

# Briggs At Large

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

October 29., 2009  
Volume 28, Issue 5

John R. Briggs Elementary: 978-827-5750

## NOVEMBER

- 3 PD Day:  
No School
- 11 Veteran's Day  
No School
- 17 Picture Retakes
- 18 School Council  
PTA Meeting
- 19 AW Foundation  
GALA  
Art Museum  
23-24 P-T Conf.

### Remember...

All visitors **MUST** sign in at the JRB Office.

### **Extended Day**

Our Extended Day Program offers child care 6:30 am – 6:00 pm throughout the school year. Please call, 978-827-4701.

### **Running Club**

Last week of Running Club; see you in the spring.

### Dismissal

To ensure that all of our students arrive safely to their after school destination, we have a staggered dismissal time:

**\*2:50 p.m. (approx)**

Parent Pickup  
Extended Day

**\* 2:55 – 3:10 p.m.**

Bus Dismissal

**Early Release Days:  
12:00 p.m.**

## Change of meeting date for PTA and JRB – School Council

### **Second Grade News**

We are off to a great start in second grade this year. We spent most of September discussing ways to improve our writing by writing "super sentences". Students were asked to expand their sentences using adjectives and adverbs and incorporating the Visualization and Verbalization structure words, such as who/what, where, background, sound, color, movement, size. Now we are focusing on ideas in writing.

In Science we have been learning about seeds. This involves students taking a walk around the schoolyard and on the nature trail to identify different types of trees, their leaves, and their seeds. We explored the parts of the seed and the life cycle of a plant.

Second grade students have homework Monday through Thursday. They are required to read every night, respond to their reading on Mondays and Wednesdays, and complete a math practice page every night. It is important that you discuss your child's homework with them. Ask them to summarize what they have read and explain their math to you. Please also remember to sign their reading each night

### **First Grade News First Grade Homework – When and How Much Help to Give**

I teach first graders and I am the parent of a first-grader. My wife is a teacher and my oldest daughter is in fifth-grade. Inevitably there's a lot of discussion about school and time spent doing homework around my dinner table. Even my preschooler wants in on the action, we have to come up with homework for her so she can feel included.

Working with my first-grader recently who had to answer an open response question, my wife and I consulted about how much support to give her. The parent in me wanted to give her the answer and tell her how to spell the words. The teacher in me said talk with her about the question and have her say what she knew about the topic. Then, have her write the answer and sound out the words as best she could. The teacher prevailed that time. How much support we give at home depends on what

type of assignment is being worked on.

Here are some thoughts from the first-grade teachers on at home support in different academic areas:

**Handwriting** (mechanics) – Children should know the correct way to hold a pencil and the correct way to form lower and upper case letters. Correct handwriting can always be modeled. Especially for numbers, it is useful to point out when digits are flipped. Using words such as, "Does that look right?" can nudge children toward self-correction. Having numbers and letters displayed where children work can help them to self-check and correct.

**Writing** – If children are answering a question, have them read the question out loud. See if they understand what is being asked. Rephrase the question if necessary. Have them verbally answer the question. Repeat their answer and see if it sounds right – is it a complete sentence? When it comes to writing out the answer, let them stretch out the words and spell phonetically.



**MCAS Corner**  
**Grades 3 – 5**  
**March 22 – Apr. 12**  
**May 10 – May 27**

**Try this one...**  
**Grade 4 - ELA**

Read the sentence from paragraph 26 in the box below.

Nothing was different except the warm glow that was in my belly and my arms and my legs and my head and wouldn't go away.

Which of the following words is an adjective as it is used in the sentence?

- A. Nothing
- B. warm
- C. belly
- D. away

**Bus Policy**



All

students should be outside and waiting for the school bus, 10 minutes prior to the expected pick-up time. If the bus driver does not see your child, they are not required to stop. Please be sure the driver sees your child.

At the end of the day, an adult should be present to receive kindergarten and first grade students. If an adult is not visible, your child may be returned to the Extended day Program at the J. R. Briggs School. 978-827-4701

**MUSIC News**

**Band rehearsals** are held on **Thursday afternoons for Beginner Band and Friday afternoons for Concert Band** during the school day **PLEASE** make sure your child has their instrument for rehearsals. Phone calls for forgotten instruments are VERY disruptive to the day. **Oct. 30<sup>th</sup> – Band performance at ORHS Football Game**

**Chorus rehearsals** 3:00-4:00 for interested students in Gr. 3 – 5.

**News from 1<sup>st</sup> Gr. cont.**

Correct spelling will come in time, putting words down on paper and not being afraid to write has to come first.

**Reading** – Children have to read at their instructional level. Read the books they come home with. Have them read the books to you, over and over. As they finish sentences, if they skip a word, have them go back and reread. Comment that something didn't sound quite right. It is important that they read words as they are written and read with expression. Reading with emotional expression shows comprehension. Cherished books from your childhood may not be suitable for your child to tackle yet. Read the books you loved as a child with them. Read aloud. Everyday. Let them see the pictures. Pictures offer critical assistance with understanding text.

Finally, the amount of help you give your child should depend on the object of the lesson. Learning takes place through self-discovery and self-checking. As with learning to ride a bike, schoolwork requires a degree of "training wheels" and keeping close by them to see that they can do it on their own. You can't do it for them but keep them within arms reach and help them learn from the spills and scraped knees.

by Craig Cucchiara and the First-Grade Team

**Square One**

The Square One art fundraiser packets have gone home with each student. This year all children will receive free stickers with their artwork on them. There is an order form and price list if families are interested in purchasing more items with their child's artwork on it. This annual fundraiser provides the art program with 33% profit to help purchase some of the materials needed to run the art program. A special thanks to Leslie Lee who is the volunteer working on this program.

**Dates to remember:**

**Nov. 2-6:** order form and payments are due at school..

**Nov. 30<sup>th</sup>:** ordered items are delivered to J. R. Briggs School.

Thank You!  
Mrs. Richard,

**Girl Scouts**

Are you looking for an afternoon or evening of fun, meeting new friends, badge work, and helping the community. It's not too late to join the Ashburnham Girl Scouts. If interested, please contact Brenda Brown at 978-827-5492 or brlebr@aol.com.

**\_Ski Program**

The Ski/Snowboard Program will begin soon! Student Program forms are available for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> graders from their teacher or the school office. Two scholarships are available from the Rachel Lee foundation and Wachusett Mountain Ski Area for those who meet the free and reduced lunch income guidelines. A letter of interest with parent or guardian's name, child's name, address and telephone number needs to be submitted by Monday, Oct. 26<sup>th</sup>. A lottery selection will be made on Tuesday, October 27<sup>th</sup>.

Ski Program typically begins in January and ends mid-February. Conditions permitting.

