

Estabrook Newsletter

September 25, 2009

Principal's Message

Greetings! We have had spectacular September weather and the students are enjoying every minute of learning and playing. It might feel like we have been back to school for a long time, but actually it has only been seventeen school days! Teachers often refer to the opening six weeks of school as the most important weeks of the school year. This is because we model, practice and celebrate learner expectations. For all students, direction-following, learning and transitioning throughout the school day is hard work. We are so proud of their effort Kindergarten through Fifth Grade!

In addition to teaching and learning, our teachers have been also been hard at work in fall professional development opportunities. Estabrook teachers have taken part in the district's diversity curriculum training, Aimsweb training (an online progress monitoring tool for reading in Grades One and Two), Fasttmath training (an online math fluency program), teacher induction training, the English Language Arts Curriculum Review Committee, the District Professional Development Committee and the Anti-Bias Committee. Most recently, we have centered our work on establishing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs.) PLCs are teams of teachers who set student achievement goals and work collaboratively to achieve those goals. A PLC team protocol is a rigorous tool that requires teachers to aggregate and analyze current student performance data, develop strategic goals, create a team action plan, progress monitor student learning and refine instruction, so that all students can learn to high levels. The power of the Professional Learning Community process is that it allows us to combine our collective expertise to serve all students proactively and strategically. Our teachers are experts in their fields. When we come together as Professional Learning Community teams, we have an enormous collective impact on examining, teaching and refining learning. For all of us on staff, Professional Learning Communities are at the heart of our professional work and one of the most meaningful ways we create growth for all children.

There is no school on Monday, September 28th!

The Innisbrook Fall Fundraiser has been extended and all orders are now due on Friday, October 2! The PTA appreciates your ongoing patience in placing your orders for giftwrap for our major fundraiser this year. This major fundraiser helps support many PTA programs, including ACT (assemblies for all grade levels performed by professional theater, music, dance, and puppetry groups). Estabrook receives 50% of the proceeds!

To order please:

- visit www.innisbrook.com
- select "EZ" to enter your order
- enter our school number: 118190
- register your student
- enter your order
- print a voucher



Don't forget to return your voucher and your payment (a check payable to "Estabrook PTA") to the Innisbrook box in the main hall – thanks!

For students, some exciting Estabrook before school happenings are beginning such as Math Olympiad and Grade Five Basketball. Stay tuned for other enrichment opportunities, such as Chess Club, Poetry Club and a new Book Club, which are headed our way. Returning to Estabrook this year will be Thursday afternoon band. All-Town Orchestra however, will continue to be held at Bridge School.

Teachers, parents and principals can never overemphasize the importance of daily reading. Children benefit from all kinds of varied reading experiences, such as visiting the library, listening to their parent read and ask questions, reading to a younger sibling, reading print in their environment, reading children's magazines, reading poetry books, reading joke and riddle books, and online

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reading games and activities. At home, a child can have fun selecting his or her favorite types of reading and parents can support by promoting decoding (sounding out skills), comprehension (asking deep critical thinking questions), fluency (smooth, even reading) and concepts (highlighting ideas such as “setting,” “theme” or “author’s intent.”) No matter what the homework is, reading daily is critical for every child in the growing and learning process. You might want to check out these websites for younger children: www.literactive.com (requires you to register) and www.starfall.com. For slightly older children, check out: <http://kids.nationalgeographic.com/> and Smithsonian’s <http://www.si.edu/kids/>. Enjoy and happy reading!

Warmest regards,
Sandra A. Trach
Principal

Site Council Election

Would you like to help our new principal set this year’s goals for Estabrook and our school community? Consider running for Site Council.

Under chapter 71 of the Massachusetts General Laws, every public school must have a council made up of equal numbers of parents and staff members to advise the principal in the following areas of school life:

- assist the principal in adopting educational goals for the schools;
- assist the principals in the identification of the educational needs of the students;
- assist principals in the review of the annual school budget; and
- assist principals in the formulation of a school improvement plan.*

** LPS Elementary handbook, p. 64*

Estabrook’s Site Council needs one additional parent representative for the 2008-2009 school year. The term will be for two years. The Site Council will meet once a month at a time to be determined by the council.

The parent community is responsible for voting in the parent representatives. If you are interested in running for a seat on Estabrook’s Site Council, please submit your name and a short bio including your reasons for wanting to be on Site Council to the PTA by Wednesday, September 30th. There will be a PTA folder in the Front Office to collect all submissions. Ballots will be sent home on Friday, October 2.

If you have any questions please contact Margaret Counts-Klebe at margck@yahoo.com or (781) 862-4933.

Parent Notice: Change in Height and Weight Regulations from Dept Public Health

School Nurses were recently notified of a change in the state law about completing heights and weights for elementary students. Only grades 1 & 4 will be measured for height and weight (not grades K, 2, 3 and 5). This is because in addition to the completing the heights and weights for students in grades 1 & 4, the state is requiring a Body Mass Index (BMI) calculation and a written report sent to the parents of these students.

The height and weight measurement for grades 1 & 4 as well as the hearing screening (grades K-3) and the vision screening (grades K-5) will take place on October 9, 13, and 16 at Estabrook School. Please contact the school nurse, Karen Palm, with any questions or concerns: (781) 861-2520.

Lexington Education Foundation Trivia Bee

Thursday, November 5, 2009, 7:00 p.m., Cary Hall

Calling all trivia buffs! The Lexington Education Foundation (LEF) will be holding its bee-loved annual Trivia Bee on Thursday, November 5, 7:00 p.m. at Cary Hall. More than 40, three-person teams will be competing by answering trivia questions in a “final Jeopardy”-style format. There is no limit to the number of teams a school can send -- last year, one school had four teams -- and we want to ensure Estabrook is well-represented. The more teams we have, the greater the chance that an Estabrook team will be crowned Lexington’s Masters of Minutia! An individual, group, or company can sponsor a team with the \$375

Save the Date for these upcoming events:

Reception for all PTA Committee Chairs
Wednesday, September 30 at 7:30 PM at the home of Gretchen Reisig, 10 Morris Street

Family Photo Day
Saturday, October 3

PTA Meeting
Monday, October 5 @ 7:30 PM in the school gym

School Pictures
Friday, October 16

International Heritage Potluck
Wednesday, October 21 @ 6:30

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tax-deductible fee that helps to support the LEF grant programs that enhance educational excellence in the Lexington Public Schools. For more information, or to sponsor or register a team online, please visit the secure website at www.lexedfoundation.org or call us at 781-372-3288. Sign up soon -- the deadline for team entries is October 16!

Greenhouse News

Lets talk dirt! Nine years ago the Greenhouse opened it's doors to the Estabrook children and staff. Estabrook is the luckiest school in town! Last weekend my family had the opportunity to meet with David Horton, Gretchen Denison and Harold and Helen Millican. They are the group who

started the greenhouse. We spoke about all the wonderful things that took place over the years. We also talked of ideas for the future. Everyone left with great hope. We will be setting up a meeting of the Greenhouse very soon.

The Greenhouse will be open every Thursday from 8:45 to 4:00 PM for people to come by and drop off the seeds they have collected. You will find the box inside on the table. On October 1st from 8:30 to 9:15 and 12:00 to 1:30 Mums will be on sale in the Greenhouse. Come by and save some money. You will be helping out the greenhouse and looking good for the fall.

Questions? Call Beverly Tringale 781-862-2228

Watch us grow!