



MARCH 2010 NEWSLETTER

Key Dates:

March 9: Speaker Series / Dietician, 7 pm
March 10: Early Release
March 10: Interviews with Principal Candidates, 6:30 pm
March 15: Town Caucus
March 16: School Committee Meeting, 7 pm
March 18: Family Fun Night, 5:30-7:30 pm
March 23: Report Cards Sent Home
March 24: Early Release
March 25: Spelling Bee, 7 pm
March 30: Teacher Conference Night
April 6: Speaker Series /Dr. Stembler, 7 pm
April 10: Rock-a-Palooza Auction, 6:30 pm

A Message from the PTO

As we begin to look towards spring, the calendar seems to get busier and busier. There are many "not-to-be-missed" events in the next few weeks. We have the last two lectures in our speaker series; our terrific "Make-a-Difference Family Fun Night" which has a new format this year; teacher conferences; the Dover Town Library Spelling Bee which will include several teams comprised of Chickering parents and one by parents who are also members of the Dover School Committee; and our big fundraiser - our "Rock-a-Palooza" Auction!

And, on everyone's mind is the question: Who will be our new principal? The search committee has been hard at work for several weeks and three final candidates have been chosen. They will participate in a public forum on the evening of March 10th, answering questions from parents and the Principal Search Committee, What are their backgrounds, their educational philosophies, and their vision for Chickering School? Again, we encourage parents to get involved in this important process.

Finally, it is not too early to think about next year! If you are interested in taking a PTO leadership position or have questions about the different committees, please contact Betsy Ryan at 4betsywryan@comcast.net to find out more!

SPRING AUCTION IS ONLINE SOON!

What might you bid to see the Red Sox play the Yankees at Fenway Park? Or, to have the use of a beautiful condo in Park City, UT during the ski season? These are just two of the fabulous items that will be available at our "Rock-a-Palooza" Auction. Many items will be posted next week. Just visit www.biddingforgood.com/chickering to bid on impossible-to-find sports tickets, gift certificates to popular restaurants and retail establishments, catered theme parties, custom jewelry, artwork, weekend getaways, and much, much, more! Send the online link to grandparents, co-workers, and friends. There is something for everyone! New items will be added daily. We are accepting donations through the end of March, so keep checking back. Have something you'd like to donate? Follow the link on the online auction website or contact Annemarie Thompson at am7thompson@msn.com.

Our April 10th event will be a casual evening, featuring rock and roll music from the 70's - 90's, festive food, and silent and LIVE auctions filled with many unique items. The Spring Auction is the PTO's primary revenue source, raising funds which directly support and enhance the school's curriculum and your child's individual learning experience. Please join this effort by attending the auction, encouraging family and friends to bid online, and purchasing tickets for the raffle of the very special items created in your child's classroom (more on that in the next news blast). "Rock-a-Palooza" tickets are \$50 each. The Auction Team will be sending out your e-invitation with purchasing information next week. Questions? Please contact Nancy Kostakos at gnkostakos@comcast.net. We count on seeing you there!

Principal Search Update

The search for a new principal is well underway. Superintendent Valerie Spriggs received resumes from 26 strong candidates with a wide range of experience. After review, nine highly-qualified applicants were invited to come to Chickering for a personal interview. That group was then narrowed to four and each received a "site visit" by members of the search committee to observe them in a work environment this week. After this evaluation, the group now stands at three.

On Wednesday, March 10th, at 6:30 pm the public will be invited to meet these candidates and to question them in at a meeting with the Principal Search Committee in the Chickering cafeteria. Following those proceedings, it is expected that a final decision will be made by Mrs. Spriggs by the end of the month and the new principal will be hired to start July 15th.

Make-a-Difference Family Fun Night!

This evening will include a variety of entertaining activities for all! When was the last time you played "Simon Says?" Or, Bingo? Children and adults can match skills at board games or making craft projects. Local author, Michael King, will read and challenge the audience to answer trivia questions from his newest book, *Patriots Passion From Day One*. We will also be collecting donations for Backpacks for Kids, a non-profit organization founded by DSHS students which provides children in need in the Boston area with school supplies. Join us by donating new backpacks and small supplies - crayons, pencils, markers, erasers, rulers, post-its, tape etc. Please visit backpacksforkids.net to learn more. Snacks and dessert will also be available. If you would like to volunteer to help with the evening, please contact Barbara Dawley jbdawley@comcast.net or Nicole Scannell nicolescannell@comcast.net. Thursday, March 18th, from 5:30-7:30 at Chickering School.

Curriculum Enrichment Money Well Spent!

This month, there are a variety of special programs visiting the school and each is an excellent example of how money raised by the PTO directly impacts your child's learning. These programs were carefully selected to correspond with and reinforce teaching units for each grade. For those students who learn best through visual and tactile experiments, these programs will have particular meaning. For first graders who are focused on storytelling in their reading and writing units, we are bringing in award-winning storyteller, Valerie Tutson, to teach about her art. *Bugworks* will visit first graders and give them a first-hand look at the insects they have been studying in the classroom. Second graders will continue to explore and experience what it is like to have a disability as part of the *Understanding Our Differences* program. Children's author, David Biedryzcki, will demonstrate how a book is made, from writing the story to creating amazing computer-generated illustrations to third graders. His presentation is certain to inspire, as they begin their creative writing unit. Also returning to Chickering is writing specialist, Jeff Kelly, who will spend valuable one-on-one time with each fourth grade child. His workshop will help students create and edit their own written samples as they prepare for that portion of the upcoming MCAS exams.

Without your generous support, the PTO would not be able to fund programs of this caliber. We are fortunate to be able to provide these outstanding programs and give our children the strong learning tools they need to succeed. We thank you!

The PTO Speaker Series Continues

Confused about what is "healthy" food for your family? Need help on making mealtime at home a more pleasant experience? Just what do all these national studies mean? Learn more about family nutrition at an informal presentation by Registered Dietician and Chickering parent, Temi Correll. Tuesday, March 9th at 7 pm in the Chickering Library.

As the final speaker in our series, we welcome back popular lecturer, Dr. David Stember, to discuss childhood anxiety. Dr. Stember is a faculty member of Harvard Medical School and McLean Hospital and consults to a number of area school districts, including Dover-Sherborn. He is an advocate of non-medication based treatments. Tuesday, April 6th at 7 pm in the Chickering Library.

Spelling Bee at the Town Library!

There are several teams with Chickering ties competing this year - from parents (including last year's champs!) to members of the Dover School Committee. Are you smarter than your fifth grader? New teams are welcome. For more information or how to register, visit the library website www.dovertownlibrary.org. Everyone is welcome to join the audience and cheer on the teams. And, don't miss shopping at the Bee Tree in the Bee Café! Thursday, March 25th at 7 pm at the Dover Town Hall.

Chickering Spotlight

When Aaron Mick was a child attending Chickering School, he dreamed of playing professional hockey just like Bobby Orr. That did not happen. Today, he is Sergeant Mick and has been a member of the Dover Police Department for 25 years. He is a Computer Forensic Examiner with the Metropolitan Law Enforcement Council and regularly leads programs in area schools about internet safety and cyber-bullying. Just this past week, he returned to Chickering School to speak with fourth grade students about these important issues. Sergeant Mick was also one of the experts who participated in this past Tuesday's Parent Information Night. If you missed that powerful presentation, we strongly urge you to attend the talk he will be giving at the Dover Library on April 7th at 7 pm. If you think these kinds of things don't happen in places like Dover, you will be very surprised. And, shocked. Learn more how to protect your child and your family. We are indeed lucky to have Sergeant Mick serving in our community!

Don't cry because it's over. Smile because it happened.
-Dr. Seuss