

# Principal's News

Davis Hill Elementary School



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Newsletter Date  
March 2010

## Budget for 2010—2011

As we approach the final third of the school year, with all the information we see everyday regarding budgets of our nation, state and town, I want to let you know what I know as of this time, as it pertains to the WRSD and Davis Hill.

If nothing changes with the level of funding from the state and federal government, I hope to be able to add one teacher to the fourth grade to reduce class size in my largest classrooms. That is my number one goal for our school. At this time I don't know if I will be able to, but I will give it my best shot.

History dictates that, to get something, I may have to give something. That may be in the way of supplies or improvements to the building. ( I did not pay for any mulch last year for beautification so that I could provide more supplies for my staff).

For my part, I will do everything in my power, to not just keep our existing level of staff, but increase it by one. I will work to keep class sizes as low as possible. As for materials and supplies, I can always find ways to work around those issues. But class size has a direct impact on education no matter at what grade level it is.

As soon as I get information that is solid , I will get it out to you in a special notice. I will also address this on March 15th at the **Principal's Coffee** at 6:30pm and the regular **PTA Meeting** at 7:00pm.

## Placement Process and Procedures 2010-2011

Placing students into groups for their class assignments is an important and well defined process. It is one that all the teachers and support staff at Davis Hill take great care in ensuring that the process and procedures are equitable and fair.

For Davis Hill, the placement process will take place in May. It will include a "Parent Questionnaire" that you may voluntarily fill out. Input from this questionnaire will be used by my staff to guide the placement process. At Davis Hill a parent or guardian's input is very important to us. It provides my staff with information about your child that we will take into consideration when determining your child's class. In some cases this is only information that you could provide. The questionnaire will be sent out the week before the April vacation and is also available on our web site.

How children are grouped at Davis Hill, includes taking into consideration the following values.

1. Placement is a school process and responsibility.
2. Our goal is to build classes that will bring students together who will work as a learning team.
3. All classroom teachers and specialists will be involved.
4. Balanced classes are critical to maximize instructional opportunities. The placement process will ensure equitable distribution of gender, achievement, class size, social-educational needs, learning

styles, independence, and behavioral issues.

5. Parent questionnaires will be reflected upon and made available to all members of the placement team.

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## Thank You !

I would like to take this opportunity to thank a few people for their work over the last two months. As some of you know I have had back surgery in January and just returned after the February vacation. I am doing fine and I am very glad to be back to work.

First, Jay Norton, my assistant principal, put in 100's of hours above and beyond the call of duty to make sure that student and teacher needs were met over the last two months. We are very lucky to have him at our school and working with our students and faculty;

Second is to my secretary, Pat Johnson. She picked up the ball and ran with it, making the best of a tough situation. I am lucky to have both of you at Davis Hill.

## MCAS 2010

The MCAS testing will begin soon for students in grades 3,4 & 5. The dates are once again published in this newsletter.

For students in the grades tested, it is crucial that parents have a talk about the importance of trying your best and not rushing. Too many students make the mistake that if my neighbor is looking like he/she is finished, it must mean that I am going too slow. Nothing could be more wrong. This race is not going to the swiftest. Students are not given any time limit on this test and most mistakes usually are small in nature.

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## **Placement Process**

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A letter from our school will go out in August introducing who your child will have as a teacher and which room they will be in. The Principal always has the final say in making the most appropriate placements.

Our goal will be to have the lists ready as we leave school, and then wait until the beginning of August to accommodate any new students while keeping the numbers in each room appropriate.

## **MCAS 2010**

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Students will be told that if they are finished they have just a few choices of what to do. First is to re-read the test and check to see if they missed any answers. Second is to go back over some items that they struggled with and read that section again. Take your time is the motto.

We must all also be aware of the testing dates and times. There will be limited noise and activities going on in the school during this time frame. Students must come to school with a good breakfast and well rested. Homework will be very limited during this period to give kids time to help take off some of the pressure of the test.

If you have any questions, the Department of Education's web site has practice tests, testing dates, and all the data from previous testing years. The site can be located by typing in [www.doe.mass.edu/](http://www.doe.mass.edu/)

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Test</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Make-Up Dates</b>	<b>Number of Sessions</b>	<b>Average Minutes Per Session</b>
3	ELA Reading Comprehension	March 22 March 23	March 24 March 25 March 26	2	60
3	Mathematics	May 10 May 11	May 13 May 14 May 17	2	45
4	ELA Composition Sessions A and B	March 23	April 7	1	45
4	ELA Reading Comprehension	March 24 March 25	March 29 March 30	2	60
4	Mathematics	May 10 May 11	May 13 May 14	2	45
5	ELA Reading Comprehension	March 22 March 23	March 24 March 25 March 26	2	60
5	Mathematics	May 10 May 11	May 13 May 14 May 17	2	45
5	Science, Technology and Engineering	May 18 May 19	May 20 May 21	2	45