian, Superintendent of Schools

The mission of the Quaboag Regional School District is to form a partnership with parents and the community to prepare our diverse population of students to become lifelong learners in a nurturing, safe environment with high expectations so they will become responsible, productive citizens in an ever-changing global society. Most importantly, decisions are made in the best interests of our students.

Quaboag Regional High School News

Congratulations to our Southern Worcester County League 2009 Fall All-Stars. Boys Soccer: Sean Ramsey (First Team); Girls Soccer: Meghan Burns (First Team), Brianna Fleming (First Team); Golf: Cameron Young (First Team), Josh Toppin, Connor Fairbanks; Football: Jake Thompson, Jon Santucci; Field Hockey: Olivia Jankins (First Team), Kaitlyn Ramsey (First Team), Jess McCann (First Team), Haylie Dolan (First Team), and Shelby Jankins. **Special congratulations to Olivia Jankins** (Class of 2010) for being selected to the “Best of 60” All-State Field Hockey All-Star Team!

Second quarter report cards will be issued to all students in grades 7-12 on Friday, February 5th. If you have any questions or concerns about your child’s progress, please do not hesitate to contact his or her teachers and guidance counselors to schedule a meeting.

Get Involved! QRMHS is seeking **community input and participation** in our upcoming accreditation visit from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC), scheduled for 2012. In order to prepare for their visit, we are forming a committee of parents, students, teachers, and community members to help establish the core values that we share as a school community and to review our expectations for student learning. We need your input! Please email Greg Myers, QRMHS Principal (gmyers@quaboag.org) if you are interested in learning more and serving on a committee. **THANK YOU!**

Quaboag Regional is looking forward to hosting **Mr. Gator Collet**, a highly-regarded motivational speaker, on February 10th. Mr. Collet will deliver a presentation to grades 9-12 designed to inspire students to make good choices, rise above peer pressure, and set worthwhile goals.

A search committee made up of teachers, students, and parents is currently forming to review applications, interview candidates, and hire our next **QRMHS Assistant Principal**. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please email Greg Myers, QRMHS Principal.

Stay involved! We are currently looking for parent and community volunteers to serve on the QRMHS School Council, which meets monthly to discuss school improvement initiatives. In addition, we are committed to extending our library’s hours of operation and are looking for after-school volunteers. If you are interested in either opportunity, please email Greg Myers, QRMHS Principal.

The faculty, staff, and administration of Quaboag Regional Middle / High School remain steadfast in achieving our vision to create a school where all students may achieve at the highest levels. We are mission-driven, student-centered, and always seeking to improve. If you have any questions or concerns about your student’s experience or if you have suggestions ideas that might make our school better, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me anytime.

Quaboag Regional Middle School News

The Middle School is keeping busy! A group of 8th graders visited Pathfinder Regional Vocational Technical High School on Tuesday, January 12, accompanied by Mr. Robbins, Mrs. Griffin, Ms. Ducomb, and Ms. Doleva. These students were given a tour of the Pathfinder facility and visited with some of the faculty and staff, including former Quaboag principal Dr. Michael Rooney, who has assumed a role in the Pathfinder Guidance Department. **In the 7th grade, “Science Friday”** has become an exciting focal point for application of student knowledge. Each week, students in Mrs. Lariviere’s classes don lab coats or scrubs, name badges, and scientist identities in an effort to solve scientific problems with real-life parallels. Students explore the critical thinking, problem solving, and laboratory techniques that are employed in medical, forensic, and environmental capacities while having fun! Also in the 7th grade this month, students will be participating in an **MCAS Essay Contest** as a way to help prepare for this spring’s exam. Students will be given a writing prompt to which they’ll respond, as well as scoring rubric and exemplars in order to help them identify both strengths and areas for growth in their own writing. **Our middle school teachers are committed** to preparing students for the myriad of challenges facing them, both immediate and long term!

Greg Myers, Principal

Mary Dernalowicz, Interim Dean of Students

Quaboag Guidance Department News

Congratulations to **Zachary Button** who has been chosen as one of Comcast's Leaders and Achievers Scholarship recipient! After being nominated by the staff, Zac worked extremely hard on the application and essay, which has definitely paid off!

The MCAS Re-test for Biology will be Monday, February 1st and Tuesday, February 2nd.

Ms. Doleva recently went to a MEFA (Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority) Seminar on Financial Aid. She received some information that will be useful to all parents in grades 7-12:

“MEFA Emails to Parents provide helpful hints about college admissions and financing and important deadline reminders. Parents of seniors receive emails with important deadline reminders and helpful tips on topics like: estimating income for the FAFSA, comparing financial aid award letters, and options for paying the balance due. Parents of juniors receive emails with advice to help them stay on track through the college enrollment process and also on topics that include: beginning the college search, making the most of college fairs, and common financial aid myths. Parents of students in grades 7th through 10th receive emails with suggestions and strategies to help students maximize their high school opportunities and prepare for college along with topics that include: establishing good study habits, making an academic plan, and getting involved in your school and community.”

Register for these emails online at www.mefacounselor.org

Guidance will be holding their Career Day on Thursday, April 15th from 9:30 AM until 12:00 PM. Each presenter will give two 30-minute presentations and briefly explain their occupation, education necessary for their job, training/skills, job projection, their typical day and more. Among these presenters will be an attorney from the D.A.'s office, a baseball team manager, an environmental police officer and a mortician! Students in grades 9-12 will be given the opportunity to sign up for the presentations on the careers that they would like to learn more about.

The Scholarship Application Night was held on January 21st from 6:00 pm until 7:00 pm in the high school library. Senior students were given the opportunity to stop in the library and pick up applications for the scholarships being offered this year. They were handed a directory of all the scholarships when they walked in the door which gave them the criteria and requirements for each one. About 45 students and parents took advantage of the night. The scholarships are still available in Guidance for any student who could not make it that evening.

The registration date for the March SATs is February 4th (late registration deadline is February 18th). To register online go to www.collegeboard.com. For a paper registration form please see Mr. Nicholson or Ms. Doleva.

Grades close on Friday, January 29th. Report cards will be handed to the students in their homeroom on Friday, February 5th. Vocational applications for Pathfinder and Bay Path are due to Mrs. Griffin before February vacation.

Warren Community Elementary School News

Preschool and Kindergarten students were treated to a puppet show put on by Pumpnickel Puppet Theatre and funded by a grant from the Local Cultural Council. This grant was obtained thanks to the initiative of pre-school teacher Mrs. Despres. The production was a performance of fairy tales.

We recently had Kelly Ally, one of our BSRI consultants, come to spend the day with us working with the teachers from Grades one and two. The purpose of her visit was to review with the teachers some useful tips for encouraging and improving writing skills with young writers. After working with the teachers, Kelly also modeled a lesson in both a first and a second grade class. The teachers will now continue to incorporate these new skills into their regular writing classes.

Parent Conferences are being scheduled for those parents requesting a conference on Thursday, February 11th. This will be an early release day, with conferences schedule from 12:30-3:00, and again from 5:30-7:30.

On Thursday, Jan. 28th our sixth grade Leadership Club sponsored a pj's for Haiti day. Students and staff wore pajamas and/or slippers, voluntarily making donations for the Haitian relief efforts. The leadership students, under the watchful eyes of Teacher Leaders, Dan Howe and Barry Seligman, counted the donations and they collected \$1,007.00. Along with the \$233 teachers have donated for Friday Dress Down Day, we are able to send to the Red Cross a total of \$ 1240.00

After a very frustrating installation period, and thanks to the persistent efforts of computer wizard Bob Sullivan, we are able to actively begin using our mobile lab of lap-top computers throughout the building. This new lab of computers was purchased with some of our Title I grant money. We will begin introducing them to the upper grade students and as the students become more familiar with the units we will bring them into the primary classrooms also. Although these lap top computers will have specific reading and math intervention programs on them, we are also looking forward to the opportunity of having the ability of doing other computer based projects on them also.

Emergency Early Dismissal: For those of you whose child(ren) are not going home the usual way, please make sure we are updated in writing for our records.

Tedd Brown, Principal

West Brookfield Elementary School News

West Brookfield Elementary School makes winter time COOL!

On Friday January 22, 2010 we held our first Family Game Night. It was a huge success with many families coming out to share board games and lots of laughs. It was such a success that we will definitely be hosting another one!

We have a newly created 6th Grade Student Council. These selected students have already met and they have begun to brainstorm ways in which to improve our school. One of their first tasks is to raise money for relief efforts in Haiti. They decided to sell freeze-pops during lunches on Friday. A cool way to raise money for sure!

Our estimation jar was a fun activity this past month. We had three different winners that ALL guessed the EXACT amount. Congratulations **Samuel Berthel, Amelia Ashworth, & Kyle Champoux!** This month we are looking at conversation hearts...how many will there be?

December Students of the Month: **Nate Damon, Walker Gill, Abigail Bouchard, Ryan Seeton, Nathan Embair, John Marty, Robert Wilson, Jack Luyrink, David Lapierre, Tyler Kubert, Brian Tinker, Jacob Giguere, Michelle Ochieng, Aaron Morgan.**

January Students of the Month: **Owen Guzik, Jacob Harder, Julianna Gorham, Adam Bolaske, Jake Cromack, Jenessa Embair, Kiaria Locke, Robert Butler Jr., Shayla Dorman, Alexandra Mendenhall, Amelia Ashworth, Kailyn Fellmeth.**

West Brookfield Walks: We are still walking to school on Tuesdays and now we have one more reason for everyone to get involved. Not only is it good exercise and better for the environment, but now you can get a sweet treat too! *Sweet Arts* is donating healthy cookie coupons to all students who walk to school on Tuesdays. These coupons can be redeemed on the walk home after school. Thank you *Sweet Arts!*

Hope for Haiti: Students at every grade level have come up with ways to raise money for relief efforts in Haiti. Coins from our Couches Campaign will run all week. Students are asked to bring in extra change from around their houses. There will also be lollipop sales, bake sale, and a freeze pop sale as well as slipper day and Colors of Haiti day. We hope everyone will be able to participate in some way for this great cause.

Colleen Mucha, Principal

District Technology News

After working out some technical bugs we finally have the mobile laptop cart up and running at Warren Community. Mr. Bob Sullivan is working with the staff to ensure all of the notebooks remained charged and the units stay “damage free”. We have another Smart Board in the high school. It will be a shared resource for the Science department and keeps us moving forward with new technologies. We continue to work with Savy Software to design the new website. They just started the actual design phase during the last week of January, so hopefully, we will have a new website up and running by month’s end.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns, mmeehan@quaboag.org

Michael Meehan, Technology Director

District Wellness News

School Nutrition News - On January 19 and 21, nine of our district school nutrition staff completed the *National School Nutrition Association Healthy Edge* training program. Staff that attended were: Kim Harrington, Melissa Mansfield, Sonia James, Jennifer Morin, Tammy Grondin, Lynne Tkatz, April Demetrius, Debbie Brunk, Trudy Sullivan. ***Congratulations to our School Nutrition Staff!*** This course is required to become state and nationally certified with the School Nutrition Association.

Updates from USDA - National Nutrition and Professional certification standards are in the final stages of approval with USDA and we are actively preparing our staff by providing this and other quality professional development and education programs. We are very proud of our staff and the contributions that they make each day providing quality nutritious meals and service to all students. Also, there will be an expansion of the Mass. Farm to School Project, which Quaboag Regional is actively participating. Spring workshops will be held mid February to discuss distribution – related challenges and to create regional cooperative planning groups for schools. Bringing more locally grown foods into our school lunch program is an important initiative.

Important News: On January 27, 2010, the MA House just passed what is titled as the **School Nutrition Bill**. The bill impacts what foods and beverages are served and available for sale in all schools venues. The bill covers physical education, school nursing and related health and wellness components. The bill has moved onto the Senate this week for final wording and is very likely to pass in this session. The School Nutrition Association and MA DPH are among a long list of organizations supporting the bill to improve the health and well being of children in MA. The current bill has been re-submitted with revised wording, and we will be following the outcome closely.

The bill will impact all food and beverage sales served on school property. These weblinks will offer preliminary information on Senate House Bill #861 and House of Rep. Bill #4438.

<http://www.mass.gov/legis/bills/house/186/ht04pdf/ht04438.pdf>

http://www.mphaweb.org/documents/CommunityActiontoChangeSchoolFoodPolicy_000.pdf

[\[source.bronto.com/928/public/09_Wellness_Agenda/School_Nutrition_Bill_Fact_Sheet.pdf\]\(http://source.bronto.com/928/public/09_Wellness_Agenda/School_Nutrition_Bill_Fact_Sheet.pdf\)](http://hosting-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

From February 27 – March 3, Janice King, School Nutrition Director, will be one of a group of 14 representing MA and the MA School Nutrition Association, traveling to Washington, DC, to work with national leaders to request additional funding for school nutrition programs. At the Legislative Action Conference, the School Nutrition Association has the unique opportunity to hear and learn more about the issues that shape and define national policy related to school nutrition. MA members will meet on Capitol Hill with our elected legislators of the U.S. Congress. Janice will be sharing our district priorities as a school nutrition director. We will receive updates from the representatives of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, as well as political insights from this year's keynote speaker, Amy Walter, one of the nation's top political forecasters. It is through direct contact with legislators that we can pursue congressional support for important legislative priorities, especially the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act.

QRMHS - From January 27 - February 12, we are hosting Ashley Christman, a BS degree student from St. Joseph's College in West Hartford, CT. In order to complete her internship and qualify for the national exam to become a Registered Dietitian, she needs to complete rotations in various industries and one of Ashley's intern sites is in school nutrition. We are proud to host her and present the professional school nutrition program we have at Quaboag. While here, she will also be completing three required projects to help our department. One of these projects is related to assisting us in data collection to complete our HACCP Food Safety policies and procedures manual.

WBES - April Demetrius, Head Cook at WBES takes a special interest in her students and this month she has specially decorated her kitchen with signed hearts from all students! Students share that school lunch is the best part of their day and with dedicated staff including Rose and Paula, children have a friendly smile and a nutritious meal each day. Thank you!

WCES - This month, school nutrition staff in WCES and WBES will be providing a special story book time for children in PK and K. Staff will read **The Two Bite Club** to students to begin our series of nutrition education in the classroom as a complement to the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program! For a sneak preview, follow this link! The short story was developed to introduce **My Pyramid** for Preschoolers and to young children. Parents are encouraged to read this story to your children at home. It includes a coloring page, a blank certificate and fun activity pages. We want to grow healthy eaters!!! <http://teammnutrition.usda.gov/Resources/TwoBiteClub.pdf>
 Follow-up Reminder:

Free and Reduced Price School Breakfast and Lunch: If you have submitted an application for Free and Reduced price meals and were declined or were assigned the reduced price category, or if you are currently paying for meals and you are experiencing challenges with financial resources, please log onto this site and complete the SNAP calculator <http://www.gettingfoodstamps.org/Screenner2/> which will let you know if you *may* qualify for food stamp benefits, then, you can continue through the prompts and download the SNAP application and send to the local Southbridge office.

The bottom line is, if you qualify for SNAP you will automatically qualify for FREE priced breakfast and lunch. Even though you might only qualify for \$10 per month in SNAP benefits, this qualifies your children for near \$800 in FREE Breakfast and Lunch at school to support their nutritional needs. Call Janice King if you need any assistance at 413-436-5991 x1922.

The Sharing Cupboard in West Brookfield at the First Congregational Church is our community pantry. Hour of operation are Wed. 10 – 12 noon and on Thursday evening from 7 – 8:30 pm. You will need your driver’s license and proof of the number in your household. No income verification is required. Member area served is residents of Warren, West Warren, and West Brookfield. If you have any questions, please call Janice King if you need any assistance at 413-436-5991 x1922.

Important District Dates & Reminders



February 1	WBES QMHS	PTG golf tournament meeting 6:30 pm- library MCAS Retest: Biology Session 1
February 2	QMHS District	MCAS Retest: Biology Session 2 Meet w/Warren Selectman 7PM (Shepherd Bldg)
February 4	District WCES	Budget focus group for parents 7PM (QMHS Library) 10 AM Gr. 4-6 Bully Presentation w/Joe Wocik
February 5	QMHS WCES	Second Term Report Cards Issued Banking for Maine
February 8	QMHS WCES	12th Grade Assembly: “Making College & Career Count,” 10:30am PTO Meeting 6:30
February 9	District WBES	Budget focus group with QRSD staff 3:30PM (QRMHS) CAP program sponsored by YWCA for parents WBES library @6:30
February 10	District WBES	W.B. Selectman’s mtg. 7:30PM (W.B. Town Hall) PTG meeting w/Bedtime Stories 6:30pm- WBES Library

February 10	QMHS	Guest Speaker: Gator Collet
February 11	WC/WB District	½ day Parent Teacher Conferences Discuss budget w/Warren Capital Planning 8PM (Shephard Bldg)
February 12	QMHS District	EDLINE Updated Discuss budget w/community 11:15AM (Warren Senior Ctr.) Discuss budget with QRMHS students 2:15PM (QRMHS Library)
February 15-19	District	February vacation No School
February 16	District	Budget subcommittee mtg. 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)
February 22	District	QRSD School Committee mtg. 6:30 (QRMHS Library)
February 23	District	Budget Subcommittee mtg. 6:30 (QRMHS Library)
February 24	WCES	Family Math Night 6-7PM
February 25	District	Discuss budget with community 10:00AM (W.B. Senior Center)
February 26	WCES	Gr. 4-6 Academic Status Reports go home

March:

March 2- Budget subcommittee meeting 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)

March 9- Budget subcommittee meeting 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)

March 15- Initial budget presentation 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)

March 16- Budget subcommittee meeting 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)

March 22- QRSD School Committee adopts a budget 6:30PM (QRMHS Library)

2010 Spring MCAS Schedule: WBES/WCES:

Grade 3: ELA: March 23 & 24

Math: May 11 & 12

Grade 4: Long composition: March 22

ELA: March 25 & 26

Math: May 13 & 14

Grade 5: ELA March 23 & 24

Math: May 11 & 12

Science: May 17 & 18

Social Studies: May 20 & 21

Grade 6: ELA: March 30 & 31

Math: May 19 & 20