

# Briggs At Large

The Voice of the John R. Briggs Elementary School  
"Educating for Success, Now and in the Future"

February 5, 2009  
Volume 27, Issue 10

John R. Briggs Elementary: 978-827-5750

## FEBRUARY

6 Sweetheart  
Dance  
11 PTA Meeting  
12 Full day  
13 Full day  
16-18 No School  
19 Full day  
20 Full day

## MARCH

10 Early Release  
12:00 PD Day  
11-12 P – T Conf.  
18 PTA Meeting  
19 School Council

## After Hours

*Please enter  
through  
Extended Day  
after 3:30 pm.*

## Phone Numbers

827-5750 Ans. Mach.  
*Please note: this  
number does not roll  
over. Call these  
numbers directly if  
you receive a busy  
signal.*

827-1410  
827-1420  
827-1411 FAX

## Check the new calendar

### Absence Letters

Early next week we will be issuing letters to parents of students with an excessive number of absences, tardiness, or dismissal. This letter was written in conjunction with the JRB School Council to inform parents of their child absentee rate, as well as reminding parents of the importance of students attending school on a regular basis to access the educational experience to the fullest. Massachusetts General Law, chapter 76 clearly defines the duties of parents regarding school attendance. Complaints of excessive absenteeism may be brought to the attention of the Worcester County Juvenile Court and a fine may be assessed.

If you receive a letter and feel that our data may be incorrect please contact our school office in writing. Please remember we have not included excused

absences in our tally. Excused absences include; medical and religious reasons. Without medical documentation (doctor's note); all absences for illness are unexcused.

Please be sure to review the absence policy in the JRB Handbook, or contact our school office in writing for clarification.

### First Grade News

In math, we have been studying Geometry and Fractions. Ask your first grader about solid figures, symmetry, halves, thirds, and fourths!

We will be exploring time next. You can help your child get ready at home by practicing calendar skills (day, week, month, year) and telling time to the hour and half hour on both digital and analog clocks.

**Have fun and keep reading!**

### School Calendar

On Tuesday, January 20<sup>th</sup> the AWRSD School Committee voted to accept the following changes to the AWRSD School Calendar, 2008-2009.

#### February

In session,  
**12<sup>th</sup>- 13<sup>th</sup>**  
**19<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup>**

#### April

In session,  
**23<sup>rd</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup>**

#### June

In session,  
**5<sup>th</sup> – ½ day**  
**16<sup>th</sup> – 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Additional days will be added if more snow days are used. Parents who have pre-planned a family vacation prior to January 5, 2009 may contact our school office to be considered for an "excused" absence during the "typical" vacation period.; proof of pre-planned vacation will need to be submitted to the attention of the building administration.

## MCAS Corner

Grades 3 – 5

March 30 – Apr. 15

May 11 – May 28

Try this one...

**Grade 4 – MATH**

Which number is equivalent to three hundredths?

- A. 0.03
- B. 0.30
- C. 3.00
- D. 300

Answer to last issue's BAL MCAS question:

**a. instinctive**

### Parent & Teacher Professional Devel.

- **Dramatic Play in Early Childhood**

Feb. 26, 2009

6:30 – 8:30 pm

Messiah Lutheran  
Preschool &  
Learning Center,  
Fitchburg

- **Behavior Management**

March 17, 2009

6:30 – 8:30 pm

Adventure Kids  
Child Care Center,  
Fitchburg

- **SONGS IN SIGN**

**LANGUAGE**

APRIL 16, 2009

GUILD OF ST. AGNES

### January Student Council

**Celtic's fleece**

**blanket!** It will be raffled on **Monday,**

**February 9th.**

**1 Ticket - \$1.00**

**6 Tickets - \$5.00**

## MUSIC News

**BAND REHEARSELS:** **Beginner Band** rehearsals are held on **Thursday afternoons** during the school day, and **Concert Band** rehearsals are now held on **Friday afternoons**. **PLEASE** make sure your child has his/her instrument for rehearsals.

**Chorus....** Rehearsals are back to regularly scheduled **Tuesday afternoons;** after school.

### Read Across America

On Friday, March 6, 2009, our school will be celebrating Dr. Seuss' birthday by sponsoring a community reading day. We are asking all parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends, and neighbors to consider taking an active role by volunteering to read to a child or group of children at our school. If you can spend a few minutes in our school reading to our children, please see the attached form or contact Andrea McGrath at [amcgrath@awrsd.org](mailto:amcgrath@awrsd.org). The times are listed below:

Kindergarten	11:00-11:30
First Grade	2:00-2:30
Second Grade	1:15-1:45
Third Grade	11:45-12:15
Fourth Grade	9:20-9:50
Fifth Grade	8:50-9:20

### Box Tops for Education

The tallies are in and we have 2 classrooms with the most box tops collected from August thru December 2008! 4MC; Mrs. McLynch's 4th grade class collected 1119 box tops for the third

through fifth grades and 2M; Mrs. Munroe's 2nd grade class collected 496 box tops for the K through 3rd grade. Congratulations to all classes for collecting a grand total of 6136 box tops for our school! Keep clipping as we will collect them through the last day school towards our goal of 15,000 box tops!

### Last Words About the Ice Storm

Despite the inconveniences and hardships caused by the ice storm the second grade teachers, and many other educators in our district used the experience as an opportunity for learning. Initially we talked about what had happened. This afforded the students a chance to express themselves verbally as well as listen while others were speaking. After reviewing the writing traits of *ideas* and *organization* from our writing program, our students wrote detailed accounts of what they had

experienced.

This type of authentic writing provides an excellent way in which to improve writing skills and foster and encourages reluctant writers. When writers write about their own lives, and what they know, the process and product becomes meaningful and substantial.

Please encourage your child to **write, write, write!**

It's the **right** thing to do! Here are some activities we hope will be helpful: keep a journal, write a letter or note, create captions for family photos, write about a pet (if the family pet could talk), write poems, cut out magazine pictures and write stories to match, partner write (take turns writing a progressive story), write a shopping list of a favorite character, write a different ending to a familiar story.

**Happy Writing from Second Grade!!**