

# DECEMBER 2008

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## Windham Middle School

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We encourage you to utilize the District and Middle School Web sites to obtain information. By going to the district site at [www.windhamsd.org](http://www.windhamsd.org), you can link to all of the Windham Schools.

### Important Dates

December 4	—School Picture Retakes
December 5	—Winter Wonderland Dance 7– 9 PM
December 9	—Band Concert 7 PM
December 10	—M2M Executive Meeting 7 AM
December 10	—Chorus Concert 7 PM
December 12	—Midterms
December 24	—January 4—Winter Vacation
January 7	—Geography Bee 6:30 PM
January 10	—Ski Trip Mount Snow 6AM-8PM

### WINDHAM WONDERLAND DANCE

The Windham Wonderland Dance is returning for the third year! Students from Middle School can get dressed up and spend an awesome night with their friends. The dance is from 7:00-9:00 on Friday, December 5th. Admission is \$10 and all profits from the dance will go to Windham Helping Hands. Boys should wear a collared shirt with or without a tie and girls should wear school-appropriate dresses. We encourage all students to attend this dance to have a great time and support Helping Hands!

### 6TH GRADE NEWS

Students in grade six were able to participate in their first Super Bowl competition. The Super Bowl is where students generate factual questions regarding current events from newspapers, news magazines, television, or other news media. Each quarter winning teams from social studies classes compete against other sixth grade classes. Each quarter there is a winner who will advance to the end of the year tournament and compete for the final sixth grade championship. This quarter's winner was Mr. Gage's homeroom. After the Super Bowl, each quarter several sixth grade students are selected by the sixth grade staff to receive the Outstanding Student Award. This award honors students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of attitude, effort, and leadership. It is always a difficult selection process being there are so many outstanding students. Good job to all who were selected this quarter. Keep up the good work! We look forward to another good month. We hope everyone has a good holiday season.

### SEVENTH GRADE NEWS

In December, reading classes will be finishing *Tangerine*, and moving on to Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*. We will be reading the abridged version in class, which we will supplement with excerpts from the original for added depth and richness. On December 18th, we will see a performance of the play here at WMS! In language arts, we will be working on vocabulary, and we will be moving on to essay writing.

Science students are wrapping up the viruses and bacteria unit. We will soon begin our study of the structure and function of cells.

In Social Studies, we have just finished our major Greek Unit. Students worked hard on their projects and learned a lot about how the ancient Greeks influenced our modern civilization. Next, we will participate in our annual Geography Bee to determine which students will represent 7th grade at the WMS Geography Bee in January. The winner of that will proceed to the state level. Following that, we will be starting our study of the ancient Romans, another civilization with many ties to our modern times.

### SIGN UP FOR EARTH SHUTTLE 2009

Students may register for the 2009 trip by picking up a registration form from Mrs. Fava or Miss Corbin. You can also register online at [worldstrides.com](http://worldstrides.com) using the ID # 22539. Earth Shuttle is an educational program for students interested in learning outside the classroom. Daily workshops may include Discovery Cove, Seaworld/Busch Gardens, American Pro Dive, MOSI- Museum of Science and Industry, and other educational programs.

### PTA

It's not too late to join PTA. Membership forms are available at:

[http://www.windhampta.org/forms\\_documents.htm](http://www.windhampta.org/forms_documents.htm)

Middle School staff would like to thank all the PTA volunteers for the fabulous dinner during Conferences. What a treat to be able to sit down and enjoy homemade soups, salads and desserts! Also, many thanks to the volunteers who helped in so many capacities in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade. From editing science brochures to helping with ancient Greek research, volunteers continue to be valuable resources for our school..

## **EIGHTH GRADE NEWS**

Science students will conduct labs in the areas of properties of matter. The labs will include Gas Laws, density, and solubility. Students will then design and construct toothpick bridges.

Students in PreAlgebra are investigating linear relationships. They are solving problems which involve a constant rate of change between variables and are writing equations to represent the situations. They will learn how to graph lines and look for patterns on the graphing calculators.

Students in Algebra are wrapping up an extensive unit on linear relationships and will move onto solving linear systems and inequalities. During this unit, they will "look for the better deal" by comparing two companies prices on services in this area.

## **MUSIC NEWS**

The WMS Winter Band and Chorus concerts will be on Tuesday, December 9, 2008 (Band) and Wednesday, December 10, 2008 (Chorus). Both concerts begin promptly at 7:00pm in the Windham Middle School gymnasium. Please come see a fantastic performance put on by the very talented students here at Windham Middle School. They have all worked exceedingly hard and we are very proud of them!

## **GUIDANCE NEWS**

### **M<sub>2</sub>M**

M<sub>2</sub>M training will be held on December 2<sup>nd</sup> this month and the formal connection will be on Wednesday Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup>. All Executives will meet for our early morning training at 7am on the 2<sup>nd</sup>. Please remember to wear your shirts on Wed. the 3<sup>rd</sup>. The month of December is geared toward inspiring the students to give back to others by doing a good deed. The theme for the month is "Pay it Forward." We must educate and inspire students to realize that they can change the world, one person at a time. Our goal this month is to have the students, staff and community members do a good deed and, in turn, have that person do something nice in return. "Paper Dollars" will be displayed on bulletin boards throughout the school showing all the good deeds done by WMS. In the true meaning of the season Pay it Forward."

The idea "Pay It Forward" was started after author Catherine Ryan Hyde wrote the novel *Pay It Forward* and introduced Trevor McKinney, a twelve-year-old boy who accepts the challenge that his teacher gives his class, a chance to earn extra credit by coming up with a plan to change the world for the better. Trevor chooses three people for whom he will do a favor, and then when those people thank him and ask how they might pay him back, he will tell them that instead of paying him back, they should each "pay it forward" by choosing three people for whom they can do favors, and in turn telling those people to pay it forward. It's nothing less than a human chain letter of kindness and good will (Pay It Forward Foundation, 2006).

### **Private High Schools**

Attention 8<sup>th</sup> graders applying to private high schools . . . the application deadlines are approaching. Remember that all application materials should be submitted to the Guidance Department. We will then forward the application packets on to the private high schools before the deadlines.

## **GUIDANCE NEWS- CONTINUED**

### **10 Ways to Help your Child with Homework**

1. Let your child know that homework is important and valuable.
2. Set a regular time each day for homework allowing some time to unwind after school before getting started.
3. Be sure your child has all essentials, such as papers, books, school notebooks and pencils.
4. Help your child get organized by providing folders for papers and a calendar and /agenda.
5. Have a quiet, clean and well-lit place to study with a comfortable chair. Keep all school work there.
6. Discourage distractions, including TV during study time. Allow study breaks at intervals.
7. Be available to answer questions or help quiz your child, but keep homework as his or her responsibility to complete.
8. Spot check homework when it's complete, but don't correct assignments unless the teacher has asked you to.
9. Read any comments the teacher has made on returned assignments.
10. If a homework problem arises, contact the teacher for clarification.

**Reminder:** All Parents have access to their own child's grades and assignments. Passwords were given out the night of Open House.

### **Expect the Best from Your Child... And Get It**

When researchers look at what makes students successful, they always find that expectations play a key role. If parents and teachers hold high expectations, children usually live up to them. That's true in academics, athletics and for behavior as well.

Emphasize the 3 A's: Attendance, Attitude, & Achievement

**Attendance-** Businesses know how important attendance is. When they call schools before hiring a graduate, they ask first about attendance...then grades. Show your child that you value attendance. You go to work with a headache or if the weather is cold and your child should go to school on those days too.

**Attitude-**Jesse Jackson often says, "It's your attitude and not your aptitude that determines your altitude". In other words, even the brightest student can fail if they don't work hard. Let your children know you expect them to try their best.

**Achievement-**We all need goals. Help your child learn to set goals...and achieve them. When they reach one goal, show them you are please and that you expect them to set their sights even higher next time.

### **Add the 3 B's**

Be Positive, Be Consistent, & Be there for your child