

News From The Gloucester Public Schools

Our mission is for all children to be successful, engaged, lifelong learners

People

Congratulations to **Pat Earle** on being recognized by the School Committee for her outstanding work organizing volunteer readers for Kindergarten and First Grade classrooms through the committee's Extraordinary Service Award

Principal of Veterans' Memorial Elementary School, **Cherylann Parker**, was seriously injured in a riding accident shortly after the start of the new school year. Cherylann has a severe spinal chord injury. I am sure that we all wish her well in her rehabilitation.

Anna O'Connor, a Veterans' reading Specialist has taken over as Acting Principal at Veterans'.

In **John Ziergiebel** we recently lost an outstanding educator and human being. I am sure that Ann Ziergiebel and her family are very much in our thoughts.

New State Achievement Data

The state has recently introduced a third measure of student achievement in response to concerns that comparing one class with another does not compare "apples with apples".

The new Student Growth Profile compares the amount of improvement a student makes as compared with a group of students with a similar achievement history. The Student Growth Profile (SGP) may range from 1 through 99, with the average normally being about 50. An SGP of 50 indicates that a student has improved more than about half of the comparator group, while a score of 80 indicates that a student has improved more than 80% of the comparator group.

The MCAS system now provides three sets of summative data to help teachers assess student progress:

- A score which indicates whether a student is proficient – the basic MCAS score in a tested subject
- A score which indicates progress towards proficiency – the Consolidated Performance Index (CPI)
- A score which indicates the degree of improvement towards meeting the goal of proficiency (the SGP)

Board of Education To Hold Charter School Hearing

Saturday November 7, 2009 1.00 to 3.00 pm The City Hall Auditorium

In response to community concern, pressure from Senator Bruce Tarr and Representative Ann-Margaret Ferrante, and two letters from Governor Patrick requesting the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to review its decision to approve the charter application of the Gloucester Community Arts Charter School, the Board will hold a hearing in Gloucester on November 7, 2009. The agenda has not been set. It will include a report from an independent attorney on the procedures open to the Board if it wishes to review the charter approval or revoke the charter. Although described as a hearing, it seems unlikely that members of the public will have an opportunity to speak.

Athletics Participation Fees Reduced

The School Committee has recently reviewed athletics participation fees and reduced fees for all sports. Discounted fee levels have been introduced for students who are eligible for free or reduced cost lunches.

High School

Sport	Previous Fee	New Full Fee	Reduced Lunch Fee	Free Lunch Fee
Track/X Country	\$271	\$260	\$175	\$125
Others	\$399	\$380	\$250	\$175

Middle School

Sport	Previous Fee	New Full Fee	Reduced Lunch Fee	Free Lunch Fee
Hockey	\$399	\$390	\$250	\$175
Others	\$114	\$100	\$75	\$55

The Gloucester Fishermen's Athletic Association is making a \$30 per season scholarship for all GHS sports and middle school hockey, and \$10 per season for other middle school sports. This will be deducted from the fee collected.

The GFAA is determined that no student should fail to participate because they or their family cannot afford the fee. In these circumstances the student should talk with the coach, who will treat a request for help with fees in the strictest confidence.

Birdseye Hammond Science, Technology And Engineering Lab Opens At O'Maley

Thanks to the vision and financial support of the Gloucester Education Foundation and the hard work of Science Specialist John Madama, the newly developed science, technology and engineering lab at O'Maley is up and running. The lab, which is named for two of Gloucester's most influential scientist-inventors, provides the opportunity for students to apply concepts learned in their Science classes. Early reports indicate that teachers and students are enjoying using the facility.

H1N1 'Flu' Precautions

None of us want to see school closures due to 'flu'. We can all help by taking precautions. 'Flu' is spread droplets, which die quickly once they dry. Our chances of avoiding 'flu' are increased if we:

- > **wash hands frequently, especially after sneezing or coughing**
- > **sneeze or cough into a tissue or our inner elbow**
- > **avoid people who are ill**
- > **get 'flu' shots when they are available**

Please keep your child at home if s/he has a temperature of over 100F **and** a cough **or** a sore throat.

Please do NOT send your child back to school until the fever has gone and not received medication such as Tylenol, Motrin or Advil for 24 hours.