



Pelham Press

Vol. 22, No. 3, September 23, 2011
<http://pe.arps.org>



Dates to Remember:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Wednesday, September 21 | School Committee Meeting, 6:30 p.m. |
| Friday, September 30 | Fall Potluck and Ice Cream Social |
| Friday, September 30-October 7 | Book Fair |
| Monday, October 3 | PTO |
| Wednesday, October 5 | Fall Curriculum Night, 7:00-8:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, October 12 | Fine Arts Field Trip- Grades 1,3,4,5 & 6 |
| Tuesday, October 18 | Picture Day |



Dear Pelham School Families,

The Pelham School Committee voted on Wednesday evening to put an article on the Fall Town Meeting Warrant scheduled for October 19 requesting permission to discuss the merits of forming a "Regional School District Planning Committee". The purpose of the committee will be to join together with another town/s to study regionalization and ultimately present a recommendation back to our town.

MCAS scores have been officially released and I wanted to give you updated information on Pelham Elementary School's MCAS test results. I want to start by sharing that Pelham School continues to remain at "No Status", which is the highest possible ranking status. Pelham School did not make AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) in language arts or in mathematics, however scores continue to remain very strong for many students. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is a measure of the extent to which a student group demonstrates proficiency in English language arts and mathematics. AYP Reports are issued each year and show the progress schools and districts are making toward the goal of having all students reach proficiency by the year 2014. To receive an affirmative AYP determination, schools and districts must meet a student participation requirement, an additional attendance or graduation requirement, and either the State's performance target or the group's own improvement target.

Pelham Elementary School will be taking actions to improve student performance according to standardized measures while working to maintain the richness of curriculum and instruction for which Pelham School is known. Some of these actions have already been in place and are being refined, and some are new to this school year. As a staff, we have an increased focus on teacher collaboration so that we are becoming a learning organization with a focus on student achievement. Pelham school has an RTII team (Response to Intervention and Instruction) team that has begun to meet regularly to plan and implement the RTII process and how data will be utilized to determine interventions. Beginning this year, all teachers have integrated a new 30 minute Enhancement block in their schedules to provide systematic and data-driven interventions for those students identified through beginning of the year benchmark assessments, MCAS data, and other classroom assessments. In addition, Pelham School is implementing the new use of the NWEA/MAP assessment, given three times a year to assess student growth to plan and evaluate interventions. We will begin using newly purchased evidence-based interventions in reading, math, and guidance/behavior for students that have been identified through assessment. We are refining and implementing our revised Child Study team process to better plan interventions for struggling

students. Teachers in grades 4-6 are continuing to provide support to students in after school Homework Clubs. The school district is providing technical assistance to the school both for the delivery of instruction and in the analysis of data in order to improve the quality of instruction for all students in our school.

Pelham school will keep you informed about additional changes that will be made at the school to improve learning. The Pelham School Council will partner with us in reviewing our School Improvement Plan and making any necessary changes to support student achievement. The teachers and administration remain committed to a comprehensive, challenging, and rich learning experience for your students. Ideas and comments on how to improve learning in the school are welcome. Parents are encouraged, as always, to contact Lisa Desjarlais, Pelham School Principal at desjarlaisl@aprs.org.

The Pelham School is seeking one parent to join our Pelham School Council. Please complete the School Council Interest Form at the back of this newsletter and return to the school office if you are interested. Elections will be held on Curriculum Night on October 5th, and the first meeting will be on October 12th.

Thank you for your careful vigilance in our parking lots at drop off and pick up. Our students are for the most part reliably using designated cross walks and drivers are proceeding much more carefully around the parking lot as directed. Our volume continues to be high, especially in the mornings. Thank you for your continued support of the revised Parking Lot Safety Plan.

Classrooms are busy preparing for the upcoming Curriculum Night in order to showcase the many facets of learning at Pelham School. We hope to see you all there!

Curriculum Night :

Class Presentations--Grades K, 1, & 2	7:00 - 7:20 PM
Class Presentations--Grades 3 & 4	7:20 - 7:40 PM
Class Presentations--Grades 5, & 6	7:40 - 8:00 PM

This is a parent/guardian only event, a time when teachers share with you important information about their classrooms and their curriculum. Most teachers will have a sign up sheet for parent conferences. Teachers will begin their classroom presentations promptly at the time on the above schedule. The Book Fair will also be open during Curriculum Night. We hope to see all of you there!

Have a great weekend!

Sincerely,

Lisa Desjarlais

Third Grade News

Meg Gallagher

Once upon a time clouds were dinosaurs, whales, or Mickey Mouse to your child. Now they may still be imaginary creatures, but soon they will also be known as cumulus, cirrus, or stratus clouds! Students in third grade are just beginning their Weather Unit. We will learn about clouds, the water cycle, wind, high and low air pressure, fronts, weather maps, and air temperature. We will collect data about temperature, wind speed and direction, precipitation, and cloud type and cover, and then we will try to predict weather based on our data.

In math, students have been working on place value. Many have a good understanding of ones, tens, and hundreds. Our unit has focused on being able to write equations for word problems and then communicate the strategy used to solve the problem. I have seen some good progress in this area. Students are using number lines, hundred charts, money, and base ten blocks to solve problems. During Wizards time, we are also learning the traditional algorithms to solve addition and subtraction problems. Students should be studying their addition facts weekly for their two minute timed tests which are given on Thursdays.

We are reading a biography about Helen Keller, which corresponds beautifully with our unit on disabilities. We are working on vocabulary, decoding strategies, and comprehension skills. Children have also had the opportunity to pick a second biography of their own choosing. They were quite excited about this.

We have just completed our first writing assignment. Your children are so creative! They will be posted for you to read on Curriculum night.

Thank you for the careful attention you are paying to the homework folder. Home – school communication seems to be running smoothly. I look forward to meeting you all on Curriculum Night.

Fourth Grade Pelham Press

The year is off to a great start. The students have already shown me that they are very capable. We have settled in with our first two units. In social studies the children have been reading about Native American culture. Soon, they will start their first project. The project will include a written portion and a visual hands-on presentation.

In science students have been exploring electricity. They have built many things that demonstrate an understanding of a complete circuit. They will investigate items that permit the passage of electricity (conductors) and inhibit the passage of electricity (insulators). Each child has completed a large project called a question and answer board, and they are ready to be tried. Using a circuit tester, they connect a question to the correct answer and a bulb lights up. The secret is on the back of the board; wires complete the path electricity must travel.

In math we are starting the year off with arrays, as they hold the key to studying multiplication in many ways. Students have selected different numbers and, using

graph paper, have drawn all possible arrays with that total. The dimensions of the array are factors of the product.

At the beginning of the year, we take time in the classroom to familiarize students with their homework responsibilities. They have been doing very well with their homework routine so far. I will send home homework club slips to some families.

Thank you all in advance for coming to Curriculum Night on October 4th; I look forward to meeting you.

Tony Shaw

News from the Art Studio

Happy New Year! I am very excited to be your child's art teacher this year. My name is Hillary Wilbur Ferro (Ms. Ferro) and I have been teaching in the Amherst Pelham School District for the past eight years. I am passionate about the arts and about providing children opportunities and skills to express themselves using various tools and materials. This year your child will have opportunities to be inspired by the work of artists from around the world and create their own two-dimensional and three-dimensional artwork. We have started the year with a focus on variations in line, contour line and portraits. Please stop by to see art work on display in the hallways the next time you are visiting the school. Your child will have art on Mondays. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or if you are interested in volunteering in the art room or with displays. The best way to contact me is wilburh@arps.org.

*******REMINDER: PELHAM SCHOOL IS A FRAGRANCE FREE ZONE*******

**We have several staff members who are allergic to fragrances.
Please refrain from using perfumes or heavily scented lotions or detergents.**

Community Notes

HAWLEY FARM TO HAWLEY RESERVOIR—THE WALK

The Pelham Historical Society has planned a walk on Saturday, September 24, from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m., leaving from the United Church parking lot. The group will visit the site of the former Hawley Farm and learn about the history of the farm and the creation of the Hawley Reservoir. The walk will possibly include a quarry site. The public is invited. For information, including a rain date, if necessary, call Bruce Klotz at 253-1601.

DEMONSTRATION OF SHAPE NOTE SINGING

On Sunday, September 25, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m., the Pelham Historical Society invites the public to hear and experience Shape Note Singing at the Historic Town Hall on the corner of Route 202 and Amherst Road. This music has its roots in early New England. Visitors' participation at this special tenth anniversary Pelham exhibition of Shape Note Singing is encouraged but not required. Books will be available to borrow. Participants may come and go as they please. The public is invited. For information, call Barbara Jenkins at 253-2929.

HARVEST SUPPER AT HISTORIC TOWN HALL IN PELHAM

The Pelham Historical Society will hold its traditional New England boiled dinner and pie auction on Saturday, October 1, at 6:30 p.m. at the historic Town Hall on the corner of Amherst Road and Route 202. State Representative Steve Kulik will be the auctioneer. As space is limited, reservations should be made soon with Elva Anderson at 253-3970 or Doris Holden at 253-5993. Tickets are \$10.00 for adults and \$7.00 for children under ten.

Come join Boy Scout Troop 500 Amherst to see how Scouting is evolving as it enters its 2nd century. We are having an Open House for prospective scouts and their families Tuesday, October 4 from 7:00 to 8:30 PM at the South Congregational Church, 1066 Southeast Street, Amherst. Troop 500 has a 50+ year history in Amherst working with school-age boys (grades 6-12). Troop activities are organized and run by the boys, including weekly meetings, monthly campouts, and projects in the community. Our Scouts learn practical outdoor skills and develop leadership skills while having a lot of fun. For more information, contact Scoutmaster Peter Crowley at (413) 253-0964.

School Council Interest Form

If you are interested in being a part of the Pelham School Council, please return this form with a brief write up of who you are and why you would like to be a part of the Pelham School Council. Thank you for your interest in this position. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Lisa Desjarlais, principal of Pelham School at 362-1100 or at Desjarlaisl@arps.org

Name: _____

Child's name(s) _____

Phone Number: _____

Email address: _____