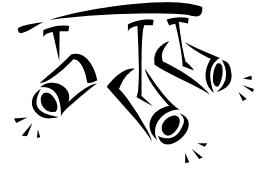




## WHITIN MIDDLE SCHOOL

120 Granite Street  
Uxbridge, Massachusetts 01569  
Main Office: 508-278-8640  
Fax: 508-278-8639



NELMS Spotlight School

Ronald J. Farrar, Principal

Amy Mayer, Assistant Principal

### **Monthly Report – April 2008** **Ronald J. Farrar, Principal**

#### **Overview of Activities for April**

- Whitin School Monthly Faculty Meeting on April 7
- Whitin School Council Meeting at 1:00PM on April 9
- Whitin Middle School PTO Monthly Meeting on April 9
- Whitin Spirit Week Activities April 16, 17, 18
- First Steps Math Training April 14, 15, 30
- Keys to Literacy Training April 11, 18

#### **Subject/Course/Classroom Activities**

**Monthly Faculty Meeting:** The monthly meeting for Whitin School faculty was held on Monday, April 7. The faculty meeting agenda included attention to the following topics: curriculum planning projects, MCAS testing, and report card timeline, and an update on the budget. A copy of the complete faculty meeting agenda is attached.

**First Steps Professional Development:** Whitin hosted 3 days of training in First Steps in Mathematics. Teachers from all over the Blackstone Valley participated with 15 teachers from Whitin and Taft. This program is designed to develop and expand teachers' understanding of mathematics. It also provides teachers the tools needed to diagnose, plan, teach, and evaluate in their classrooms.

**Keys to Literacy Professional Development:** 9 Whitin teachers participated in a 2 day professional development program. This program is a comprehension and study strategies program for grades 4 through 12. The program emphasizes the integration of reading and study strategies using existing content teaching materials, and can be used in any content area. Teachers found this program to be beneficial.

**Whitin Middle School Student Council Spirit Week:** On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup>, and 18<sup>th</sup> the Whitin Student Council encouraged all Whitin students and staff to participate in Spirit Week. Each day had its own theme. Themes included, hat day, twin day, and spirit wear day. The effort of the student council has been a great asset to our school.

**MCAS-Prep Classes:** A special program of classes to prepare selected students for upcoming MCAS tests is being offered at Whitin School during the month of April. The classes are held in the morning and after school. Students have been grouped for instruction by grade level. Classes are being taught by Whitin Math teachers. Students receive instruction and practice using MCAS test math questions.

**Student Selected to Speak at NELMS:** Grade 8 student Corey Gomes was selected to introduce keynote speaker Kathy Hunt Ullock during the NELMS 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference. Corey provided a brief autobiography of Ms. Ullock and assisted in setting the tone for the morning session. The staff is proud of his efforts.

**Hoops for Heart:** Once again this year, Whitin School physical education teachers, Dean Tourangeau and Jen Hill, have coordinated plans for students to participate in the Hoops for Heart fundraiser for the American Heart Association. A great job and a well deserved thank you to our student as their effort has made a difference in the world.

**Grade 8 End of Year Activities:** The spring semester is a busy and exciting time for grade 8 students and their parents. Important events and activities such as MCAS testing, planning for high school, class trip, dinner dance, yearbook, grade 8 debates, and promotion night are scheduled for the upcoming final weeks. Following is a calendar of upcoming activities for grade 8 students:

May 23	Grade 8 Class Trip to Six Flags New England Park
June 9	Dinner Dance at a location TBA
June 12	Grade 8 Promotion Night Ceremony
June TBA	Grade 8 Debate

Copies of parent newsletters relating to grade 8 activities are attached for your review.

### **PTO Reports and Parent Information**

**PTO Monthly Meeting:** Whitin School PTO held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 9, 2008 at 6:30PM in the school library. A group of parents have been attending PTO monthly meetings. Copies of PTO meeting agenda and monthly Parent Newsletter are attached for your review.

### **Upcoming Events:**

May 2	Curriculum ½ Day
May 3	Central District Concert at Bellingham High School
May 5-9	Teacher Appreciation Week
May 9	Social Grades 5-6, Dance Grades 7-8
May 12-29	MCAS Testing Grades 5-8
May 14	School Council Meeting
May 14	PTO Meeting
May 23	Flying Squadron
May 23	Grade 8 Class Trip
May 26	Whitin Band Marches in Memorial Day Parade
May 29	Grade 6 Science Fair Expo
May 30	Great East Competition
May 30	Grade 5 Spelling Bee



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Ronald J. Farrar, Principal

Amy Mayer, Assistant Principal

Date: April 7, 2008  
To: Whitin School Faculty  
From: Mr. Farrar & Ms. Mayer  
Re: Faculty Meeting

**Faculty Meeting Agenda for April 7, 2008**

- Whitin Carrot(s): Thanks for the MCAS effort and cooperation
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Report Card Grades: Due by April 9
- May MCAS Schedule (See attached)
- Four Weeks to Improve MCAS Scores: Study Island
- Review Calendar of Activities for April
- School Council Update: Handbook
- Crisis Team Update
- Professional Development:
  - First Steps in Mathematics
  - Keys To Literacy

Whitin Middle School PTO Meeting  
Wednesday April 09, 2008  
**6:30pm** in the Whitin Library

## Agenda

- ❖ **Review March Meeting Minutes**
- ❖ **Review Treasurer's Report**
- ❖ **Calendar of Upcoming Events**
- ❖ **MCAS Test Schedule**
- ❖ **Update on Superintendent's Gala**
- ❖ **Update on School Council**
- ❖ **Grade 8 Class End of Year Activities**
- ❖ **Plans for Social and Dance in April**
- ❖ **Plans for Teacher Appreciation Week (May5-9)**
- ❖ **Update on Sports Program for the Spring 2007**
- ❖ **Plans for Grade 4 MoveUp Night/MoveUp Day**
- ❖ **Plans for Fall Fundraisers**
- ❖ **Budget Update**
- ❖ **Upcoming Events**
- ❖ **New Business**

**WHITIN MIDDLE SCHOOL PTO**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
Wednesday March 12, 2008

**Attendance**

Andrea Consoletti, Laura Derderian, Chris Holt, Ron Farrar, Nancy Hanson, Kay Klos, Kristin Laverty, Amy Mayer, Maria Morales, Michaelle Phillips, Lisa Rooney, Chris Stack, Tracy Wagner

**Review of Meeting Minutes from February 13, 2008**

Minutes from the February meeting were accepted as written.

**Treasurer's Report**

The treasurer's report was accepted with a balance of \$28,871.85. Financially, we are in good shape to start next year. We won't have to do as many fundraisers.

**Calendar of Upcoming events**

March 14 Faculty/Student Basketball Game  
April 2 Band Concert - Central District  
April 11 Social and Dance

**MCAS Test Schedule**

MCAS schedule received. All grades will be tested between March 24 and April 4.

**School Council**

Revisions in handbook under conduct were made. Teachers will be reviewing at the next faculty meeting. Cell phone use becoming a big problem. This policy will also be reviewed.

**Grade 8 Class End of Year Activities**

Renee Bianco is the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class advisor. The activities are:

Field Trip May 23  
Debate June 6  
Dinner Dance June 9  
Promotion Night June 12  
Last Day of School June 12

There are 160 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. The estimates for the dinner dance are between \$3,000 and \$5,500. PTO voted and approved to allot \$4,500 for the dinner dance.

# Plans for Social and Dance

Both the social and Dance will be held on Friday April 11. The class advisors are looking into renting a karaoke machine for both. It will be used only in the cafeteria. There will be some snacks provided.

# Plans for Teacher Appreciation

The schedule for Teacher Appreciation Week May 5-9 is as follows:

Mon - PTO will provide fruit tray for Teacher meeting

Tue - PTO will provide a gift for teachers

Wed - PTO will be sponsoring a lunch for teachers

Thu - Student Council will be providing a gift for teachers

Fri - PTO will be sponsoring a breakfast for teachers

The fruit and breakfast will be ordered from Janice Watt, school catering.

The lunch will be ordered from Colleen's Catering, Uxbridge

Maria to update the letter, asking parents to donate deserts and drinks.

Catalogs were passed around to pick out possible gifts. We will discuss next month.

## Fundraisers

There was a discussion for the need to send a thank you letter to all parents for participating and helping out with all of the fundraisers this year.

There was a letter sent out Monday telling of the last two fundraisers for the year. From the bulb purchases, we will receive 50% profit. From the cookie sales, we will receive 45%. If parents sell 3 cookie items, they get an entertainment coupon book.

## New Business

- Study Island competition doing well
- Uxbridge Special Ed Pack - conference to be held April 5. PTO will donate \$200 as in years past
- A request came from Mrs. Penza to pay the buses for the band concert. \$1750 was approved
- A request from the Grade 5 team to pay foto journalist, Brian Skerry who will be giving a presentation. \$500 was approved
- Two frames have been designed and built for the Hero Art by the High School students. This was paid for from the school budget. They will also be building frames for the other three art pictures.
- 300 chairs were purchased from the school budget
- Walmart grant should be available soon
- Shaws receipts program - bring in Shaws receipts since 2005 and get a percentage of money back.

- Nancy Hanson gave an update on putting together a slide show of pictures for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade promotional night. She has not received many pictures to date but parents have until the middle of April. She needs music ideas.
- The PTO donated 4 tickets (\$200) to the Superintendent's Gala as in years passed.

The next meeting will be held Wednesday April 9, 2008.

Submitted by,  
Maria Morales  
Secretary



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**NEWSLETTER FOR PARENTS OF GRADE 8 STUDENTS**

**The Spring Semester is an Important Time for Students and Parents**

*The spring semester is traditionally a busy and exciting time for our grade 8 students. Important events and activities such as MCAS testing, planning for high school, class trip, dinner dance, yearbook, and promotion are scheduled for the upcoming final weeks. This special newsletter is intended to keep students and their parents informed about these varied upcoming events.*

**Third Quarter Report Cards**

The third quarter for Whitin students ended last week. Report cards have been sent home to parents along with this newsletter. Parents/guardians are asked to sign the report card envelope and return it to the student’s homeroom teacher as soon as possible.

**“Tips for Success” for Grade 8 Students**

The Principal will hold meetings with grade 8 students to offer suggestions relating to schoolwork and to stress the importance of making good choices during the final weeks of this school year. The enclosed copy of “Tips for Success” was reviewed with all classes. Hopefully, parents can take a moment to discuss this information with students.

**Yearbook News**

A committee of students is working hard to design the 2008 edition of the Whitin Middle School Yearbook. Faculty members Michael Flanagan and Cathy Chauvin are serving as Yearbook Advisors. Order forms for the 2008 Yearbook were recently given to students. A copy of the Yearbook order form is attached for students who did not order a yearbook. The cost of our school Yearbook is \$20.00 – the deadline for ordering has been extended to Monday, May 14, 2008.

**May MCAS Test Schedule for Grade 8**

**Grade 8**

Mon. May 19  
Tues. May 20  
Wed. May 21

**Mathematics**

Math Session 1                      11:00-2:00 PM  
Math Session 2                      11:00-2:00 PM  
Math Make-Up                        11:00-2:00 PM

**Grade 8**

Thurs. May 22  
Tues. May 27  
Wed. May 28

**Science & Technology**

Science Session 1                    11:00-2:00 PM  
Science Session 2                    11:00-2:00 PM  
Science Make-Up                      11:00-2:00 PM

### **Grade 8 Class Trip – Preliminary Information**

This year's Grade 8 Class Trip to Six Flags New England is scheduled for Friday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>. For many people, there is one simple reason to go to an amusement park: the rides. Whitin School students will find an even better reason to go: math and science. Students will spend Friday, May 23<sup>rd</sup> at Six Flags where volunteer instructors will help them learn about physics and math. To prepare for our trip, students will be expected to complete a course of study in science and math classes that involves learning formulas and strategies for calculating specific events. Upon completing these lessons successfully, the reward will be a visit to Science and Math Day at Six Flags. Students will be given activity packets, and park instructors will provide lessons and experiments geared especially for 8<sup>th</sup> graders. Students will be expected to record observations, answer questions, and investigate different physical events throughout the day. This cross-curricular activity should prove to be a positive learning experience for all of us.

Please note: Grade 8 students will be required to complete all trip related assignments in order to participate on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. Any student suspended from school may be excluded from the trip.

### **Grade 8 Dinner Dance**

The annual Grade 8 Dinner Dance is scheduled to be held on Monday evening, June 9<sup>th</sup> at a Location TBA, from 6:30-10:00P.M. This event represents the last opportunity for 8<sup>th</sup> graders to meet socially as a class. The following preliminary information is intended to help parents plan for this event.

The dinner dance is not a high school prom. Parents are asked to cooperate by keeping it simple. Gowns, extravagant dresses, and tuxedos are too formal. Flowers are not necessary. Limousines are not appropriate. The dinner dance is not planned as a couple's event.

Students can have a good time. For boys, a shirt and tie or a collared shirt with slacks (no jeans) is appropriate. For girls, dresses, skirts or dress slacks are good choices. Your cooperation and support will be greatly appreciated.

### **Grade 8 Promotion Night Ceremony**

Thursday Evening, June 12<sup>th</sup> in the Whitin Gym  
Awards – Recognition – Promotion Certificates

### **Make Good Choices – Think Before You Act**

On School Busses – In the Halls – In the Lunchroom  
Avoid Teasing and Bullying – Attitude – Effort – Respect  
Suspension Could Lead to Exclusion from Events

**Additional Parent Newsletters that include detailed information about upcoming grade 8 activities will be sent home as plans for each event are finalized.**

## Tips for Success for Grade 8 Students During the Final Weeks

### Schoolwork is Priority #1...

- Pay attention during classtime
- Complete homework assignments
- Plan for study time each day
- Prepare for tests and quizzes
- Use your school time wisely
- Plan to do your best on MCAS
- Practice a “can-do” attitude
- Get extra-help if you need it

### Make Good Choices: Stop-Think-Act...

- You have choices
- Choices have consequences
- Some are positive
- Some are negative
- Some will affect you
- Some will affect others
- Some will happen now
- Some will happen later
- Some will change the future
- Think before you choose

### Making Good Choices is Especially Important...

- On school busses
- In the hallways
- During lunchtime
- At dismissal time
- To avoid teasing and bullying
- When using the internet
- When meeting deadlines
- Every other time

### Upcoming Events for Grade 8...

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| April | Blackstone Valley Tech (BVT) Admissions                           |
| April | Grade 9 Course Selection for Uxbridge High School                 |
| May   | Deadline for Ordering School Yearbook (May 14 <sup>th</sup> )     |
| May   | MCAS Testing Schedule (May 19-21 & May 22-28)                     |
| May   | Grade 8 Class Trip to Six Flags Park (May 23)                     |
| June  | Dinner Dance on June 9 <sup>th</sup> Location TBA                 |
| June  | Promotion Ceremony on June 12 <sup>th</sup> in Whittin School Gym |



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## MCAS TEST SCHEDULE FOR SPRING 2008

### Grade 5

Mon. May 12  
Tues. May 13  
Wed. May 14

### Mathematics

Math Session 1 8:00-10:15 AM  
Math Session 2 8:00-10:15 AM  
Math Make-Up 8:00-10:15 AM

### Grade 5

Thurs. May 15  
Fri. May 16  
Mon. May 19

### Science & Technology

Science Session 1 8:00-10:15 AM  
Science Session 2 8:00-10:15 AM  
Science Make-Up 8:00-10:15 AM

### Grade 5

Tues. May 20  
Wed. May 21  
Thurs. May 22

### History & Social Studies

History & Social Sci. Test 1 8:00-10:15 AM  
History & Social Sci Test 2 8:00-10:15 AM  
History & S.S. Make-Up 8:00-10:15 AM

### Grade 6

Tues. May 13  
Wed. May 14  
Thurs. May 15

### Mathematics

Math Session 1 8:00-11:00 AM  
Math Session 2 8:00-11:00 AM  
Math Make-Up 8:00-11:00 AM

### Grade 7

Mon. May 12  
Tues. May 13  
Wed. May 14

### Mathematics

Math Session 1 11:45-2:00 PM  
Math Session 2 11:45-2:00 PM  
Math Make-Up 11:45-2:00 PM

### Grade 7

Thurs. May 15  
Fri. May 16  
Mon. May 19

### History & Social Studies

History & Social Sci Test 1 11:45-2:00 PM  
History & Social Sci. Test 2 11:45-2:00 PM  
History & S.S. Make-Up 11:45-2:00 PM

### Grade 8

Mon. May 19  
Tues. May 20  
Wed. May 21

### Mathematics

Math Session 1 11:00-2:00 PM  
Math Session 2 11:00-2:00 PM  
Math Make-Up 11:00-2:00 PM

### Grade 8

Thurs. May 22  
Tues. May 27  
Wed. May 28

### Science & Technology

Science Session 1 11:00-2:00 PM  
Science Session 2 11:00-2:00 PM  
Science Make-Up 11:00-2:00 PM