

THE PIERCE SCHOOL BROADSHEET

Issue 11 - November 17, 2009

PTO NEWS is also available online at <http://www.pierceschoolbrookline.org>

From the Desk of the Principal

Dear Pierce Families,

Below is a letter sent to Lawrence School families after the incident last week that many of you may have heard about. In an effort to minimize rumors and inaccurate information, I am sending this so the details of the incident are clear. I have also shared this information with Pierce staff and we are using it as a reminder to be ever vigilant and adhere to the established routines that all classrooms have in place. It is unfortunate that this incident took place. However, we use this as a way to reinforce our need to secure both of our buildings at certain hours and to ask visitors to check in at the office. Though it is sometimes hard for parents, we ask that you also check in the office before moving about the buildings. Though we are not changing the times that our doors are locked, primarily because many of our students need to go between the two buildings all day, I am hoping that this incident helps everyone to better understand our need to secure the buildings after school, particularly Unit A and the library.

I thank you for your cooperation and continued support.

Sincerely,

Pipier Smith-Mumford

November 10, 2009

Dear Lawrence Families,

We wanted to let you know that there was a report from two fourth grade students that an unidentified man was seen in the second floor girls' bathroom. The man did not speak or interact in any way with the students. Both students returned to class and reported the sighting to their teacher. The teacher of the students reported the sightings immediately to the vice-principal. Faculty then checked the building and did not see the stranger again in the building or on the property.

At the same time, the Brookline Police were immediately called. They came to the school, did a sweep of the building and also declared that the building was safe. The police asked that we share a description of the man. We ask you to call the school if you have any information. The man is believed to be in his twenties or thirties, about 5' 8' tall, was wearing a black, business-like suit, black shoes, dark hat and dark gym bag.

We are very proud of how the two children reported the sightings to their teacher, and how the teacher informed the administration in order to maintain safety in the building. We appreciate the quick response by both our faculty and the Brookline police.

We will be reviewing our building security protocol and will keep you updated. If you have any questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact one of us.

William H. Lupini, Superintendent of School

Richard M. Rogers, Principal

H1N1 flu information update

A letter from Brookline Superintendent of Schools and Director of Public Health and Human Services to Brookline Public Schools Community (dated 12 November 2009):

School H1N1 Flu Information (http://rs6.net/tn.jsp?et=1102825714130&s=8&e=001A_Qaes0FIPEQ2KQ-vDin5PPkkoKBBQeZ7nNSWtDD8j2bwmA5JUUYTC4n8NdkQ0n--enSv6H9tT_vKXlhmfL-)

Websites from Pierce Teachers

There is a great collection of websites from our Pierce teachers. They can be reached by clicking on the apple symbol on the Pierce staff webpage or here:

<http://www.homeworknow.com/fetch/index.php?number=250315000422&countrytabs=0>

Town-Wide Enrollment Issues

November 17, 2009

Please find below a statement from the superintendent explaining the present status of the district's plans for addressing the enrollment issues. The good news for Pierce is that this may mean additional classroom space and potential renovation of common spaces sooner rather than later.

For further information or questions please contact Building Task Force leaders, Peter Sacks, sacksjacobs@verizon.net; and/or Philip Kramer, pkramer@rcn.com; PTO co-chair Chuck Silverston, csilverston@prudentialunlimited.com.

Thank you.

Pipier Smith-Mumford

The Public Schools of Brookline have been experiencing significant K-8 enrollment increases for the past five years. During this period, the total K-8 enrollment has grown by 581 students (15%) and, based upon available birth data and other demographic trends, we expect this growth pattern to continue for at least the next four years. This will result in total enrollment growth of approximately 900 students (23%) during the nine year (FY05-FY14) period.

The impact of the enrollment growth during the last five years has increased demand on the Town's eight PK-8 schools appreciably. In 2005, the schools operated with 3,888 students in 196 homerooms. In the current school year, we operate with 4,469 students in 219 homerooms. In FY2014, our system projects a need for approximately 241 homerooms with a projected enrollment of 4,780 students, representing an increase of 45 homerooms between 2005 and 2014. In order to create the classroom space necessary to accommodate these enrollment levels, we have been forced to convert spaces intended for other purposes into regular classrooms.

Each of the Town's PK-8 schools is nearing or at its capacity. The community is experiencing an influx of students, especially at the Kindergarten level that far exceeds what would be expected based on the birth data alone. This indicates that other factors are impacting the enrollment numbers. Specifically, our analysis points to an increase in the number of families moving to the community, resulting in this growth rate exceeding that predicted by the birth rate.

In order to address this serious issue, various mitigation measures have been taken, the most significant being the Runkle School renovation and addition project. This endeavor, which is being funded 41.58% by the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA), will allow for additional school capacity in a geographic location that is buffered by multiple schools. The Runkle School will become a three section per grade school across all grades, with appropriate support and shared space to support the enrollment of 560 students. Other mitigation activities have primarily consisted of the careful re-modeling and renovation to internal spaces within each of the schools, with the goal being the creation of the highest quality space within available constraints. For example, multi-purpose rooms and music rooms have been converted into dedicated homerooms, resulting in itinerant teachers working in substandard spaces. Adjacent office and learning spaces have been reconstructed and modified into full size classrooms. Dedicated computer laboratories have been converted into homerooms. Lastly, early education classes have been moved from dedicated homerooms into shared spaces with extended day programs.

While the changes made to school spaces have been done carefully, with adequate attention to infrastructure needs, they have resulted in less than optimum spaces and conditions. Moreover, we anticipate that additional spaces need to be converted into regular classrooms within the next four years. While this will require additional conversion and the creation of alternative spaces, it is clear that we cannot create these classrooms from our existing buildings as they are presently configured.

Therefore, I am requesting that the Board of Selectmen and School Committee support the submission of a Statement of Interest (SOI) to the Massachusetts School Building Authority for the construction of additional classrooms at Heath School and/or some other location(s), including the possibility of Baldwin School, Lynch Center or schools yet to be identified. This proposal will allow us to address space concerns at Heath, while also looking at strategies to create capacity at our other K-8 buildings (i.e., moving early education classes from a number of elementary schools to a one location). While these steps certainly represent a short-term strategy that could require additional measures if enrollments continue to grow (i.e., "permanent" use of the Old Lincoln School), I believe they are necessary to address the needs of our schools and families as overcrowding issues throughout the system continue to worsen. Unfortunately, it is also clear that this need for a "wedge" project (to take place between Runkle and Devotion) will cause a delay in the proposed full-renovations to both Devotion and Pierce Schools.

The Board of Selectmen will consider this SOI request at their meeting on Tuesday, November 10th, while the School Committee will take up the proposal on Thursday, November 12th. We are very hopeful that the MSBA would consider funding a second project in Brookline, given our extraordinary enrollment growth and space needs. We would hope to begin conversations with representatives from MSBA in December and to work with representatives from various boards/committees (including Selectmen, School Committee, Building Commission and Advisory Committee) to develop the best options for addressing the space needs of the elementary schools as soon as possible.

Superintendent William Lupini

The Math League Started on November 16 for Grades 4-6 - Math League is starting the week of November 16 for grades 4-6, with practices running from 7:20-7:55am in Math Specialist Darrielle Sullivan's room behind the it. There will be a different topic covered each day of the week:

Monday - Bases — Tuesday - Geometry — Wednesday - Operations — Thursday - Problem Solving — Friday - Patterns

Interested students in grades 4-6 are invited to come any of the days the first week (Nov. 16-20) to try the different topics to see what they might be interested in. After the first week, students will be asked to select one or more ays. Students will have the option of attending meets against the other Brookline schools in January, February, and March. Math League practices run through March 9.

Pierce Math League is also participating in Math Olympiads this year. Interested Math League participants in grades 4-6 are invited to try Math Olympiads on Tuesday, Nov. 24, 2009 at 2:30pm - 3pm, also in Darrielle's room by the pit.

Please contact Darrielle Sullivan (Darrielle_Sullivan@brookline.k12.ma.us) and Ira Heffan (heffan@yahoo.com) with any questions.

Reminder - Pajamas Wanted! The set design crew for the grade 7/8 production of The Pajama Game would like to borrow your gently worn cotton pajamas for the show (adult or larger children's sizes), particularly those in bright colors, with stripes or polka dots. Note that these will be hung above the stage, and will therefore not be subject to significant wear and tear. Contributions should be left by **Friday, November 20** (labeled with your name) in the marked bin in the Pierce School main lobby. Your pajamas will be returned to you in this same bin once the play is over. Thank you!

Save The Date

Seventh Sense — The first meeting of Seventh Sense (a parent networking group for Pierce School 7th grade parents and guardians) will be held on Tuesday, December 1st at 7pm in the Teachers Room.

Enrichment Instructors are Still Needed - Do you have one hour of free time this upcoming winter? Are you interested in teaching a class to a small group of children? Do you have a hobby or talent that you would like to share?

The Pierce School Enrichment Program is looking for some new creative classes for children in grades K-6. These classes are one afternoon a week from 2:20-3:15 p.m. and sometimes from 3:20 -4:15 p.m. The winter session is eight weeks and begins the third week in January 2010.

Pay is \$40 an hour

If interested contact Abbie at pierceanrichment@gmail.com

Positive Press for Pierce

Kudos to Pierce from Dr. Fischer-Mueller

Below is a message from Dr. Jennifer Fischer-Mueller that was sent to all staff last Friday, 11/13. It is feedback on last Thursday evening's presentation to the school committee (as described in the message below).

I thank Dr. Fischer-Mueller for her kind words and for her support to Pierce. I also congratulate the staff for their continued hard work on behalf of all Pierce students!

Pipier Smith-Mumford

To all of the Pierce faculty and staff,

I don't know what you were doing last night at 6:30PM, but I wish you could've been at the School Committee's Curriculum Subcommittee meeting. Pipier presented some of the Pierce School's work relating to your School Improvement Plan around mathematics. Her presentation was outstanding!!!!

Questions and comments from the School Committee centered around:

How can this great work be shared with other schools?

It's very impressive how the Pierce School has grown a culture of collaboration among the adults.

How did you schedule in a 6th period of math and how did you "free up" all of the teachers, including specialists, to work with kids?

How were you able to create a block of common planning time and how are the teachers using that time?

This data is impressive!!! Have you shared this with teachers? Parents?

This was a fabulous half hour of "Positive Press for Pierce"!

The School Committee, Superintendent and his Senior Staff, were treated to a glimpse of some of the fabulous work going on at the Pierce School.

Nice job, Pipier!! Way to go, Pierce!!!!

Enjoy your weekend,

Jennifer

Jennifer Fischer-Mueller, Ed.D.

Deputy Superintendent for Teaching and Learning Public Schools of Brookline

333 Washington St.

Brookline, MA 02445

Community Announcements

1st Light Festival 2009 on Thursday, December 3rd from 5pm until 8pm to kick off the holiday season. Enjoy live performances, free food, activities for everyone, and more. Come share this night with your family, friends, and community to shop, eat, and discover Brookline's best!

Performers, Sponsors and Business Participants are now being sought for 1st Light Festival 2009; Brookline's Holiday Town-wide Open House. For more information, contact us at 1stlightbrookline@gmail.com or 617-730-2050.

GIFT

Help the Pierce PTO raise funds, spend time with other parents and get a jump on your holiday shopping!

Henry Bear's provides all the supplies and all donations for wrapping go to Pierce. The store will match all donations with a gift certificate for teachers too!

WRAP

We need two volunteers for each one hour shift to wrap gifts at Henry Bear's Park in Brookline Village. No prior gift wrapping experience necessary!

Times are available on:

Friday, December 4 (10 am – 7 pm)

Saturday December 5 (10 am – 6 pm)

Sunday December 6 (10am-5 pm)

For more information or to sign up for a slot please contact Nancy Leventhal (2Le) at nancyandchuck@comcast.net or Gioia Perugini (KW) at gpjb@verizon.net.

Save the Date

Wednesday, November 18, **Early dismissal, Grades K-8** (12:30pm)

Friday, November 20, **Report cards issued**, Grades 6-8

Wednesday, November 25, **Noon dismissal** (12:00pm)

Thursday, November 26, **Thanksgiving holiday** (no school)

Friday, November 27, **Thanksgiving holiday** (no school)

Tuesday, December 1, **Seventh Sense** (7:00pm)

Thursday, December 3, **Early dismissal, Grades K-8** (12:30pm)

Friday, December 4, **Pot luck community breakfast** (8:00am)

Saturday, December 5, **Henry Bear Park wrapping fundraiser**

Sunday, December 6, **Henry Bear Park wrapping fundraiser**

Wednesday, December 9, **Early dismissal, Grades K-12** (12:30pm)

Thursday, December 10, **Pajama Game (7/8 Musical)** (7:00pm)

Friday, December 11, **Pajama Game (7/8 Musical)** (7:00pm)

Saturday, December 12, **Pajama Game (7/8 Musical)** (2:00pm)

Saturday, December 12, **Pajama Game (7/8 Musical)** (7:00pm)

For the Current School Lunch Menu Visit:

<http://www.brookline.k12.ma.us/NR/rdonlyres/F11BCF49-7AC4-4986-A1E8-2F775BDD205A/3074/Nov2009.pdf>

Broadsheet Schedule for the 2009-2010 school year

Thank you for your continued support. The broadsheet will continue another year of "green"! Therefore, the Broadsheet will be e-mailed on Tuesdays to all who have registered for electronic information. If you would like to register, visit <http://www.pierceschoolbrookline.org/> or email poetsareangels@rcn.com. The deadline for submitting articles is Monday at 5pm. Anything not received by that deadline will go in the next broadsheet. Each Thursday a limited number of paper copies will be distributed to the teachers and will be available outside the main office.

Classified ads will run on the last Thursday of each month by email only.

Broadsheet
Pierce School
50 School Street
Brookline, Massachusetts 02446

piercebroadhsheet@gmail.com

Felina Mucha Cyr's Cell: 617/935-4367
Pierce School Brookline: 617/730-2580

Thank you for your interest and support!

Sincerely,

Felina

Felina-Marie Mucha-Cyr
Editor, The Pierce School Broadsheet
poetsareangels@rcn.com

