



HOME Warren Bulletin SCHOOL

Parents & Teachers -- working together for children.

December 21, 2009

Per Pupil Costs down 7.5% -- maybe...

The Board meets on Tuesday evening, 12/22, starting at 6 pm, to consider a proposal to add back a third classroom for the Intermediate Unit, and to hire an additional classroom aide to support the larger classes in the Upper Unit. The Intermediate Unit is expecting 45 students next year, and 57 students the following year, so the additional classroom is essential. The Upper Unit will have similar sizes next year, but drops to 36 the following year.

With an enrollment increase of 14.1%, in the current budget draft including the additional teacher will result in a 5.6% increase in local elementary education spending (=expenses less revenues), but still a 7.5% decrease in the cost per pupil – the basis of the local tax rate – because of those additional students.

The Board has asked Ellen Strauss to do a preliminary assessment of options for finding additional instructional space in the building, in case the enrollment continues to increase. Ellen first started addressing this issue back in 1987, when she developed a proposal for an addition to the school that was never implemented.

While all Board meetings are open to the public, the Board is issuing a special invitation for its budget hearing scheduled for Tuesday, January 12, 2010. Final action on the budget takes place on January 25th.

In French classes, *Mme Veronique writes,*

There has been so much to celebrate! Bean jars were all filled and the Upper and Intermediate Units fêted with *Croquenbouche* that they constructed in class (a tower of cream puffs, a traditional French cake for celebrations).

The Primary unit and Kindergarten kids enjoyed finding their hidden shoes complete with a treat to learn about *St. Nicholas Day*. We also learned about the *Escalade* observed by schoolchildren in Geneva on December 11th to remember the brave Swiss women who fought off the French army with vegetable soup!

All the while. We learned new vocabulary, directions, likes and dislikes and reviewed what we have already covered.

We have been singing *Vive le vent* (Long live the wind!, the French version of Jingle Bells). It is about the winter weather and the *neige* we hope our singing will bring.

We are ready to start the New Year introducing family members -- and adjectives. We will kick off January with the celebration of the Three Kings (*les Trois Rois*). If anyone would like to bake a *galette* (any kind of cake or cupcake) for you child's class please let me know (email: veronica@bernicke.us)

Bonne Fête et Bonne Année!



Avery spins the distracting pinwheel as guest vaccinator Deb O'Hara administers the flu shot last Thursday. Grace Holter provides the comforting lap. Together, Fran and Deb administered 106 shots in a little over two hours, with help from kid-wrangers Christy Ketchel and Anna Mays, Deirdre Fennelly, who ran the "recovery room", and Ken Blair who served as recording secretary for the operation. Thanks to all who helped (and especially Anna's muffins!), the clinic was a great success. Round 2 (for children who need the second dose) is tentatively scheduled for Jan. 14th.

Theater Program

The Warren School theater program is still looking for your donations to support the Primary and Intermediate Unit plays this spring. If you've lost the letter that was sent out last week, you can find it on the Warren School PTO's Facebook page, or get a copy from Laurie, or just send in your check payable to the Warren PTO, with "Theater Program" on the memo line.

School Health Notes *Fran Blair writes,*

Holiday Time – a time of wonderful smells – evergreen trees, cookies baking, gingerbread, turkey roasting, scented candles burning. A time of parties and eating.

A few things to remember during this festive season:

- When taking food to a party remember our friends with allergies and clearly label the food so we can keep everyone safe. Try new recipes that are nut free, or gluten free or dairy free and don't forget the ones who are allergic to shellfish. Read labels so you know what is in the food that you buy.
- Use the usual baking safety when cooking your food. Make sure cutting surfaces and utensils are cleaned between uses. Cook food thoroughly.
- When using candles make sure they are not going to tip over and start a fire. Keep them away from anything flammable.

- If you have a party and have little ones in your house, make sure you clean up before going to bed. Children are curious and if there are glasses with liquid still in it, cigarette butts or food sitting around they might 'experiment' with sampling and the results could be dangerous. A trip to the emergency room is not what we want to spoil the holidays.
- Spend time with your children – skiing, snowshoeing and skating are all fun things to do as a family. Dress appropriately for the weather. Nothing can spoil your fun faster than a child getting wet or cold. If the weather is really cold take a hot chocolate break to warm up.

Have a wonderful holiday season. Enjoy family and friends. Eat healthy and get lots of exercise. If traveling, travel safe. See you next year.

Important Dates for your calendars:

12/22	Tues	School Board, 6:00 pm
12/24 – 1/3		Vacation
1/4/10	Mon	Classes resume
1/6	Weds	School Board, 6:00 pm
1/12	Tues	School Board Budget Hearing, 6:00 pm
1/25	Mon	School Board, 6:00 pm
3/2	Tues	Annual School Meeting 9:00 am

REPEAT ANNOUNCEMENTS

Town Meeting

This year, the School Meeting will take place *before* Town Meeting on March 2, 2010. Last year's Town Meeting voted to make this significant change in order to increase voter participation in voting on the School budget. We're giving you this "heads-up" now because it is critically important that Warren School parents come to support our school, to be there to say "Yes" when the moderator asks "All those in favor..."

If you usually go skiing on Town Meeting Day, you can come to the school meeting and still get in a (nearly) full day on the slopes. If you're headed off to work, the school meeting should be completed before 10:00 am. And if you're making reservations for travel, we hope you will make every effort to be back in time!

Family Directory

We intend to publish (for home consumption only) a Warren School family directory, listing students' names, birthdates, parents' names, home phone numbers, and mail and email addresses. We'll sort it by classroom, so you can find your child's classmates.

If you would prefer that we NOT list any or all of this information, please let us know this week. The directory will be made available only to Warren families.

Photo Permission

As you may already know, the Warren School has a home page on the Internet at www.warrenschool.org which includes photos of unidentified Warren students. We also post the weekly Warren Bulletin, which usually includes photos of small groups of children, sometimes identified by first name. And we also occasionally submit students' work and illustrative photos to local newspapers.

In previous years, we have included a request for your permission to share your child's image and work with

the Information Form we send home in August (it also includes permission for field trips and emergency treatment). We realize that this release was omitted from this year's form, so we are asking you now to give us that permission.

With this Bulletin, we're sending home a form for you to sign and return. You can also communicate your wishes by phone or email (alehner@warrenschool.org).

December Four Winds: "Birds on the Wing"

During their December sessions (led by our amazing and talented parent volunteers!) the kids will be learning about things like

- why do some birds migrate and others don't?
- when they do head off to warmer climates, where do they go and why?

They'll contemplate why some birds migrate only short distances, but many fly thousands of miles each year. Through fun activities they'll learn a bit about migration patterns; how distances traveled vary with species; and why and how birds migrate from northern areas to places where there are more adequate food supplies, longer daylight hours for foraging for food, and less need to expend energy to stay warm. We'll also examine why birds such as the black-capped chickadee, ruffed grouse, and blue jay have adaptations that allow them to survive the challenges of northern winters, keeping us company all season long!



HUMS Community Council

The Harwood Union Middle School Community Council meets once a month to discuss ways to improve the middle school experience for students and families. As a member of the Harwood community, your input is wanted. You do not need to have a student currently at Harwood to participate. The next meeting, on Tuesday, January 5, at 6:30 at the middle school, will be a planning session for a potluck and activities night in March. This evening is intended to give Harwood parents a chance to mingle with Harwood parents from different towns, while giving the students something fun to do.



Preschoolers bravely stood up in front of the packed auditorium to give us their enthusiastic rendition of Jingle Bells.