



50 (11)

Haddam Elementary School Dolphin Times



DECEMBER, 2009

**DR. JANICE HARRIS
PRINCIPAL**

NOTES FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Happy Holidays to all! December offers a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the year's accomplishment and make plans for the start of a new year. In a couple of weeks you will be receiving your child's 1st term report card for this academic year. Below is some information to help you understand the report card.

About the report card (adapted from "A Parent Guide to the K-8 report Card", RSD 17, Fall 2006)

Our report card was revised in 2006 to reflect a national and state focus on having students meet grade level standards. The report card standards reflect the most important aspects of the curriculum that students need to know by the end of the grade in order to be successful in the next grade, in life and to enhance student performance on the CMTs and other assessments.

Why did my child get some NAs? Some skills/concepts are not taught until later in the year or may not be emphasized and assessed at a particular time during the year. This is particularly true for some specific concepts in math, science and social studies.

Is a "2" OK in the first or second marking period? Most students will receive a 2 or NA for each curriculum standard in the first and/or second marking period. A "2" indicates that your child is progressing toward the end of year expectation. A "1" does mean your child is having difficulty with a specific standard. The teacher will contact you if there is a concern regarding your child's progress. A "3" is the goal for the end of the year. A "4" indicates that the child has mastered the grade level skill/knowledge and has gone beyond in some way.

Please remember that the report is one of progress toward END OF YEAR expectations. We do not expect students to meet these expectations in the first or second marking period. A "3" means the student can do the skill independently. *The report card also includes a section on social responsibility and academic responsibility (work habits) that are assessed using a "-", "V", or "+".*

As always, if you have any questions about your child's progress, contact his/her child's teacher.

Bouquets of thanks to...

- ❖ PTO Cultural Arts volunteers for helping to assemble the beautiful Mandala created by our students. You can see it on display in the All-Purpose Room.

- ❖ Heather Rigatti, math support teacher, for coordinating our first HES All-School Math Night and to the teachers and parents in attendance. We had very positive feedback on this evening and parents left with concrete ideas to support their child at home with math learning. You can contact Mrs. Rigatti at rigatti66@rsd17.org with any questions.

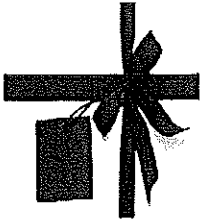
Other reminders:

Recently, a letter was sent home outlining a school-wide procedure to address homework for absentees. This letter can also be found at the school website under school publications for your reference in the event of an absence.

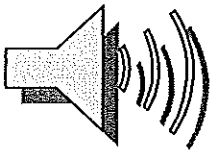
Our School Advisory Team will hold its next office hours on Thursday, January 14th from 6:00 to 6:30pm. Feel free to drop in to give us suggestions or ask questions. The next PTO meeting will be held that same evening beginning at 6:45pm.

I look forward to seeing you all in the new year!

HOLIDAY GIFT PROGRAM



During the holidays, HES staff will sponsor a "Giving Tree". HES staff members will purchase gifts for students whose families might be having trouble providing for the holidays this year. If you are interested in having your HES student receive a gift, please contact the office. All requests will remain confidential. If you are a parent who would like to join the HES staff in sponsoring a gift for a student, please contact us in the office. Happy Holidays to all!



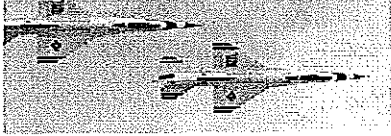
Students in Grade 4 will be presenting their concert on Thursday December 17th at 6:30 PM at HES. Additional information will be forthcoming regarding dress rehearsal time and last minute details.



NEW LIBRARY BOOKS

PTO purchased 46 new books for the HES Library at the book fair. The books are being catalogued and will be available for all the students to enjoy soon! Many thanks to the PTO for a wonderful book fair and all the fantastic new books!!

Several students also purchased and donated books from the book fair to the library. Thank you to Eric Giulini for Friend or Fiend, Kevin Giulini for Winter's Tail and Maddy O'Hanlon for The Scarecrow's Dance.



The HES Stuff the Stocking Drive in support of "Operation Home for the Holidays" will continue to collect donations until December 16th. To date, **\$506.34** has been collected from our HES families. Thank you to all who have contributed, your generosity is greatly appreciated!

Clean Hands Hold the Key

Simple Prevention Starts With You

Each year, between 5 and 20 percent of the population will be infected with influenza.* Some people, such as the elderly, pregnant women, young children, and others with certain illnesses, such as asthma and diabetes, are at an increased risk for contracting the flu. This infectious disease has caused school closures, national emergencies, and even pandemics. But it can be prevented with one simple task - washing your hands.

This year, December 6 - 12 will mark National Handwashing Awareness Week. The goal of this campaign is to spread the word about the prevention of infectious diseases, particularly by practicing a few simple steps:

- 1) washing your hands when they are dirty and before eating,
- 2) sneezing and coughing into your arm rather than your hand, and
- 3) not putting your fingers in your eyes, nose, or mouth.

Help us prevent the spread of germs by practicing these simple steps at home.

Also, please remember that if your child has a fever, diarrhea, vomiting, they must be free of these symptoms for **24 hours** before returning to school. And if your child is on an antibiotic for – example - pink eye, they must be on the antibiotic for **24 hours** before returning to school. Please call me if there are any questions regarding these policies.

I hope you have a wonderful December! Now with the cold weather upon us every day, please make sure children dress appropriately for the days weather and that they have a coat for outdoor recess.

Your school nurse,

Jennifer Pletcher, RN

Also, the Health Office is in need of Boy's tops and bottoms in sizes 10/12 and 14/16. We will gladly accept gently used clothing. Thank you.



WELCOME VOLUNTEERS

As is customary, parents/guardians are always welcome to plan a visit to our school. The usual procedure requires you to sign-in on a visitor's badge when you arrive. We now ask that upon exiting the building, you also sign-out. This new change is for emergency purposes only and will take effect immediately. We thank you for your attention to this matter.



HONEYWELL SYSTEM See attached.



LOST AND FOUND

Please have your child/children check the stage for any items they may have lost. All unclaimed clothing will be donated to Goodwill during the Winter Break.

DATES TO REMEMBER

DECEMBER 7 CANCELLATION	CULTURAL ARTS-NED SHOW – TO BE RESCHEDULED TO A LATER DATE
DECEMBER 11	REPORT CARDS DISTRIBUTED TO ALL STUDENTS
DECEMBER 17	4 TH GRADE CHORUS CONCERT AT 6:30 PM
DECEMBER 23	SING-A-LONG, 10:30 AM – ALL PURPOSE ROOM
DECEMBER 23	EARLY DISMISSAL AT 1:05 – ALL STUDENTS
DEC. 24 – JAN. 3RD	HOLIDAY RECESS
JANUARY 4	CLASSES RESUME
JANUARY 21 & 22	KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION - THURS. 9AM-7PM / FRI. 9AM-3PM INFORMATION TO FOLLOW IN JANUARY'S NEWSLETTER



In the event of an evacuation in which students and staff must leave the school premises, we have two locations that we are authorized to use. One is the United Methodist Church next door and the other is the Town Garage. The EMERGENCY LINE TELEPHONE NUMBER is 860-345-8526.

Honeywell Instant Alert™ for Schools

Parent User Interface

Minimum Requirements

Register and create your account

1. Go to the Honeywell Instant Alert for Schools website, listed above.
2. If you are a staff member in the school, use the user ID and password given to you by the school.
3. If you are not a staff member in the school, click on 'New User' below the login boxes.
4. Complete the Student information form. (Fields marked with * are mandatory) Click 'Submit.'
5. Complete the corresponding Parent information form. (Fields marked with * are mandatory) Click 'Submit.'
6. After receiving the Confirmation message, click on 'Proceed' to get started with Instant Alert.
7. Note: Remember your Login Name and Password so you may use it to update your profile.

View and check details about yourself and your family members

1. Upon successful login, click on 'Account Details.'
2. Click on 'Parent Profiles' to view and edit details about yourself and your family members.
3. Click on 'Student Profiles' to view details about your children enrolled in this school.

Configure alert settings for yourself

1. Click on 'Alerts.' Click on 'Alert Configuration.'
2. Click on the name of a contact from the list.
3. Click on the tabs (Phone, Email, Text Messaging, Pager) to view this person's contact device information.
4. Enter contact device information within the gray box and click 'Add' to add more contact devices.
5. Click on the check boxes in the appropriate column to select which alert type you would like to have sent to which device. Click on 'Save' when complete. Note: Phones only receive 'School Closing' Alerts.
6. For e-mail, text messaging and pagers you may send yourself a test message. Click on 'Send Test Message' to check if the address has been entered correctly. Common cell phone text messaging addresses are located in the Help section – click on 'Help' while on the 'Text Messaging' screen. You can also contact your cell provider to receive your text messaging address.

Additional Functions

View History of Alerts

Click on 'Alerts' to view Alerts that have been sent to you. Use the calendar icons and 'Alert Type' list to filter.

Identify key contacts for your children

1. Click on 'My Other Contacts.'
2. Click on 'Add New Contact' and complete the form. (Fields marked with * are mandatory)
3. Click on the 'Pick up Rights' check box if you wish to allow this person the right to pick up your child from school. This person's name will appear on a report for the school.
4. Click 'Add' OR click 'Save and Configure Alerts' to directly configure alert settings for this contact.
5. Select a child's name from the drop down and click on 'Change Priority' in order to prioritize the contacts for that child. If you want a contact to receive Alerts, click on the 'Yes/No' button in the Contact List.

Set your 'Out of Town' calendar

1. Click on 'Account Details.' Set your travel calendar and still stay in touch with your child's school.
2. Complete the form (Fields marked with * are mandatory); use the calendar icons to specify travel dates.
3. Assign a primary contact while you are away.

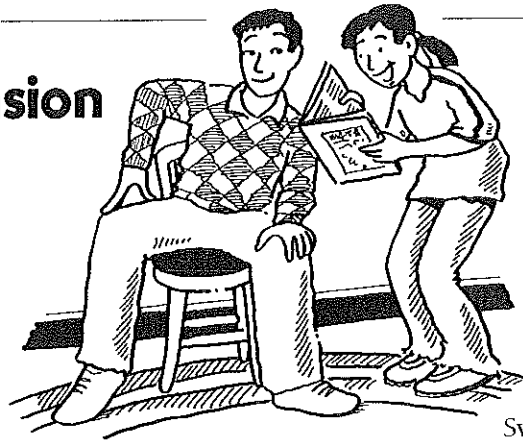
For Assistance: InstantAlertHelp@Honeywell.com

Improving comprehension

Preparing for standardized tests

Reading comprehension is a part of most standardized tests. How can you help your child improve her understanding of what she reads? Try a "paired reading" with your youngster.

1. First, you and your child silently read the same part of a story, an article, or a textbook. Try two or three paragraphs to start.
2. Next, listen while your youngster summarizes aloud what she has just read. She might say, "I learned that sedimentary



rocks are made from pressure." After she's finished summarizing, offer your corrections or additions to what she heard. Example: "We also learned that igneous rocks come from cooling lava."

3. Then, take turns reading another two or three paragraphs and changing roles. Switch back and forth until the whole story, article, or chapter is read.

Note: This activity is a good study aid for subjects like science or history—and it builds listening skills. 📖

Parent Discussion night

One night our son asked if we had heard about a frog that's over a foot long. Well, neither of us had. But his question prompted the three of us to do some exploring and see what we could discover.



We looked in the newspaper, on the Internet, and in books. A week later, we shared everything we had found out about the frog. We learned so much together that our son came up with another topic to explore—how to take care of a pet frog!

Our conversations have turned into a regular event. And each of us has become an "expert" on one topic or another. My son is especially proud when he finds an interesting fact the two of us missed! 📖

Q&A Vocabulary practice

Q My daughter has a tough time with vocabulary quizzes. What can I do to help?

A Try sneaking in a little extra vocabulary practice. The more your youngster uses the words, the easier it will be for her to remember them.

▲ **Do puzzles.** You can turn vocabulary words and their definitions into simple crossword puzzles at <http://puzzlemaker.discoveryeducation.com>. Select "Criss-Cross" from the puzzle menu in the middle of the screen.

▲ **Hunt for treasure.** Encourage your child to find and circle vocabulary words in newspapers and magazines and to read the sentences aloud. Seeing the words used in context will help her learn their meanings.

▲ **Use synonyms.** List your youngster's vocabulary words. Then, beside each one, have her write words with similar meanings. She can use a thesaurus from the library (try Scholastic's *Children's Thesaurus*, or search at www.wordsmyth.net). Hang the list on the refrigerator where she can review it. 📖



Other Picks

WEB SITES

■ ArchKIDecture

Have a curious builder in your house? Steer her to

this Web site for information about different kinds of building materials and instructions for making a house of cards or a tiny toothpick structure. She can also find books about architecture and learn what it takes to become an architect. www.archkidecture.org

■ Weekly Reader Online

Kids can stay informed about current events with this interactive news source. A companion site to the popular classroom magazine, it also includes games and other features. Design your own virtual room, enter a contest, or apply to be a student reporter. www.weeklyreader.com



MAGAZINES

■ Stone Soup

Young writers and artists will enjoy reading the work of kids their own age in Stone Soup. Each 48-page issue of the bimonthly magazine contains fiction, poetry, book reviews, and illustrations created by children ages 8–13. 800-447-4569

■ Cousteau Kids

This magazine, a publication of the Cousteau Society, is filled with stories about sea life. Your child can read about everything from sea otters to dolphins, as well as news from the Cousteau expeditions. 800-441-4395, www.cousteaukids.org



OUR PURPOSE

To provide busy parents with practical ways to promote their children's reading, writing, and language skills.

Resources for Educators,
a division of Aspen Publishers, Inc.
128 N. Royal Avenue • Front Royal, VA 22630
540-636-4280 • rfecustomer@wolterskluwer.com
www.rfeonline.com
ISSN 1540-5648