



Naquag Elementary School

The Wachusett Regional School District

Fabulous February Greetings
From: Dixie Herbst, Principal
February 2, 2010

Naquag Donates to “American Red Cross” **Support to Haitian Earthquake Victims**

Our generous Naquag community donated over \$1,600 to support the Haitian earthquake victims. Thank you to all for the generous contributions; this collection will be forwarded to the American Red Cross. Your charitable support is appreciated and acknowledged. Additionally, our art teacher, Mrs. Joanne Quinn, is coordinating an “Art Hearts for Haiti” project with Grades Kindergarten – 5. Students are creating “hearts” that will be sent to the children and people of Haiti. Conceived by twin 7-year girls in Lunenburg, MA and sponsored by *Let’s Gogh Art*, the “Art Hearts for Haiti” project is a worldwide campaign. For more information please visit: <http://www.letsoghart.com/art-hearts.html> .

From our Assistant Principal, Jim Graham

The Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) is at our doorstep. There are many misconceptions about this series of tests and how schools prepare students for them. “Teaching to the Test” is a phrase commonly heard when MCAS is discussed. It is a misnomer. The MCAS strictly adheres to the Massachusetts State Standards and Frameworks that all districts, schools, and teachers are required to follow. All of the material, content, and skills your child learns over the course of the school year are covered on the test. Teachers don’t “teach to the test”, the MCAS tests students’ mastery of our State mandated curriculum. There will be more to come next month on how to prepare your child for MCAS success at home.

2010 MCAS Dates / Grades 3, 4, & 5

We strongly encourage school attendance during the 2010 MCAS assessments. The following dates include the testing schedule for Grades 3, 4, and 5.

March 23 rd	Grade 4 – ELA Long Composition
Week of March 22 nd – 26 th	MCAS Reading / ELA (Grades 3 & 5)
Week of April 5 th – 9 th	MCAS Reading / ELA (Grade 4)
May 10 th – 26 th	MCAS Mathematics (Grades 3, 4, & 5)
	MCAS Science & Technology (Grade 5)

“Wacky Wednesday” February 24th - SLIPPER DAY!

We continue our “Wacky Wednesday” celebration on the last Wednesday of each month. Wednesday, February 26th will feature “SLIPPER DAY”! Please note that regular shoes should be worn to school, as well as to specials (Art, Music and PE), restrooms and to lunch. Thank you for participating in our fun monthly events.



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Grades 3, 4 & 5 Snowshoe in PE

Snowshoeing! Naquag's P.E. teacher, Mr. Mitch Jacobs, has begun a new snowshoe unit for Grades 3, 4, & 5. This winter season, we have new snowshoes (funding from our Fall Read-a-Thon proceeds and the Naquag PTO). Animal tracks and wind blown snow designs are a few of the winter wonderland experiences our third, fourth and fifth grade students are enjoying. Fresh air and exercise are extra bonuses as they explore the winter world of nature.

Homework Tips: From our School Psychologist, Mrs. Kate Sackos

Children develop important study skills and habits by completing nightly homework assignments. These important life lessons assist students in the upper grades of middle school and high school. Parents can help their child by establishing regular routines. The three basic "W's" (where, when, what) of home work and how parents can help their child with home work assignments include:

Where: The importance of providing a consistent place with minimal distractions where parents can easily supervise.

When: Choose a consistent time to begin every day. Set time limits and break homework into manageable time segments. Also, plan scheduled short breaks to accommodate attention spans.

What: Parents should check their child's homework sheet / assignment notebook daily.

Other helpful hints include assembling a "Homework Kit" to aid in keeping supplies readily available. Include all supplies – paper, pencils, pencil sharpener, erasers, markers, ruler, scissors, glue, highlighter, and also a number line, dry erase board and markers, children's dictionary, a timer and flash cards. Different avenues to encourage homework with children included:

Giving praise and positive feedback

Helping child prioritize assignments

Helping clarifying directions

Offering support but not HOVERING

Helping child initiate homework

Helping child stay focused and on track

Important February Dates to Remember

Friday	2/5	NATIONAL WEAR RED DAY (American Heart Association) Report Cards go home
Tuesday	2/9	SIMCO @ 4:00
February Vacation:		Week of 2/15 - 2/19 (No School!)
Tuesday	2/23	Principals' Chat @ 10:00
Wednesday	2/24	WACKY WEDNESDAY - Slipper Day! (Slippers to be worn in classroom only. Shoes must be worn to school, to restrooms, lunch and specials.) PTO @ 4:00 in Library Grade 5 Spree Day Parent Planning Meeting, 6:30 in Library

Early Planning for March 2010

Wednesday, March 17th is a District-wide Early Release Day. We will dismiss at 12:30. Lunch will not be served. (This will also be a wear "Green" day!)