

# BRANCHING OUT

The Maple Street School Principal's Weekly Newsletter



Dear Parents and Students:

It was an interesting, busy week as we head into the Holiday Recess. This time of year can be so chaotic, with the balancing of professional and personal needs that impact our daily lives at school. The kids are certainly not immune to this either, as we can visibly see them building up with excitement as their vacation week approaches.

The school budget season is in full swing here in the District. Many of our sixth grade parents were present at this past Monday's School Board meeting to hear the Board deliberate on the proposed 2012-2013 budget. After several hours of discussion, the Board opted to increase the Superintendent's recommended budget by approximately \$120,000. This increase to the proposed budget was added in an effort to replace middle school reductions in teaching staff. The Superintendent's proposed budget included the reduction of all middle school teaching positions by 20% to reflect the bubble of declining enrollment which has been a part of the Harold Martin and Maple Street School for several years and has resulted in reductions of teaching positions in both buildings. These reductions would have resulted in some shifting of the daily schedule and changes to course offerings, particularly in the unified arts / specials. Fundamentally, the decision was made by the Board to increase the positions back to full-time because, after much consideration, the Board was concerned that children attending middle school next year may not have an experience equivalent to their peers who attended in prior years due to the reduction and resulting shifts in the schedule.

While many walked away from that meeting believing the budget now to be fixed, in reality the budget is still in its "infancy", as the School Board proposed budget now will be presented to the Town Budget Committee. After their

review and deliberation, a budget will be presented for a warrant article at the Town meeting on March 17th.

The Budget Committee will examine this budget and will also consider the spending impact the additional warrants which will be brought forward may present. These warrants may include additions to trusts, and the adoption of a Collective bargaining Agreement with the Hopkinton Education Association who's representatives are in negotiations with the Board at this time due to the need to replace an expiring teachers contract in 2012. Ultimately, the Budget Committee's presented budget will appear as a warrant article on March 17th. Please save the date for this very important meeting!

Finally, I was asked to remind students and families about the importance of keeping physically active over the vacation. Ms. Wardell has challenged her students to take advantage of the vacation time to enjoy sixty minutes daily of physical activity and exercise, and asked that I remind them to please track their exercise times if possible. It is an exciting challenge, and I hope that the skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, or biking that takes place as a result is fun for the family.

Ms. Wardell also asked that I remind parents and students that, upon our return (and weather willing) we will be snowshoeing / active in the outdoors for PE upon our return. Please plan to dress accordingly for the outdoor weather when you are scheduled for PE.

Have a great week ahead!

# DATES TO REMEMBER

## December / January 2011-2012

S	M	T	W	TH	F	SA
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28

### December Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time / Location</u>	<u>Event</u>
• December 23, 2011	All Day / NA	Holiday Recess Begins

### January Events

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time / Location</u>	<u>Event</u>
• January 2, 2012	All Day / NA	No School - New Year's Day
• January 3, 2012	All Day / NA	Students Return to School
• January 10, 2012	All Day / NA	No School - Teacher Professional Development Day
• January 16, 2012	All Day / NA	No School - Civil Right's Day
• January 19, 2012	7:00 PM / HMHS Audi	Winter Concert*
• January 25, 2012	All Day / NA	Progress Reports Go Home

\*Indicates Parental Invitation