



Community Newsletter

April 2010

J. Lanoue—Editor

Message from the Superintendent

As you are aware, there have been many articles recently in our local newspapers regarding the school building project. At times the information you read in the papers may have left you with more questions than answers. It is important that your questions are answered and that the public be given accurate information on the building project options. Therefore, the Uxbridge School Building Committee will conduct three Public Informational Meetings to provide the community with information on the advantages/disadvantages, cost analysis, tax impact and all pertinent information relative to the different building options. These public meetings will be held in the High School Auditorium on the following dates:

Monday, April 5 at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, April 11 at 4:00 p.m.

Thursday, April 29 at 7:00 p.m.

The School Building Committee, Project Manager Noah Luskin, and Architect Gene Raymond will present important information during these meetings and will be available to answer your questions. I urge you to attend at least one of these meetings. If you are

unable to attend one of these meetings and have a question regarding the school project options, you can post your question on our school website at: www.uxbridgeschools.com. To find additional information on the building project, go to the School Building Committee's link at: <http://www.uxbridge-ma.gov/Pages/SBC.php>. All of the meetings will be recorded and broadcast at a future date.

In addition, the Uxbridge Student Council will provide babysitting services at the high school during each meeting. If you are interested in this babysitting service please notify Pam DiBattista prior to the meeting at pdibattista@uxbridge.k12.ma.us or call (508)278-8634.

Sincerely,

George Zini

Superintendent of Schools

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CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

Tips to Help Your Child Prepare for MCAS

M-C-A-S. Four letters that can spell anxiety, both for parents and for students! They stand for Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System. Parents and families can do several things to create a positive test-taking experience and help students prepare for tests. Here are some ideas:

Before the Test

- Write test dates on your home calendar. The MCAS test schedule for Taft School is:

March 23rd-Grade 4 Long Composition

March 24th-Grade 3 Reading Session I

March 25th-Grade 3 Reading Session II

March 30th-Grade 4 Reading Session I

March 31st-Grade 4 Reading Session II

- Encourage your child to participate in, and talk about practice-test opportunities (we are doing these in class).
- Praise your child for working hard and for the things they do well.

The Day(s) of the Test

- Make sure that your child is well rested and eats breakfast.
- See that your child arrives at school on time and is relaxed.
- Comfort counts. Send a sweater if it's a cool day. Dress in layers for a warm day.
- Send along all the needed tools—sharpened pencils, pens, rulers, etc.
- Encourage your child to do the best work possible and to have a positive attitude.
- Encourage your child to listen/ read carefully to all test-taking directions and to ask questions if any directions are unclear.
- Remind your child not to get stuck on any one item.
- Encourage your child to check answers for accuracy if time permits.

To Reduce Test Anxiety

“Test anxiety” is worrying too much about doing well on a test. It can keep students from doing their best. Some ways to help reduce anxiety are:

- Talk about the test in a positive way.
- Encourage best efforts, yet have realistic expectations.
- Encourage your child to focus on his or her strengths, such as a good memory or strong analytical skills.
- Assure your child that the test is only one measure of academic performance.
- Emphasize that test scores do not determine a person's worth.

Source: Parents' PLACE: The Massachusetts Statewide Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC), Parents' PLACE Pointers, and the Federation for Children with Special Needs.

EARL D. TAFT ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Student Effort Was Super During MCAS

Students in grades 3 and 4 at Taft School recently completed the 2010 MCAS tests for ELA Reading Comprehension. It was evident that students gave superior effort during all MCAS test sessions. Taft teachers are confident that extra effort will bring improved achievement. Sincere thanks to parents for encouraging a positive test-taking experience. Grade 3 and 4 students will be called on again in mid-May to take MCAS tests in Mathematics.

Early Dismissal on April 9 for Parent Conferences

Friday, April 9 will be a half-day of school for students at Taft School.

Dismissal will begin at 11:30 AM, and no lunches will be served.

An afternoon of parent-teacher conferences is scheduled to run from 12:30 PM to 3:00 PM on Friday, April 9. Taft School Specialists, including Reading, Special Education, Art, Music, Physical Education, Librarian, and Computer teachers will be available in their classrooms during conference day. There is no need to make an appointment with them.

It is necessary, however, for parents to schedule appointments to meet with grade-level classroom teachers. A special Parent-Teacher Conference Appointment Newsletter was recently sent home with students. Extra copies of this newsletter are available in the main office at Taft School. We hope you can join us for conferences during the afternoon on Friday, April 9.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 2	Good Friday – No School
April 9	Half-Day for Students – Dismissal at 11:30 AM
April 9	Parent-Teacher Conferences from 12:30 to 3:00 PM
April 9	Free Family Fun Night – Baskets Galore on Display
April 10	Baskets Galore at Uxbridge Community House – 7:00 PM
April 10	Jungle Book Production Cast B: 11:00 & 12:30 - Cast A: 2:00 & 3:00
April 13	PTO Monthly Meeting in Taft Cafe – 7:00 PM
April 19-23	April Vacation Week – No School

WHITIN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Celebration of the Arts

On Tuesday, March 9th, Uxbridge Public Schools recognized and celebrated the arts district wide. A district wide art show was displayed in the Whitin Library with works of art from students in grades pre-K through 12. In addition there were several musical performances throughout the day at Taft and Whitin. The evening culminated with Music & Meatballs held in Whitin Cafeteria. The Whitin Jazz band, High School Jazz Band and High School Rock & Blues band performed for an audience of over 150. In addition to the musical performance, audience members were treated to a pasta dinner and basket raffle. It was a great event overall and terrific showcase of the talented students of Uxbridge.

Student vs. Faculty Basketball

March madness reigned at Whitin Middle School on Friday, March 19th as the faculty took on the boys' & girls' basketball teams. The event kicked off with a free throw contest. The faculty started strong taking the lead, but the students soon hit their stride coming back to win it. The students dominated from the start of the game to the end. They maintained their lead throughout and won the game.

Student Council Fundraiser for Haiti

The Student Council raised funds and awareness for the victims of the Haiti earthquake with a program called Helping Hands for Haiti. The goal of the collection was \$400.00. Whitin staff's and students' generosity raised over \$600.00 for this worthwhile cause.

GREAT Program

This year, in partnership with the Uxbridge Police Department, sixth grade students are participating in a 13 week gang awareness class taught by Officer Dan Deveau. First developed by the Phoenix Police Department, the GREAT Program has evolved into a school-based, law enforcement officer-instructed classroom curriculum. With prevention as its primary objective, the program is intended to teach students about the dangers of youth violence, and gang membership. The lessons focus on providing life skills to students to help them avoid using delinquent behavior and violence to solve problems.

UPCOMING EVENTS

March 26	Whitin Community of Caring Bingo Night
April 2	No School: Good Friday
April 7	PTO Meeting: 6:30 Whitin Library
April 13	Whitin/UHS Choral Concert: UHS
April 16	7 th & 8 th grade dance: 7PM Whitin Cafeteria
April 19-23	April Vacation

UXBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

Principal's Piece...

Spring has arrived at Uxbridge High School, but there is much to review from February and March. I am excited to announce that UHS has been awarded a highly competitive grant to increase enrollment in Advanced Placement classes and to increase the number of Advanced Placement course offerings. The grant will provide extensive professional development for our math, science, and English teachers and incentives for students for achieving qualifying scores. Students are completing the process of picking their courses for the 2010-2011 school year. Thank you to Sarah Zeis, Katelyn O'Neil, Dan Tessier, Katie Larrivee, Max Leary, Kelly Cotter, Kym Ker for speaking about their AP experience to their classmates at the Program of Studies assemblies. I would also like to thank Jeff Copland, Domenico Favaro, Kelly Cotter, Katelyn O'Neil, and Sarah Zeis for talking at Whitin to the 8th graders about course offerings at UHS. A Program of Studies night was held for parents of 8th graders in the high school library and Kelly Cotter and Rebecca Larrivee provided babysitting during the presentation.

At UHS we are continuously looking to develop student leaders. On March 19th Tim Beaudette, Emily Cahill, Steve Derderian, Mark DeVries, Jerome Drane, Taurie Gniadek, Allison Graham, Brandon Hetherington, Meryl Hoffman, Nick Maloney, and Brianna Perry attended a MIAA leadership conference.

Sadly, I must report that the students beat the faculty in the annual basketball game that was held on March 4th. It was a close game and a great time was had by all. The best part for the students was when Mr. Arnold and Ms. Bennett got "pied in the face" at half-time as part of a charity food drive for the local pantry. Thank you to everyone that donated. Enjoy the warmer weather and be well! ~ Tara Bennett

Foreign Language

Mrs. Brooks' Honors Spanish 2 class and Mrs. Plasse's Cultural Foods class worked together to create a Spanish meal. Mrs. Brooks' students did research on the eating habits of the Spanish culture and their most popular dishes and ingredients then prepared a PowerPoint with the information. They presented the information to the Foods class. The foods class prepared a Spanish meal for all. It was very fun! Also, Mrs Brooks' Spanish 1 class Skyped with the class they have been emailing from Jalapa, Mexico. The students asked and answered questions for more than 30 minutes. The dialogue was in English so that the Mexican students could practice. The instructor from Mexico and Mrs. Brooks are planning on continuing this exchange and hopefully, the Uxbridge students will have enough language to practice their Spanish next time!

Massachusetts Girls State 2010

The American Legion Auxiliary will hold its 65th Annual Massachusetts Girls State at Stonehill College, Easton, MA from Sunday, June 13, 2010 through Friday, June 18, 2010. The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors this program state-wide. In Uxbridge, the program is financed through the generosity of the Uxbridge Woman's Club. The Girls State Citizens chosen this year from Uxbridge High School are Emily Drywa, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Todd Drywa and Tara Feeley, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Brian Feeley. The two alternates that have been selected are, Anna Walsh, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Michael Walsh and Jamie St. Pierre, daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Kris St. Pierre. More than 22, 000 Massachusetts girls have participated in this citizenship program since its inauguration in 1945. There will be approximately 300 girls from all parts of the State participating in the week's study of Local and State Government. They will establish and operate their own City and Town, form two political parties, nominate candidates for office, conduct campaigns and hold elections. Speakers will be state officials, leaders in Government, and other professions. The students will learn about the responsibilities of the various branches of government and the qualifications and benefits of many of the leading professions. Girls State will be held in every state in the union. At the Girls State Sessions in June, two girls will be selected to represent their respective States at Girls Nation to be held in Maryland in July.

Social Studies

Selectman Michael Potaski gave an interesting presentation to Mrs. Puckett's and Mr. Hutchings' classes. He has been conducting research into the history of slavery and the abolitionist movement in Uxbridge. Some of the areas he discussed were:

1. Background of Slavery in Massachusetts Bay Colony
2. Slavery in colonial Uxbridge
3. Uxbridge Freedmen and other minorities in the early Republic
4. Case study of the Willard family
5. The Abolitionist movement in Uxbridge & Massachusetts
6. Blacks and other minorities in early industrialized Uxbridge

Also, Senator Moore visited Uxbridge High. He answered questions from students in Mr. Hutchings' Government class and members of the Student Council Executive Board. The students were interested in the Senator's views on health care reform, and the school building situation. The UHS Food Service department prepared a delicious luncheon for the Senator and the students.

UXBRIDGE HIGH SCHOOL

Prevocational Life Skills Program

The Prevocational Life Skills students enjoyed a relaxing vacation and are back to school well-rested and eager to work. They have returned to their recycling job and are doing a great job at it. Our students are showing more independence while performing their jobs for the Main Office and Guidance too. It is wonderful to see how comfortable the students are becoming with our peer tutors. I see significant growth in the skills of our students as well as with the peer tutors in terms of self-reliance and job performance.

Academically, we continue to work on increasing life skills and basic skills. We have been focusing on the issues of bullying and the importance of healthy relationships most recently. Students' computer skills are improving and even those students who are less able to use the computer independently are showing growth and a willingness to try. We are currently exploring a website called mywonderfulworld.org. It is a National Geographic sponsored site and is proving to be an interesting and fun way to address geography with our class. Even our students who are weak readers are able to use parts of it effectively and independently.

Socially, we have some upcoming events scheduled. There is a student-faculty basketball game scheduled for the evening of March 4th from 6-8 pm. Our class is planning to attend. The next meeting of the Peer Interaction Group will take place on Wednesday, March 17th from 1:45-2:45 pm. Mrs. Jones-Barbosa has organized an informal exercise group for interested staff and students. We have been exercising a couple days each week after school in room 125. This week, we participated in Zumba dancing. It was quite a workout and very fun! ~Leslie Lesperance

Student Council

STUCO went to the annual MASC (Massachusetts Association of Student Councils) Spring Conference. The council was awarded a Gold Council of Excellence. This is the highest honor a council can be awarded. In addition, STUCO was awarded a Top Ten Project Award for its Central Mass Idol Project. STUCO also held its annual flirtz fundraiser. Students filled out surveys and were allowed to purchase the results for \$2. The council sold about 50 surveys. The annual "pie a teacher in the face contest" was held and the lucky winners were Mr. Arnold and Ms. Bennett. The council collected almost 300 canned food items for the local pantry. Currently, STUCO is selling Muscular Dystrophy Shamrocks to help with the fight against MD. Another project the Uxbridge Student Council is working on is the collecting of used prom and semi formal dresses for a company named Body Utopia. In April Body Utopia will hold a dress sale, and all proceeds will be donated back to the school. Lastly, STUCO is collecting recipes for a Haiti Cookbook. The recipes will be sent out to a company and proceeds from the sale of the book will be given to the Haiti relief effort.

Family & Consumer Science

Rebecca Plasse attended a workshop on Italian Cuisine where she prepared Sweet Potato Gnocchi and enjoyed an Italian dinner. The innovative Study Buddies Program came to an end with the conclusion of second trimester. An average of twenty second graders came to school early on Tuesdays and Fridays to meet with Child Development students from the high school for language and math tutoring. The pilot program was met with much enthusiasm. It is hoped that the program can be repeated next year. Sue Priore was a member of a NEASC accreditation team for Turners Falls High School. She served on the School Resources standard.

SADD

Students Against Destructive Decisions is currently hosting a shoe drive for Soles4Souls. There are collection boxes located at the Town Hall, Uxbridge Public Library and Uxbridge High School. We have collected over 50 pairs of gently used shoes that will be donated to people all over the world. The shoe drive lasts thru April 15, 2010. SADD is excited to have Sober Thoughts on April 28, 2010 as well as work in collaboration with the Uxbridge Police Department and the Uxbridge Fire Department to do a mock car crash to remind the students of the dangers of driving under the influence.

UHS WINTER ATHLETICS

The Winter Athletic Awards Assembly was held on Tuesday, March 16. Coaches presented varsity letters and certificates to all winter athletes. Coaches Awards, Sportsmanship Awards, and SWCL All Star certificates were also announced.

Here is a list of the award winners:

Coaches Award

Girls Basketball- Jaime McQuade
Boys Basketball- Daniel Tessier
Dennis Lynch Memorial
Girls Track and Field- Samantha Copland & Sarah Zeis
Boys Track and Field- Jerome Drane
Cheerleading- Kym Kerr & Kayleigh Hodgdon

Sportsmanship Award

Girls Basketball- Stephanie Benoit
Boys Basketball- Kyle Tatum
Girls Track and Field- Jen Rosa
Boys Track and Field- Steve Derderian
Cheerleading- Kelly Cotter

Southern Worcester County League All Stars

First Team - Track and Field:

Peter Manka, Samantha Copland, Emily Cahill, Chelsey Peso, Sarah Zeis, Debra Lopes, Stephanie Seagrave, Jessica Drane

First Team – Boys Basketball:

Dan Tessier, Corey Gomes

Second Team – Track and Field:

Andrew Reardon, Jerome Drane, Matt O' Hara, Laura Sarrasin, Samantha Copland, Jen Rosa

Second Team – Girls Basketball:

Libbi Richardson

Second Team – Boys Basketball:

Mark DeVries



STUDENTS OF THE MONTH

Two seniors (one boy, one girl) are nominated monthly by the faculty and staff at Uxbridge High School to receive recognition as *Senior of the Month*. Considerations for nomination include: demonstrate willingness to assist others, have good academic standing but do not need to be an A student, be respectful of others and self, be a good citizen, and be involved with school/community service. Upon selection by the administration, the *Seniors of the Month* will have their pictures and brief write-ups displayed in the front lobby of the high school for recognition.


Andrea Hession

Andrea "Andie" Hession is determined to make a difference in the lives of others. Her versatility, leadership skills and humble personality combined with her intelligence and brilliant smile will certainly guide her in making an impact. Andie's academic record and service to the school and community speak for themselves. Ranked fifth in the Class of 2010, Andie has excelled in A.P. and honors level courses. Her work ethic is second to none; she demonstrated "exceptional capabilities" in her AP US History class, particularly by achieving a 5 on the AP exam junior year. She is a conscientious student who respects and delivers the effort and expectations asked for by her teachers. This was seen with her willingness to attempt a new skill in playing the guitar, thus leading to a new found passion in music. Andie is interested in pursuing education in social sciences. Outside the classroom, Andie makes a positive impact with her extra-curricular activities, often taking on leadership roles. A three sport athlete, she has been elected team captain for cross country and basketball, where she displays a "team first" attitude and philosophy. Additionally, Andie is class historian, president of the *Go Green Club*, National Honor Society treasurer and is a student mentor. Within the larger community, Andie has volunteered her time at Family Fun Night for children with special needs, 4th grade Math Day at Taft Elementary and the Family Fun Fair in Milford. She clearly is someone who enjoys being involved with all aspects of the Uxbridge community. There is no doubt that Andie will be extremely successful in her future adventures. She is an outstanding young woman who has made a difference in the lives at Uxbridge High School.

Wesley Gabree

Wesley is a very special young man who is always willing to help others. He is sensitive and kind to others and is an active volunteer who is up to any tasks asked of him. A member of the Uxbridge Prevocational Skills Classroom, Wesley makes deliveries for the Spartan Café and completes jobs for the Main Office and Guidance area. He is an integral part of the Uxbridge High School recycling program. Wesley has faced many challenges both academically and physically over the years. He has worked hard to improve his muscle strength and stamina through various athletic activities while simultaneously challenging himself intellectually. Wes takes his academic classes very seriously and is a model student in the Prevocational Program. He diligently completes his assignments and is an active participant in class discussions. Wesley finds time to foster his creative side through his ceramics class where he has created some wonderful pieces of art. Wesley's kindness, good manners and gentle nature have made him a popular student. He has a great sense of humor too! Wesley loves his whole family very much and enjoys working with his father where he assists him with tools. It is a pleasure to see his progress both in athletic activities and in academics, while keeping in mind that he most prefers to kick back and listen to his music! Wesley Gabree is an all-around awesome person and is well-deserving of the honor of 'Senior of the Month'.

DISTRICT CALENDAR – APRIL 2010

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Whitin School Gr. 7 MCAS ELA2 High School - Band, Chorus, Jazz, Rock Trip to Symphony Hall	2 Good Friday No School Child Care Open	3
4 Easter 	5 Whitin School GR. 8 MCAS ELA2 Faculty Mtng-1:45 pm 2:20 pm. Health Ins. Review with K. Poulin	6 Admin Mtng - 9:30 a.m. School Committee Meeting 7 pm	7 Whitin School MCAS Gr. 7 & Gr. 8 Make-up PTO Mtng-6:30pm	8	9 ELC ½ day K No PM K Taft School -1/2 day Parent Teach. Conf. PTO Free Family Fun Night 7 p.m. Café Whitin School GR.7&8 Dance 7-9pm	10 Annual PTO Fundraiser 7 - 9 pm Community House
11	12 Whitin School Report cards sent home Central District Rehearsal 3-7:30pm Southborough High School Sr. Class Unibank Financial Literacy Workshop	13 Whitin/UHS Choral Concert – 7pm @ UHS Auditorium Taft School PTO Mtng-7 pm Cafe	14 Taft School PTO Playground Cash for Gold Fundraiser Whitin School School Council Mtng-12:30pm High School Empty Bowls Fundraiser 5:30-7:30 cafeteria USEPAC Meeting 7 pm Whitin Library	15 High school Prom Fashion Show 7 p.m.	16	17
18	19 Patriot's Day School Vacation No School Child Care Closed	20 School Vacation No School Child Care Open	21 Admin.Prof.Day School Vacation No School Child Care Open	22 School Vacation No School Child Care Open	23 School Vacation No School Child Care Open	24 School Vacation No School Child Care Open

FOOD SERVICE NEWS

Janice Watt, SNS, food service director, was one of only two school food service directors in the Commonwealth to recently be selected by the Executive Board of the Massachusetts School Nutrition Association to participate in the School Nutrition Association's fourth Future Leaders Program. This program is in conjunction with SNA National Leadership Conference, being held in Charleston, South Carolina, April 15-18, 2010. The Massachusetts SNA will be covering all of the expenses for this invitation-only conference for Mrs. Watt.

SNA created this program to provide hands-on training to upcoming and future leaders and to help strengthen the long-term viability and effectiveness of state associations and SNA. Mrs. Watt was chosen to represent Massachusetts SNA because state leaders believe that she has demonstrated strong qualities for future association leadership. This new program is designed to help hone necessary skills to become a successful and effective volunteer association leader.

Helping to lead the training workshops are three outstanding past SNA national presidents – Marilyn Hurt, Marcia Smith, and Katie Wilson. They will be joined by one of the best association leader trainers in the industry today, Pam Hemann, a past chair of the American Society of Association Executives

Mrs. Watt is credentialed as a School Nutrition Specialist, and is currently the Delegate- Elect for SNA Chapter 2. She has been the food service director for the Uxbridge Public Schools since 2000.