

FRANCIS W. PARKER CHARTER ESSENTIAL SCHOOL
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Friday Announcements

Friday, January 13, 2006

This week's letter was written by two Division Two students who attended the Fall Forum in November, 2005.

Dear Parker Community,

Reclaiming the freedom to learn: what does it really mean? Does it mean promoting the joy of discovery? Sharing a passion for learning? Or does it mean seeing enthusiasm on a student's face?

These were some of the questions we were faced with this year at the Fall Forum. We, along with six other Parker students, were lucky enough to be given the opportunity to attend a national conference about the Coalition of Essential Schools. There we sat, among some of the most highly respected educators, sharing our ideas and learning from one another.

The Fall Forum is a series of seminars and workshops that run over the course of three days, focusing on a variety of different topics, all in relation to this year's common goal: to bring back the freedom to learn. Bringing thousands of educators, students, and parents from around the world to generate ideas, share insight, and make suggestions towards providing a more successful educational experience was truly empowering.

Being in a room having a simple roundtable discussion with people so devoted to making the process of learning a memorable experience, sharing ideas, giving opinions, and being asked to answer complex questions by such highly respected educators was both powerful and influential.

After attending the conference, we were both left curious and interested. We found that a lot of the ideas expressed at the workshops we attended were all things that our school does exceptionally well. Parker is a prime example of what an Essential School really is. Now the question is, how we can share with the rest of the country "The Parker Way?"

Being so inspired, we would like to host a workshop at next year's Fall Forum to present and discuss the freedom of speech, specifically focusing on student voice outside of student government and how a school can make freedom of speech clearly accessible to the whole student body.

If we are chosen to present, we will be representing Parker and its extraordinary philosophy. We would like to get input from the whole community to include in our presentation. We are inviting teachers, students, and parents to help us formulate our ideas at an informal brainstorming meeting. Everyone and anyone is invited to attend and share their ideas on how they've seen student voice at Parker. The meeting will happen within the next two months, and details will be provided in future Friday Announcements.

Sincerely,

Amanda Griffin

Kayla Reeves

**Coffee with the Principal -
Thursday, January 19, 2006**

Please join me for coffee on Thursday, January 19 at 8:00 a.m. in my office. This will be a chance for informal conversation and an opportunity to have some of your questions answered and to meet some other Parker parents. For those of you whose schedule does not allow you to come in the morning please consider stopping by around 3:00 p.m.

Applications for Enrollment at Parker for September, 2006

Have you filled out your sibling application form?

We have begun to accept applications for enrollment at Parker in September, 2006!

If you have another child at home who will be applying to Parker, you do need to fill out an application form by the February 1 deadline. Please call the main office or stop by and ask for an application packet. The Information Session is not required for siblings although they are definitely welcome to attend if you wish.

If you have any questions please email, telephone or stop by the office and speak to Deborah Merriam, Academic Dean, deb@parker.org or (978) 772-3293. Thank you.

***P.E.F. Auction Planning Meeting
Tuesday, January 17, 2006***



The Parker Essential Fund is a group of parents, teachers and students whose purpose is to raise money to support educationally enriching activities at Parker. Check the Parker website for a list of recently funded items by the PEF.

The Parker Essential Fund will be holding an auction next fall as one of its major fundraisers. We are looking for Parker parents to plan and develop the auction. The first planning meeting will be held next Tuesday, January 17th at 7:30 in Room 2 at Parker.

P.E.F. Board Meeting - Grant Applications ***Wednesday, January 25***

The Parker Essential Fund is now accepting grant applications for review at the next Board meeting on January 25. Please submit applications to the PEF Box by Wednesday, January 18, with Teri's signature. Bridgit has the forms and instructions in the office. Please call or email Maryellen Grady ([978-486-4064](tel:978-486-4064)/mwgrady@gmail.com) if you have questions.

COMING SOON

January Gateways

We are working on a new system to inform families about Gateways this year. If your student is working towards a January Gateway, you should have received a letter in the mail informing you of the Gateway Exhibition day and time. With 100 children gatewaying at the mid-year, the schedule is tight. Please do your best to be available on the day and time in your letter. However, if this day and time just will not work for your family, please contact Deb Merriam at deb@parker.org or at 978 772 3293, ext. 152. Any questions, please feel free to contact Deb.

January, 2006

- Monday, 16 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Birthday (no school)
- Tuesday, 17 - PEF Meeting at 7:30 p.m. in Room 2
- Thursday, 19 - Coffee with the Principal at 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m.
- Sunday, 22 - Enrollment Information Session (1:00 – 4:00 p.m.)
- Wednesday, 25 – American Red Cross Community Blood Drive 8:00 am – 2:00 p.m. in the Gym
- Sunday, 29 - Snow date for Enrollment Information Session (1:00 – 4:00 p.m.)
- Monday, 30 – Faculty Planning , no classes
- Tuesday, 31 - New semester begins

CALENDAR

PLEASE MARK THESE DATES! (*Subject to change*)

February, 2006

- Friday, 3 – Junior College Trip to Hampshire College and U. Mass. Amherst
- Monday, 6 - Trustees Meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday 15 – Evening with the Stars, Division I MST night 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- Friday, 17 - Gateway Celebration - Early Release (noon dismissal)
- Monday, 20 - President's Day (no school)
- Tuesday, 21 - Friday, 24 - Winter Recess

March, 2006

- Wednesday, 1 – Junior Parent Information Night for Jon, Tom and Clay's advisories
- Thursday, 2 – Parker Matters Parenting Workshop – Assistant District Attorney Nora Mann – Internet Safety
- Thursday, 9 – Junior Parent Information Night for Tricia and Jim/Meghan's advisories
- Wednesday, 15 – An Evening With the Stars – A Division I presentation from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.
- Thursday, 16 – Snow date for Junior Parent Information Night
- Monday, 13 - Trustees Meeting at 7:00 p.m.
- Wednesday, 15 - Noon dismissal - Faculty Planning
- TBA - Spring Conference Day (no classes)

Thank you!

Many thanks to the family of John and Amy Williamson for a box of pencils.

Thanks goes to Bill Allen for donating a fantastic Civil War resource to the A/H library. Bill gave Parker his collection of African-American slave songs.

GENEVIEVE FALL FUND RAISER

GENEVIEVE'S SALE BRINGS IN \$1884 IN PROFIT!

Thank you to all the students, parents and staff who participated in the Genevieve's fall fundraiser. All the money will go to staff education and travel.

CAN YOU HELP?

We are in need of 8 MM tapes.

FROM THE COLLEGE COUNSELOR

Senior Mid-Year Reports and Semester Narratives:

Senior mid-year reports including end of course narratives will be mailed to all colleges to which a student has applied in mid-February. Narratives will not be ready before this time. This is an automatic process, students do not need to request the reports be sent.

Scholarship:

Seniors are invited to apply for the Henry David Thoreau Scholarship. Learn more online and download an application from: <http://www.thoreauscholar.org/student/application.html>

Rebekah Society of Oddfellows scholarship: See Sue for details

Class of 2007 and 2008:

The University of New Hampshire is offering a summer program, Project SMART (Science and Mathematics Achievement through Research Training). Learn more at www.smart.unh.edu

See the poster on the bulletin board across from Sue's office for this and many other offerings.

Junior College Trip – Friday, February 3rd

Amherst Extravaganza!

Each year Juniors learn basic college touring skills as we visit Hampshire College and U. Mass Amherst together. We visit these particular schools because they represent the two extremes in educational environments. Hampshire offers flexible curriculum and a small, private school environment. U. Mass is a good example of a traditional large public university.

The trip is not meant to promote either school, but rather to teach the Juniors what to look for on a college trip and how to sift out what is relevant to them from the information sessions. Permission slips will be distributed during advisory.

Junior Parent Information Night

Hear about the college application process and ways to help support your child during this adventure.

To keep the groups small, we offer two meeting dates.

Wednesday, March 1

For parents of student in Jon's, Tom's and Clay's advisories

Thursday, March 9

For parents of students in Tricia's and Jim's/Meghan's advisories

(If you can't come on your advisory's date, feel free to use the alternate date above.)

Thursday, March 16 is the snow date for both.

DIVISION III

In Imagining America, students are currently giving their oral presentations based on the research project which was completed in December. Like the research project, each oral presentation identifies the questions that drove the research, the research findings, a thesis, evidence in support of the thesis, and an evaluation of the strength of the thesis in light of evidence and counter-evidence. During the final week of the course (after Jim departs), the class will be led by Meghan Welch, our new A/H teacher. Students will watch and discuss a documentary of the ways in which Saddam Hussein has been viewed by the American press over a twenty year period. This experience will allow students a further opportunity to consider the forces that shape differing interpretations of history.

In Crime and Punishment, students are vigorously discussing the pros and cons of the death penalty on the basis of morality, law, deterrent effect, and fairness of application. Next week, we will conduct a class wide debate. During the final week of the course (after Jim departs), the class will be led by Meghan Welch, our new A/H teacher. Students will watch and discuss the film, *Dead Man Walking*, a thought provoking Hollywood drama based on the true story of Sister Helen Prejean who ministered to a death row inmate during his final days.

ARTS AND HUMANITIES

A/H Division I

Happy New Year! We are happy to be beginning 2006 with a continuation of our Rights and Government Unit. At the end of last week and the beginning of this one we concluded our work with Lois Lowry's trilogy with a Newscast about each of the books. Students are continuing to explore the question: "What is the relationship between the individual and the government?" as we finish this week with an investigation of "What is a constitution?" and our own Constitutional Convention to create "Parkerville's" Constitution. Ask your student what town in the country of Parkerville they represented and find out if they are happy with the compromises reached at the convention.

If your student is Gatewaying next week be sure that they are prepared with their cover letter, final portfolio and presentation outline, as well as having met with their assessor. We congratulate all the students who take on this challenge of a mid-year Gateway and the leadership role of becoming a "Spring Trainer."

A/H Division II

In Science, students are currently presenting their group projects on various systems of the human body. Each group has taken on the task of learning one system thoroughly and presenting their project in the form of a lesson for the class. Be sure to ask your student to see their project, as we have had amazingly well-prepared presentations. Quadratic functions are the topic for math. We have been learning the skills necessary to solve quadratic equations and furthering our knowledge by solving applications that involve quadratic modeling.

MATH SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Math, Science and Technology- Division I

Students have been busy this week investigating the reasons for the seasons through modeling labs. They have also been working on how to represent various 3-D models in a 2-D diagram and are practicing using mathematical tools to create effective diagrams as evidence for their explanations.

Students received Challenge of the Week # 8 "What are the Reasons for the Seasons?" on Monday of this week. It is due back on Tuesday, January 17, 2006.

Reminders

- Students will need an empty copy paper with lid for C.O.W. # 9 by 1/20/06.
- Students will also need a tri-fold presentation board by 2/3/06.
- Assignment completion continues to be an on-going issue. Homework notices were sent out before the holiday break and continue to be sent. We need your support.
- MARK YOUR CALENDARSFebruary 15, 2006...you don't want to miss this!

You are cordially invited to attend—



An Evening with the Stars

Wednesday, February 15, 2006

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Francis Parker Charter School

Presented by Division 1 M.S.T. students

WELLNESS

Alan's Wellness class

In Alan's classes, students played wiffleball, floor hockey and dodgeball this week. We also started getting back into shape with fitness work by doing five sets of five push-ups and sit-ups. In Health class, students worked on communication skills by practicing role plays around using "I" statements during conflict. Several students still need to hand in their behavior change project which can be found on the Parker web site.

Deborah's Wellness class

This week in Deborah's Wellness classes, we focused on their recent behavior change projects. We reviewed the passive, aggressive and assertive styles of communication, as well as brainstormed strategies for students to use towards their changes. Next week we will continue with "reading" and understanding feelings. In physical activity classes, we started a soccer module. Health screening also took place on Friday. The school purchased 5 pairs of snowshoes to go along with the 20 some odd pair of x-country skis. An outdoor skating rink has also been installed on Rogers Field. As soon as conditions are ripe, we will be spending time outside. Please make sure your child has adequate clothing for outdoor winter sports.

Laura's Wellness class

This week in Wellness the classes played a very inspired and enthusiastic game of indoor wiffle ball. We will also be playing board games and if the weather cooperates going snow shoeing/cross country skiing. At the beginning of each physical activity class we are focusing on fitness related activities to increase student physical fitness levels. In Health class we discussed the importance of using "I" statements in de-escalating conflict. Next week we will learn about the conflict escalator and behaviors that escalate conflict such as bulldozing, put downs and the silent treatment. I have also finished assessing the behavior change project that all classes were assigned and I must say I am very impressed with the level of honesty and the thoughtfulness that many students put forth. The behavior change project centers around improving communication skills.

SPANISH

Division I

Ano uno: Terminamos ROSA #4 que trata de vocabulario de la familia y el acuerdo de numero.

Year 1: We completed the ROSA on family vocabulary and number agreement. We will begin studying descriptive adjectives.

Ano dos:

Terminamos PODER # 6 esa semana. Necesitamos conjugar los verbos de cambio de raiz encontrado en un articulo en el periodico de Santiago, Chile. En la proxima semana, vamos a investigar Fultono, Chile.

Year 2:

We complete the PODER #6 assessment this week. We will need to correctly conjugate the infinitive verbs to the stem changing verbs which are found in Miguelin's want ad. in the Santiago newspaper. Next week, we will study O-UE stem changing verbs. For our PODER #7, we will apply stem changing rules to a post card which we will write.

Ano tres:

Esta semana hemos empezado el proyecto de leer y escribir. Es el ultimo de la unidad 2 y esta enfocado en pensar criticamente. Estamos leyendo un ensayo de Eduardo Galeano sobre la inmigracion en el mundo. En la clase de Patricia tuvimos un peque?o quiz de verbos para refrescar la mente! La proxima semana seguiremos con otro texto, esta vez en verso. Los estudiantes que hacen su Gran Puerta a Mitad de A?o entregaron su segundo borrador el viernes. ya estamos pensando en como lo van a presentar cada uno.

Year 3:

This week, we began the reading and writing projects which will focus on critical thinking. We are reading an essay by Eduardo Galeano which addresses world immigration. We also had a quiz on verbs. Next week we will read Spanish verse.

**** Students who are preparing to gateway in January need to hand in their second draft of their cover letter. We are already preparing how each student will present his/her gateway.

SPORTS UPDATE

Sports Schedule for Week of January 16, 2006

Date	Parker Team	Practice/Game	Location	Dismissal from class	Bus Leaves	Game Time	Pick-up
Mon., 1/16	Boys Varsity	Home vs. University Park	SMS			7:00	8:15 at SMS
	Girls Varsity	No Practice					
	Boys JV	Home vs. University Park	SMS			5:30	6:45 at SMS
	Girls JV	No Practice					
	Boys MS	No Practice					
	Girls MS	No Practice					
Tues., 1/17	Boys Varsity	Practice	SMS			5:00	6:30 at SMS
	Girls Varsity	Away vs. University Park	See website	3:05	3:15	6:00	8:00 at school
	Boys JV	Practice	SMS			5:00	6:30 at SMS
	Girls JV	Away vs. University Park	See website	3:05	3:15	4:30	8:00 at school
	Boys MS	Away vs. Lincoln	See website	2:20	2:30	4:30	6:30 at school
	Girls MS	Away vs. Lincoln	See website	2:20	2:30	3:30	6:30 at school
Weds., 1/18	Boys Varsity	Away vs. N.C. Charter	Monty Tech.		5:45	7:00	8:45 at school
	Girls Varsity	Practice	OH			2:00	4:00 at OH
	Boys JV	No practice					
	Girls JV	Away vs. Groton School	See website		3:00	4:15	5:45 at school
	Boys MS	No practice					
	Girls MS	No practice					
Thurs., 1/19	Boys Varsity	Practice	SMS			5:00	6:30 at SMS
	Girls Varsity	Practice	LW			4:00	6:00 at LW
	Boys JV	Practice	SMS			5:00	6:30 at SMS
	Girls JV	Practice	School			3:30	5:30 at school
	Boys MS	Away vs. Shirley	SMS	2:05	2:15	3:30	4:30 at SMS
	Girls MS	Away vs. Shirley	SMS	2:05	2:15	2:30	3:30 at SMS
Fri., 1/20	Boys Varsity	Away vs. North Shore	See website	3:05	3:15	4:45	7:00 at school
	Girls Varsity	Practice	JC			6:00 AM	
	Boys JV	Practice	SMS			5:00	6:30 at SMS
	Girls JV	Practice	SMS			5:00	6:30 at SMS
	Boys MS	Practice	School			4:45	6:00 at school
	Girls MS	Practice	School			3:30	4:45 at school

School = Parker
 SMS = Shirley Middle School (Devens)
 LW = Lura White School (Shirley)

JC = Job Corps (Devens)
 OH = Orchard Hills (Lancaster)

Please contact Ben Benoit, Parker School Athletic Director, with any questions at (978) 772-3293

Ext. 114 or at bbenoit@parker.org.

FROM THE NURSE'S OFFICE

Thank you to the Farese family for the bags of goodies that they sent in for students last week. As always, we could use more crackers and ginger ale for our hungry students.

This week Division 1 and 2 students are having their vision and hearing screenings done. If time permits, the students will have their height and weight done this week as well. Letters will be sent home for those students that need further follow up and referral. If your son or daughter is successful with the screenings no information will be sent. No news is good news. If you have any questions feel free to call me. Postural screening will be done the week before February vacation. Parents of Division 1 and Division 2 students will receive an informational letter about this soon.

Thank you

Shirley Nelson- School Nurse

LIBRARY NEWS

As of today, we have cataloged and processed **18,202 items** for the Parker School Library – and we have recorded 2,390 items that have been signed since we've been able to electronically track circulation, starting last school year!

Maura and I are *THRILLED* to announce that, with the help of hundreds of hours of volunteer work by our parent volunteers and service students, **we have completed the cataloging and processing for all of our non-fiction books!** These are the ones most likely to be used by students for research projects and classroom assignments! What an accomplishment this is!

We are now working on completing the FICTION books – the ones kids read mostly for pleasure. Our fiction collection needs to be fully reviewed and culled, as a good portion of our fiction books were donated to us from the Fort Devens Public library and are dated or have inappropriate reading levels.

Anyone in the Parker Community (student or adult) who is an avid FICTION reader is welcome to join us for this weeding project – a difficult task for most librarians! (Books we're culling from the collection will be selectively made available for purchase during the Parker Classic. Donations to non-profit organizations will be considered as well, so feel free to suggest one you know of!)

And finally, we will also be removing the old wooden card catalog from the library in the coming weeks. Three sections will be available. These are large – 3 ½ feet width by 5 feet height. If you're interested in making an offer for one of them, please email Laurie at laurie@parker.org. (Several people have already expressed interest).

Happy reading!

Laurie Nehring, Librarian

LUNCH MENU - Week of January 16

Monday: No school – Martin Luther King Day

Tuesday: BBQ Chicken, Potato Salad, Carrot & Raisin Salad, Fruit Dessert, Milk

Wednesday: Pizza Day, 2 slices, salad, fruit & milk \$3.50 – A La Carte is \$1.50 a slice

Thursday: Lasagna, Garden Salad, Garlic Bread, Fruit Dessert, Milk

Friday: Chicken Patty on Bun, French Fries, Lettuce & Tomato, Fruit Dessert, Milk or a Veggie Burger

PARKER/WACHUSETT SKI PROGRAM BEGAN YESTERDAY, (THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 2006)!

The ski program began **Thursday, January 12th and run for six weeks.** If school is canceled, skiing is also canceled. In the event of poor weather or other events that require cancellation, notice will be posted at the Parker School Office by 11:00 a.m. on the day in question and an email will be sent to the "Parker School List Server." If a cancellation occurs, it is the responsibility of the parent to arrange pick-up of the student and his/her equipment, at the end of the school day. Makeup sessions will be scheduled later in the season if cancellations occur.

Ski Passes

Students purchasing a Century Pass will receive a Confirmation Post Card from Wachusett Mountain in the next week or two. Bring the Post Card to the Customer Service desk at Wachusett before Friday, December 30 for your picture and to obtain your pass.

Students purchasing the six-session Parker lift pass and riding the bus will be given their lift pass on the bus each Thursday.

Departure and Return Times

The bus will leave Parker promptly at 3:40 p.m. It will be the students' responsibility to get their equipment and themselves onto the bus quickly after school. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of each trip and verified before returning. No notice is required if a student is unable to attend for any reason. Any student who fails to make the bus on time will be assumed to have canceled, and will be required to make his/her own alternative arrangements to get home.

The bus will leave Wachusett Mountain for the return trip to Parker at 8:00 p.m. sharp. The buses will arrive at the Parker School at 8:30 p.m. - John Poikonen, Ski Program Coordinator

The school will not be open, so please - be on time (8:30 p.m.) picking-up your student!

CC BI-WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

BI weekly news letter:

PR will begin community outreach by announcements on Wednesday. STAF still have grants and there are mini grants now available for student activity groups, choice blocks, and projects that meet criteria, available on the CC board outside the front office. Division I Spirit may have a Valentines Day dance. Division 2 Spirit are making Parker t-shirts and sweatshirts. The Constitution review will have posters up about changes to Parker's Constitution. The Outreach committee are planning a movie night for a prep school in Baton Rouge, yay! Teachers have met and discussed with the CC about the rising TRASH CRISIS OF 06! Ahhhh! A new committee is being formed and we will keep you posted.

FOR THE COMMUNITY/NOTICE BOARD

BLOOD DRIVE

Please come and support the Parker School blood drive on Wednesday, January 25 from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. in the gymnasium. To schedule an appointment or for more information, please call (978) 772-3293 Ext 555 or email Blooddrive@parker.org.

PLEASE NOTE: You must be at least 17 years old, at least 110 pounds, and you must bring a picture ID with you to give blood.

Parker Model Rocket Club

We are looking for a parent volunteer who has a truck with a snow-plough on the front! We need it to clear the access road to the Moore Army Air Field at Devens which is about 100 yards long. Please call Steve Byan at (978) 486-4241 or stevebyan@mac.com if you can help.

FOUND ITEMS

If any of the items below belong to you please come to the office.

Various leather gloves (only one side, black and brown)

A silver moon and star bracelet

A green earring

An unfinished light green bead bracelet

An orange and purple striped cotton scarf belt

April, 2006

Monday, 10 - Trustees Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Friday, 14 - Early Release (noon dismissal)

Monday, 17 - Patriot's Day (no school)

Tuesday, 18 - Friday, 21- Spring Recess

May, 2006

Monday, 15 - Trustees Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Sunday, 21 – 11th Annual Parker Road Race and Springfest

Friday, 26 - Early Release (noon dismissal)

Monday, 29 - Memorial Day (no school)

June, 2006

Wednesday, 7 - Noon dismissal - Graduation (6:00 p.m.)

Monday, 19 - Trustees Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Friday, 23 - Last Day of Classes (or earlier)

Monday, 26, Tuesday, 27 and Wednesday, 28 - Faculty Work Days (or earlier)

