



# Hanlon School Newsletters

October 2016

From the Desk of Mrs. Cronin:

October 28, 2016

Dear Hanlon Families,

We had a great turnout for our PTO Sponsored Annual **Hanlon Halloween Party** on Friday. It was fun to watch the students dancing with the deejay in the gym, getting faces painted and temporary tattoos in the hallway, trying their luck at carnival games, decorating cookies, wrapping their friends in toilet paper for the Mummy Wrap, and holding onto one another after exiting Mark Johnson's Haunted Hallway. It was a fantastic night for all. Jackie Keaveny orchestrated the night, and she had help from many, many parents. The Halloween Party is easily my favorite night of the school year, and we wouldn't be able to do it without so many volunteers. Thank you!

The Wellesley Dental Group is once again **collecting Halloween candy** to send to our troops serving overseas. From November 1st to November 9th, we will be collecting candy, along with handwritten notes and cards for our soldiers. The goal is to teach our kids lessons in giving, by encouraging them to share their extra Halloween candy with our troops. The sweet treats and the handwritten cards are a little reminder of home for our troops, and a message of support just in time for Veteran's Day. The packages will be sent via CarePacks, a non-profit organization, along with oral hygiene supplies. Collection bins will be in front of the Main Office through Nov. 9th.

We are looking forward to seeing families for **Parent Teacher Conferences** over the next two weeks. Most conferences are scheduled for either Wednesday Nov. 2nd or Nov. 16th. Please take a minute to check your scheduled conference time, as the meetings are usually scheduled back to back. The conference is a great opportunity to hear how your child has settled into the year, and about his or her strengths and areas for growth. Status Reports containing information about Effort, Communication, Respect & Responsibility, and Work Habits will go home in backpacks a few days before the conference. While teachers prepare lots of information to share, it can be helpful to brainstorm your own list of questions as well. The teachers care very much about your children and are looking forward to connecting with you at the conference.

**Picture Day Makeups and Retakes** for students in K-5 are scheduled for Friday, Nov. 4th, beginning at 9AM. 5th Grade Families, please take note: The 5th Grade Class Picture is also scheduled for this date. Traditionally the entire class gathers on the playground structure for the photograph that hangs in Hanlon's hall, and is the centerfold of the yearbook. It rained on our first Picture Day, and we were unable to take the 5th Grade Picture, so this is the only chance for the picture. If your child is not in attendance on Friday Nov. 4th, he or she will not be in the picture. Please make every effort to have your 5th grader in school.

Congratulations to the Ganson Family for winning the PTO raffle for a reserved parking spot. As a reminder please be mindful of the new Reserved Parking sign located on the fence marking the fifth parking spot on Gay Street. Please refrain from using this parking spot during morning drop-off (8:30-8:45am) and during afternoon pick-up (3:00-3:15pm).

Tech Tidbits from Mr. Goguen

IXL (from "I excel") is a practice website for math, language arts, science and social studies. The Westwood Public Schools subscribe to the Math content for our K-5 elementary students. Login information can be found [here](#).

IXL is organized by grade level and provides limitless, dynamically created questions in hundreds of skill areas. As a result, when a child first signs on it can be overwhelming to understand where to begin. In some cases, teachers will assign skills by identifying a letter and a number (i.e. F5).

Although IXL can be a fabulous tool for practicing and reinforcing math skills, there are a few important considerations to keep in mind. A bad habit of solving all the math mentally could develop. Remind your child that using scrap paper or a whiteboard is a more accurate strategy in many situations. Likewise, when a student incorrectly answers a question s/he is presented with "Sorry, incorrect ..." Another poor habit is to quickly press "Got it." Instead, remind your child to review the correct answer and the explanation. Our youngest students will absolutely need support with this concept, so expecting IXL to be an independent task might be missing an opportunity to reinforce good strategies and metacognition. ~ [Previous Tech Tidbits](#)

A Message from SEPAC

Dear Parents,

You are invited to attend the Westwood Special Education Parent Advisory Council's (SEPAC) November meeting. The topic of the meeting will be an interactive workshop covering the important topic of *Basic Rights in Special Education*. This

workshop will be provided by Joanne Flatley, a trained parent educator and member of the Westwood community. The meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 15, 2016 at 7:00 pm in the Professional Development Room located in the District Administrative Offices section of the WHS campus. Parking is available at the front and back of the building. Attached, please find the notes from the September SEPAC meeting. More information about special education programming in the District can be found at the Student Services Department webpage on the WPS main site.

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you on November 15<sup>th</sup>,

Abby Hanscom

Director of Student Services

### Meeting Notes from September 27 SEPAC Meeting

October 13, 2016

#### **Student Council Spirit Day**

This year, our Student Council Representatives are James Beggan, Jack Benbow, Sarah Garratt, Elizabeth Weston, Katelyn Fay, Jesse Peck, Meaghan McNutt, Vic Ganson, Caitlin Ferreira, Olivia Li, John Quinn, and Cole Gustie. Some of the roles of Student Council are to lead the school in altruistic projects, emcee parts of our monthly All School Meetings, and determine Spirit Days. On Tuesday, October 18th, we will have both an All School Meeting and a Westwood Pride Spirit Day. Students are encouraged to wear green colors and Westwood gear (no hats, please).

#### **Site Council- volunteers needed**

One of the many ways to be involved this year is to join our Site Council. The Hanlon School Site Council meets several times throughout the year as mandated by the Education Reform Act of 1993. Our Site Council is designed as an advisory group consisting of parents, school staff, and community members. The Site Council assists in developing goals for school improvement and other school initiatives. Hanlon's Site Council will have our first meeting from 3:15-4:15PM this Thursday, October 20th. We would like to encourage new and returning parents/guardians. If you are interested in serving on Hanlon's Site Council, please email me at [scronin@westwood.k12.ma.us](mailto:scronin@westwood.k12.ma.us).

#### **Science Update**

This year WPS has begun a three-year process of alignment with the new MA Curriculum Frameworks for Science and Technology/Engineering that were adopted in January. After a great deal of research, we have chosen to use STEMscopes, a science curriculum that is specifically aligned with the MA Standards. This program emphasizes inquiry and exploration, hands-on, project-based learning, and offers engineering design challenges that encourage student collaboration.

If you were to walk into one of Hanlon's classrooms, you would see students DOing science, not just reading about it (although connections to nonfiction literature are embedded throughout). For example, children might explore amplitude and wavelength by shaking and moving long coils of steel, experiment with the ratio of the height of a ramp to the speed and distance that a Matchbox car will travel, or developing a

deep understanding of what matter is by debating whether clouds, fire, and wind are matter, or something else.

Under the guidance of our new Science Coordinator, Kate Doyle, and our Leadership Team, teachers have already begun professional development to deepen their content knowledge, experience the investigations that students will participate in, and to begin planning their lessons to meet the needs of their students. Ms. Kelly, Ms. Feuer-Beck, Ms. Lindsay, and myself are all part of the district-wide Science Leadership Team. If you are curious to learn more about STEMscopes, you can visit their website by clicking [here](#).

### **Bus Safety**

On Tuesday, School Resource Officer Pindel visited Hanlon to review bus safety rules with all students. He reminded them about the following rules:

- Bus Stops: be on time, pay attention to cars, and avoid games that involve running, throwing, and catching as they take your focus off the road
- Bus Seats: remain seated with your backpack on your lap and your hands away from windows
- Crossing: even if you see someone else looking left and right, you should still look both ways before crossing

Officer Pindel also led students in a Bus Evacuation Drill in which students identified the emergency exits (back, windows, ceiling, main door) and practiced hopping safely out the back door. This annual Safety Lesson prepares all students for riding the bus on field trips and other events.

### **Meet Tony Mullin, The Hanlon School Committee Liaison**

Tony looks forward to serving on the Westwood School Committee for the next three years and is thankful for the support that Westwood residents have given

As Hanlon Liaison, parents can reach out to Tony on School Committee topics. Tony will also be sharing School Committee updates with the Hanlon community and will attend PTO meetings.

Tony was elected to the School Committee this past April for a three-year term. His professional career has been spent in the business world with the Boston Consulting Group engaged on long term strategy, and the last six years with Biogen in Human Resources. He is the father of two girls who attend Thurston Middle School and Martha Jones. He has been an active volunteer in Westwood sports as a basketball coach, soccer coach and serving on the Westwood Youth Soccer Board.

Tony Can be reached by email at [tonymmullin@gmail.com](mailto:tonymmullin@gmail.com). He also encourages parents to visit and like his School Committee Facebook page in which School Committee information is updated:

<https://www.facebook.com/Mullin4WestwoodSC/>

### **Family Fun Night**

It was great to see so many families at our PTO sponsored Family Fun Night last Tuesday. Vlad Ortega led an awesome game of Tug-o-War and we had plenty of PTO supplied popsicles for all students.

Congratulations to the Ganson family who won the raffle for a reserved parking spot between 3:00-3:20PM on Gay Street. Save the date for our Halloween Party on October 28th!

### **PTO Fundraiser Update**

Thank you for your participation in the Kidstuff Coupon Book fundraiser. Together we raised around \$1350! This secures funding for both the DJ and photo booth at the upcoming Halloween Party.

If coupons aren't your thing, please take a look at the Genevieve's catalogue that came home in backpacks and see if anything interests you. You can order online at <http://shop.genevieves.com/>, the school code for credit is 2531. **The deadline has been extended:** Order forms are due Friday, October 21st.

Please keep in mind that fundraising efforts are heavy in the fall in order to fund academic enrichment programs (field trips, school assemblies, etc.) as well as all of our events (Halloween Party, Movie Night, Bingo Night, etc.) throughout the year. These We promise the next major fundraiser will not be until the Parent Social in March!

We thank you for your continued support!

#### **A Message from the School Nurse, Ms. Davie**

Just a reminder that state mandated annual screenings are taking place. Vision screening takes place for all students, hearing screening for students in K-3rd grade and BMI screening in 1st and 4th grade. You will only be notified if your child has difficulties with the screenings. Please call if you have any questions or concerns about your children.

#### **Tech Tidbit from Mr. Goguen**

What types of devices are used at each grade level?

- Each K - 1 classroom has 6 iPads capable of running the latest iOS 10 update from Apple. Teachers typically use these iPads as a station. Learning how to properly insert and remove headphones can be quite a challenge. As a result, we have had a few broken pins stuck in the jack. Likewise, controlling the audio volume is another hurdle for our youngest students.
- Second graders transition to computers so each classroom has 4 Mac desktops that can be used as a station. Teachers also have access to Macbook carts so they can get more kids on at one time. A few challenges for second graders include getting familiar with the keyboard, scrolling, click and dragging and learning to control the mouse and cursor.
- Our grade 3 - 5 classrooms also have a bank of Mac desktops but technology use is more likely to be whole class directed with students using Macbooks or Chromebooks. The Chromebook has become the machine of choice with our older students who can sign in with their Westwood Google account.
- A set of iPads is also available to borrow from the library. Teachers might use these for a special project or as a station.
- Specialist teaches also have access to the shared iPads and the laptops if it fits with their lesson design.

[Tech blog](#)

Hanlon Elementary School, 790 Gay Street, Westwood, MA 02090 781-325-7500 x.8424  
Sarah Cronin, Principal

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