

WHITIN MIDDLE SCHOOL

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

Operational Report – September 2008 **Ronald J. Farrar, Principal**

Overview of Activities for September

- Whitin PTO Monthly Meeting at 6:30PM on September 3
- Music Department Instrument Demo Assembly for Grade 5 on September 5
- Whitin School Monthly Faculty Meeting on September 8
- Annual PTO Back-to-School Night for Parents on September 9
- Music Department Instrument Rental Night for Parents on September 12

Subject/Course/Classroom Activities

Music Department: The Whitin School Instrumental/Band program has a record-setting student enrollment to begin the new school year. At current time, there are 174 students in grades 5-8 who will be participating in band and instrument class lessons. Mr. Rob Hammerton and Mr. Nick LaPete have joined Mrs. Penza in providing instrument lesson classes for the large enrollment of students. Band membership by grade: grade 5 = 85, grade 6 = 21, grade 7 = 42, grade 8 = 26.

Also, the music department is implementing a “team” approach in Grades 5-12 this year. Instrumental music lessons and ensembles are being taught by Mrs. Penza, Mr. Hammerton, and Mr. LaPete and the vocal ensembles are directed by Mrs. Rapoza, Mr. Hammerton and Mr. La Pete. In addition, Mr. Hammerton is teaching several classes at the Taft School and Mrs. Penza is teaching a section of Instrumental Music at Uxbridge High School. The bands at Whitin are directed by Mrs. Penza and the Whitin School chorus is being co-directed by Mrs. Rapoza. Best wishes to the Whitin Middle School Music Department for a successful school year.

Field Trip to Spirit of America: On September 19th, the Grade 5 students and members of the Whitin Middle School Marching Band attended the U.S. Army’s performance, Spirit of America at the Worcester DCU Center. The show celebrates the spirit, strength, and history of our nation. The students were treated to musical performances as well as disciplined rifle drills. Over 280 students, staff, and parents attended this event. Thank you to all the family members who chaperoned.

School-Wide Reading: Research has shown that reading and literacy has a direct effect on academic success, yet middle school students are reading less and less. For this reason, the district has implemented a school-wide reading time. For at least 15 minutes every Friday, students at Whitin Middle School will be Dropping Everything and Reading. This is the second year the program has been in place. Teachers and students report positive results.

Whitin Whalers Climate Committee: This year a group of Whitin teachers have created a group that has as a focus to promote and sustain a positive culture in the building. This group has been busy planning events for the staff. The effort and commitment by these individuals is appreciated.

PTO Reports and Parent Information:

PTO Report: Whitin School PTO held its monthly meeting on Wednesday, September 12 at 6:30PM in the school library. A group of Whitin parents attended this meeting. Copies of the PTO meeting agenda are included for your review.

Parent officers of Whitin PTO for 2008-2009:

Laura Derderian	Co-President
Nancy Hanson	Co-President
Andrea Consoletti	Co-Treasurer
Michaelle Phillips	Co-Treasurer
Tracy Wagner	Secretary

Parents Back-to-School Night: The annual Back-to-School Night program for Whitin parents was held on Tuesday evening, September 9. Back-to-School Night is a popular program for parents that is always well attended. A special parent newsletter relating to Back-to-School Night is included.

Extracurricular Activities:

Interscholastic Sports: The fall athletic season is underway at Whitin School. Students in grades 5-8 are participating in cross country. Students in grades 7-8 are involved in soccer and field hockey. Each team is off to a “fantastic” start.

Whitin School Athletic Team Coaches:

Cross Country	Dean Tourangeau, Jen Hill, Debbie Sawyer
Boys’ Soccer	Colin Gordon
Girls’ Soccer	Mike Catalano
Field Hockey	Lauren Bouchard

Extra-Curricular Activities: Whitin Middle School proudly offers many after school activities for students to become involved in. These include intramural sports, interscholastic sports, and a variety of clubs. Currently running activities include:

Cross Country	Chorus
Boys’ Soccer	Robotics
Girls’ Soccer	Student Council

Upcoming Events:

October 1	Whitin PTO Meeting (Library at 6:30PM)
October 3	Celebration of World Smile Day
October 6	Whitin Faculty Meeting (Library at 2:30PM)
October 6	Mid-Term Progress Reports
October 6-7	Student Photos with Laprade Studio
October 10	Professional Development Day
October 31	Halloween Social for Grades 5-6 (2:30-4:00PM)

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NELMS Spotlight School

Ronald J. Farrar, Principal

Amy Puliafico, Assistant Principal

Date: September 3, 2008
To: Whitin School Faculty
From: Mr. Farrar & Ms. Puliafico
Re: **Common Planning Agenda**

Agenda for Common Planning Meetings

- School Opening Issues
- Faculty Meeting on September 8 (First Monday of Every Month)
- Plans for Back to School Night on September 9
- Teacher Professional Development Goals Due by September 12
- Status Report on Whitin Middle School Website
- Chorus Scheduling
- Study Island Updates/Schedules
- Budget Updates
- District Newsletter
- Bullying Lesson Update
- PTO Comments
- Other

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NELMS Spotlight School

Ronald J. Farrar, Principal

Amy Puliafico, Assistant Principal

Date: September 8, 2008
To: Whitin School Faculty
From: Mr. Farrar & Ms. Puliafico
Re: Faculty Meeting

Faculty Meeting Agenda for September 8, 2008

- Fish Sticks
- District Crisis Team – Uxbridge Police & Fire
 - Additional ID Cards
- Back-to-School Night Information (Tuesday, September 9, 2008)
- Reading Time Initiative
- Scheduling of Activities
- School Photographs: October 6 & 7
- School Council
- PTO Update
 - Magazine Drive Assemblies: Monday, October 20th
- Handbook Review: Setting the Example
- Annual Health Training – Mrs. Donahue

**Whitin Middle School PTO Meeting
Wednesday, September 3, 2008
6:30pm in the Whitin Library**

Agenda

- ❖ **Superintendent Dan Stefanilo to talk about Check Only Policy**
- ❖ **Review of August Minutes**
- ❖ **Review Treasurer's Report**
- ❖ **Back to School Night**
- ❖ **Calendar of Upcoming Events**
- ❖ **Update on Yankee Candle Fundraiser**
- ❖ **Update on Spirit Wear**
- ❖ **Update on Box Tops**
- ❖ **Update on School Council**
- ❖ **New Business**

WHITIN MIDDLE SCHOOL PTO
MEETING MINUTES
Wednesday, August 20, 2008

Attendance

Lisa Anderson, Andrea Consoletti, Laura Derderian, Lisa Devane, Ronald Farrar, Nancy Hanson, Kristen Holt, Nancy Lemire, Christine Nolan, Michaelle Phillips, Amy Puliafico, Maureen Stewart, Tracy Wagner

Review of Meeting Minutes from June 11, 2008

Minutes from the June meeting were accepted as written.

Treasurer's Report

The treasurer's report was accepted with a balance of \$20,618.49.

Calendar of Events

- 8/22 Cross Country Practices Begin
- 8/25 Opening Day for Staff
- 8/26 Professional Development for Teachers(Gr.6 & below is implementing a new reading series and Gr. 7&8 will be working with a new math book)
- 8/27 Opening Day for Students
- 9/1 Labor Day- No School
- 9/3 Instrument Demo- Grade 5
- 9/3 PTO Meeting
- 9/8 Faculty Meeting
- 9/9 Parent's Back to School Night
- 9/12 Instrument Rental Night
- 9/19 Gr. 5 Music Trip
- 9/26 Mid Term Progress Reports

School Council

School Council will be working on School Improvement Plan. It will be made known in September if there are any vacancies.

Fundraisers

Yankee Candle Fundraiser will start on 9/2/08 and end on 9/16/08 with a delivery of 10/29/08. Pick-up will be at dismissal until 7:00pm on the 29th. Volunteers will be needed to help with delivery. Laura Derderian will be running this fundraiser this year.

Magazine drive will again be held during mid October.

Bake Sale at Vendor Fair will again be done in November.

Cookie Dough will be sold again in February. **There will be no bulb sale this year.**

Box Tops and Shaws receipts will be collected throughout the year. Nancy Lemire has agreed to help Student Council with the box tops. Boxes are available in the office for both of these.

Election of officers

Nancy Hanson will join the current board as Vice President for the 2008-2009 school year.

Back to School Night

Back to school night for parents will be 9/9/08 from 6-9pm. Orientation will begin at 6:45pm and parents will meet teachers at 7:00pm. Student Council Representatives will be available that night to assist parents. T-Shirts will be ordered for the Student Council to wear on that night. A letter will go home with information about this. Spirit Wear samples will be on display that night and various items from the school store will be available for purchase that night. Fliers with the past years accomplishments will be available on this night to thank parents for their support and to show them what was done for programs last year with the help of the various fundraisers.

New Business

Eighth Grade video/slide show raised \$210.00. This money will go to the incoming Freshman Class. An additional \$3.00 per child will be sent to the incoming freshman as well, with a cap of \$300.00.

A New Parking Lot is being constructed in front of the Cafeteria with 22- 24 additional parking slots. Access will be from the parking lot side with an exit out onto the circle.

Michaëlle Phillips is checking with Hannaford's for a water donation. Hannaford's donated water to the PTO for the 2007-2008 school year.

More smencils will be ordered.

The Uxbridge Public Schools will be implementing a check only policy. Dan Stefanilo will be at the September PTO meeting to discuss this further.

Welcome Back gifts were purchased for the Whitin staff. Andrea Consoletti purchased Memories Frames for 1.08 apiece. These will be placed in the staff mailboxes upon their arrival back to school.

Front Doors of the school will not open until 7:30am. Students should not arrive at school before this time.

Mr. Farrar is currently involved in a very intense Doctoral Program. He hopes to be finished with this by next year.

Amy Mayer is now Amy Puliafico.

PTO meetings have been moved to the first Wednesday of every month.

The next meeting will be held Wednesday, September 3, 2008 at 6:30 in the Whitin Library.

Submitted by,
Tracy Wagner
Secretary

WHITIN MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2008

School Year Off to a Good Start

The new academic year at Whitin Middle School appears to be off to an exceptional start. Most teachers were in school through out the summer organizing their classrooms and preparing materials for students. Teachers and administrators have established clear and positive directions and expectations for students during the first week. School spirit is high and the cooperative attitude of students and staff is noteworthy.

Message from Whitin PTO

The Whitin Middle School Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) extends a sincere welcome to all parents. We are looking forward to a productive and successful school year. The first meeting of the Whitin PTO is scheduled for Wednesday, September 3rd at 6:30pm in the school library. All of our monthly meetings will be held the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm. Parents are encouraged to become involved, and you also will meet other parents and staff while helping out in your child's school.

The first PTO fundraiser for the year is underway. Brochures and order forms for Yankee Candle were sent home with students on Tuesday, September 2nd. This fundraiser will set our budget to help with key programs, activities, field trips, and buses throughout the school year. **New this year, we are only accepting checks for Yankee Candle orders.** Please do not send in any cash. We continuously accept donations.

Our school has two on-going collections, Box Tops and Shaw's receipts. Just send them in with your child. With Shaw's receipts they can be collected from friends and family. Please send in the entire receipt, if needed you can black out the debit info.

Would you like to be notified via email for PTO meeting reminders and information? We will have an email sign-up at the PTO table on back to school night. Please stop by and say hello.

Check out our school's web page at www.uxbridgeschools.com . Under the PTO tab there are updates and reminders.

Back-to-School Night is September 9

On Tuesday evening, September 9, the Whitin School PTO will sponsor the annual Back-to-School Night program for parents to begin the new school year. Refreshments will be served in the school cafeteria beginning at 6:15 PM. A brief orientation for parents will be presented by school staff members at 6:45 PM. The Back-to-School Night program will run from 7:00 to 8:30 PM and will allow parents to follow their child's daily class schedule. A special Parent Newsletter relating to Back-to-School Night is being sent home with this newsletter.

Note from the Nurse...

A reminder to parents of Grade 7 students- Massachusetts State Law requires all students entering grade 7 to have a tetanus booster and a current physical on file. Please send your child's physical form in as soon as possible. If you are without a health care provider, please contact Mrs. Donahue, the school nurse, for assistance.

Students who wish to play a Whitin Middle School sport are required to have a current physical on file before the first tryout.

Notes from the Band Room

The band program is off to a good start this year with over 90 students returning in grades 6, 7, & 8. The fifth grade students attended an instrument demonstration on Wednesday, September 3rd and should be bringing home information about the program. Lessons and Band rehearsal for grades 6, 7 & 8 will begin the week of September 8th and beginner lessons will begin on September 15th. There are three teachers working in the instrumental music program this year, Mrs. Penza, Mr. Hammerton, and Mr. LaPete. The additional staff has made it possible for us to schedule most lessons during the students' directed study period and the remaining students have been scheduled during their Unified Arts block. Grade 6 Band rehearsals will be on Tuesdays – period 8 and the Advanced Band (grades 7 & 8) will once again rehearse on Wednesdays using a 4 period (1,2, 3, and 4) rotation. We are looking forward to a great year!!

Special Education News

The Uxbridge Special Education PAC (USEPAC) would like all parents to know that we will have members at the Whitin Back to School Night with information or to answer any questions anyone may have about special education. We are always looking for new members and welcome anyone who may be interested. We will have our first meeting on Wed. Sept. 17 in the Whitin Library at 7pm. We are also having a yard sale on Sat. Sept. 6 on the town common to raise money for our scholarship and programs we offer throughout the year. If you have any gently used toys, books or other items that you would like to donate please contact Kristin Lavery at Klavery@charter.net or call 508-278-3941.

Ronald J. Farrar, Principal
Amy Puliafico, Assistant Principal

September 3, 2008

Whitin Middle School Parent Teacher Organization - PTO

Back-to-School Night Program – Tuesday, September 9, 2008

Dear Parents,

On Tuesday evening, September 9, 2008, the Whitin Middle School PTO will sponsor its annual Parents' Back-to-School Night Program to begin the new school year. Appetizers and refreshments will be served in the Whitin School Cafeteria beginning at 6:15 PM. A brief orientation for parents will be presented by school administrators at 6:45 PM. The Back-to-School Night Program will run from 7:00 to 9:00 PM, and will allow parents to follow their child's daily class schedule. Baby-sitting services will be provided for children in grades 6 and below by members of the Uxbridge High School Student Council in the Whitin Library.

Members of the Whitin PTO need parent volunteers to provide various appetizers and refreshments for Back-to-School Night. Assorted appetizers may be brought by parents to the Whitin School Cafeteria after 5:00 PM on Tuesday, September 9th. Parents who intend to bring appetizers are asked to complete the form below. Parents who will need baby-sitting services should complete the form on the reverse side of this bulletin.

The PTO will have smencils and Spartan wear (gym bags, cozies, t-shirts) available for purchase, prices range from \$1.00 to \$10.00. Cash and checks are accepted.

The officers of PTO, along with school administrators and teachers, look forward to meeting you on Tuesday evening, September 9. Please come to enjoy refreshments, visit classes, and support your child's school experience. Remember to wear your sneakers for physical education class.

Over for more information

Please return reply form by Friday, September 5.

Grade _____

Number of Parents Attending _____

Name _____

I will bring:

Phone _____

Email _____

_____ Fresh Fruit Tray

_____ Cup Cakes

_____ Soda

_____ Veggie Tray

_____ Chips & Dip

_____ Bottled Water

_____ Cheese & Crackers

_____ Cookies/Brownies

_____ Dessert (kind)

_____ I can help with set-up

_____ I can help with clean-up

_____ Financial Donation

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Whitin Middle School Back-to-School Night Program

Schedule for Tuesday Night, September 9, 2008

6:15 - 6:45 PM Appetizers and Refreshments in Whitin School Cafeteria

6:45 - 7:00 PM Orientation for Parents by School Administrators

7:00 - 9:00 PM Back-to-School Schedule: Parents Attend Classes

This special program will provide parents with an opportunity to follow their child's daily class schedule. Parents will attend 10-minute classes to hear teachers discuss course goals, curriculum content, homework requirements, academic expectations, and grading standards.

Please Note ...

It is important for parents to know their child's homeroom number before they arrive at school on Tuesday evening, as parents will be reporting to homerooms at 7 o'clock to pick up class schedules. Our Middle School Student Council members will be wearing orange and shirts. Look for them to help you find classrooms and answer questions this evening.

Baby-Sitting Available ...

Baby-sitting services will be provided in the Whitin Library for children in grades 6 and below by members of the Uxbridge High School Student Council. Parents who will need baby-sitting services should complete the form below.

Please check the Whitin Middle School web page for school and PTO information/updates found on www.uxbridgeschools.com

Request for Baby Sitting

Please return reply form by Friday, September 5.

Parent Name _____

Phone _____

Number of Children Needing Baby-sitting Service _____

Whitin Middle School 2008-09 Back-to-School Night Evaluation

Dear Families,

Thank you for attending tonight's event. Whitin Middle School continually strives to meet the needs of its students and their families. Please take a moment to complete this informational evaluation to help us improve our program for upcoming years.

Thank you,

The Staff of Whitin Middle School

Please circle the number that best describes how you feel about each statement.

1= Strongly Disagree



4= Strongly Agree

Name (optional) _____

Grade of my child(ren) _____

1. Whitin School was clean and well-maintained.

1

2

3

4

Suggestions/comments: _____

2. Going through my child's schedule period-by-period was a good way to get to meet his/her teachers.

1

2

3

4

Suggestions/comments: _____

3. Each of my child's teachers clearly explained the goals and expectations of that class.

1

2

3

4

Suggestions/comments: _____

4. The 6:00-8:30 time frame for Back-to-School night was convenient for my family and me.

1

2

3

4

Suggestions/comments: _____

(over)

5. The climate of the classrooms I visited appeared inviting.

1

2

3

4

Suggestions/comments: _____

6. My child appears to have a positive feeling about Whitin School after the first two weeks.

1

2

3

4

Suggestions/comments: _____

7. Whitin School's curricula and other offerings appear varied enough to meet my child's academic, social and emotional needs.

1

2

3

4

Suggestions/comments: _____

Additional Feedback:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this informational evaluation. We will use this feedback to guide our decision making for future events.

Please return to the box by the front door as you leave.