



BEST/PTO NEWSLETTER

Bedford Elementary Schools Together/Parent Teacher Organization
 Providing a Forum for Communication, Enrichment, and Support
 September 2008

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News From the President of BEST

Dear Davis and Lane School Families,

Welcome to BEST and to the start of what I am sure will be another great year at Davis and Lane Schools. Like most of you, I can hardly believe the summer has drawn to a close - it always flies by much too quickly. The cooler temperatures of the last two weeks are definite indicators that indeed fall is on the way.

September has always seemed like the month of new beginnings for me, much more so than January. New teachers, new clothes, new backpacks, for some a new school - a chance to start fresh again! I hope you have been able to find some time for relaxation this summer and feel ready to jump in with both feet to a new school year. As always, there will be many opportunities for you to become involved in your child's educational experience in a variety of ways. As I begin my second and final year as president, I stand ready with the rest of the BEST officers to lead the charge to make this a memorable year for our kids and our schools. We are thrilled to welcome Diane Bernstein to the BEST board as Treasurer! Thank you Diane for stepping up to the plate to fill this important position.

Please take the time to read this initial newsletter. It gives you a good overview of all the upcoming happenings for this month and beyond. Once again, this will be the only issue of the newsletter distributed in paper copy. The survey we conducted last spring showed overwhelming support for distributing the newsletter electronically. Please visit our website, www.bestpto.org, to sign up to receive the monthly newsletter via email. You will receive an email each month that will link you to our website and the current newsletter.

Your child should have brought home this year's **BEST Volunteer Packet** earlier this week. We would appreciate it if you could review the packet and let us know which committees you may be most interested in joining. Our organization is only as good as its volunteers and we need lots of them! Any time or talent you share will be greatly appreciated and have direct benefits for your children.

The first BEST Meeting will take place on Tuesday, September 16 at 7pm in the Lane Multipurpose Room. Board members and Committee Chairpersons will be available to share their committee goals and answer any of your questions. We will also be having a guest speaker who will give parents some great tips for getting organized for the school year. We hope to see you there!

Be sure to check the September calendar of events for some important upcoming activities. Once again, I look forward to working with all of you this year.

Best regards,
 Marge Heckman



September Calendar of Events



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 • Gr. 5 Back to School Night-Lane	10 • Gr. 4 Back to School Night-Lane	11 • Parent Coffee w/Jennifer Brown	12 • VOLUNTEER FORMS DUE!!	13
14	15	16 • BEST Meeting	17 • Gr. 3 Back to School Night-Lane • Wrapping Paper Fundraiser begins	18 • Back to School Night-Davis • Lane Class Photos	19 • Newcomers' Playground Activity, Davis 3:45 (raindate 9/26)	20 • <i>Bedford Day-Parade and Fair</i>
21	22	23	24 • Back to School Night-Davis	25	26 • 3 Apples Storytelling Festival	27 • 3 Apples Storytelling Festival
28 • 3 Apples Storytelling Festival	29	30	Oct 1	2 • Davis Class Photos	3	4

Support Your Schools

Box Tops 2008 - 2009: Clip - Clip Box Tops from hundreds of participating products. Box Tops are worth 10¢ each when our school redeems them from Box Tops for Education. Thanks for your continuous support! We made over \$ 1700 last year in Box Top collections. Our **next deadline is Wednesday, October 29th**. So send in all those boxtops you saved over the summer!



Bedford Day 2008: BEST will once again have a booth where we will be selling wrapping paper and possibly slush. The **parade begins on Saturday, September 20 at 10:30** and **fair hours are from 10:30 until 3:00**. Please be sure to stop by our booth. Volunteers are needed for short shifts during the day to chat with attendees about the work we do in the school and help with sales! For information about the booth or to volunteer, contact Marge Heckman, 781 275-5167, maheckman@gmail.com



Tom Nolan Fund: Last spring, BEST initiated the establishment of the Tom Nolan "Make My Day" fund to honor retiring Lane School principal Tom Nolan. This fund is a discretionary fund for use by the principals of each of the four schools in Bedford to provide small incentives to students who could just use a bit of a boost. In discussions with people who worked with Tom for many years, we learned that Tom is known for always looking out for the underdog, for kids who might need a little more encouragement. This fund will help carry on that tradition. If you would still like to donate to the fund, checks may be made payable to: Bedford Public Schools - Tom Nolan Fund. Send checks to: Director of Finance, 97 McMahan Road, Bedford.

Fall Fundraiser, Sept. 17-Oct. 8: One of BEST's biggest fundraisers for 2008-09 is about to start! From **September 17 to October 8**, you'll have a chance to order wrapping paper, gifts for the holidays or yourself, coffee cakes and more through Genevieve's. Look for information coming home with your child in the next few weeks! BEST receives 50% profit on most sales and your child is eligible for prizes bases on orders places. This year we are encouraging you to take advantage of Genevieve's mail order service which ships items directly to you. All other orders will need to be picked up a the school after delivery -- no orders will be sent home with children this year.



Student Activities

Time to join Girl Scouts! Girl Scouts is not just about the three C's (cookies, camping and crafts), now we are developing girls of courage, confidence and character. Take the time to talk to Girl Scout leaders about the current program and how you and your daughter can become involved in a troop. Girl Scouts is open to girls ages 5-17. There are two opportunities to learn more and sign up: **Bedford Day, Sept. 20, 11am-2pm** - check out our booth at the town fair! **3 Apples Storytelling Festival, Sept. 27, 10am-2pm** - Stop by our booth on the Town Common. Listen to Girl Scout stories and do a craft or two while learning all about Girl Scouting in Bedford. If you miss these events and still want to join, please call Raelene at 781-275-7912.



Pan Mass Challenge Bedford Kids Ride Parade Float: Hey PMC Kids! Join us on your bikes in the **Bedford Day Parade, Sept. 20 at 10:00am**. All riders must wear a helmet and are asked to wear their PMC Kids shirt. If you would like to participate, please email Amy Mason at a.mason10@verizon.net. We hope to see you there!

Fall Afterschool Art Classes: Art classes with Penny Leslie will again be offered through the Bedford Recreation Dept. Descriptions and sign up at www.bedfordrecreation.org. Classes include Mixed Media, Tapestry Weaving, Observational Drawing, Ceramics, and 3-D Sculptures and Crafts for various age groups. All **classes run 7 weeks starting October 6th** and follow the school calendar. Programs are held at the Bedford Center for the Arts studio at the Old Town Hall. Students are encouraged to bring a snack if coming right from school. The art room is spacious and sunny and a relaxing environment to get creative. All supplies are provided by the instructor, including lots of individual guidance. Penny has a B.A. and M.A. degree in Art Education and has been teaching for many years.



In the Schools

Parent Coffee with Jennifer Brown, Davis School Principal: Davis School Principal Jenny Brown will again welcome parents back at an informal coffee hour on **Thursday, Sept. 11, at 9:30am** in the Davis Cafeteria. Kindergarten parents and any parents new to the school are especially encouraged to attend. Please bring any questions you may have for Mrs. Brown.



Newcomer Activity: Are you new to Bedford and/or our schools? The BEST Board invites you to the Newcomer Playground Activity for children and parents on **Friday, Sept. 19; 3:15-4:15** (raindate Fri. Sept. 26, same time) at the Davis School playground. BEST will provide drinks and snacks. Meet other parents and find out how you can become more involved. Please contact Annette Brown, 781 275-1081, pgbanb@comcast.net, if you have any questions.



Kudos

Welcome Back Breakfast: Thank you to Starbucks, Bruegger's Bagels, and Carriage House Catering for their generous food donations towards breakfast for the teachers and support staff on Thursday, August 28th. It was much appreciated! Hospitality Coordinators: Carla Bradford-Davis, and Serena Danielson-Lane.



Community Corner

Fallen Veterans: The Bedford High School Fallen Veterans Committee is raising funds to construct a new memorial in honor of the three BHS graduates who made the supreme sacrifice in service to their country. The memorial plaza in front of the high school will pay tribute to Travis Desiato '03 and John Hart '02, who both lost their lives in Iraq, and Terry Reed '63, who was a casualty of the Vietnam Conflict. The current flagpole will be replaced and the area around it will be enhanced with space appropriate for reflection and contemplation. Although the memorial coincides with the high school renovation and expansion, the committee feels the entire Bedford community has ownership of this memorial and is asking everyone - individuals, families, businesses and industries -- to contribute whatever they can. Donations may be sent to Bedford High School on Mudge Way, attention Janet Brady. Checks should be payable to "BHS Fallen Veterans Memorial." All donations will be recognized publicly. Questions may be addressed to Mrs. Brady at BHS 781-275-1700 or Mike Rosenberg 781-983-1763.



Bedford School Committee: Topics scheduled for upcoming school committee meetings are:

9/9: Annual Report approval; Approval of student activities account maximum; Appointment-Superintendent as voting member of CASE collaborative; Superintendent's goals; Textbook presentation-Social Studies; Textbook presentation-Foreign language; Approval-Facilities Contract; Enrollment/Space Discussion.

9/23: Revote of School Budget; Appointment of School Attendance Officer; Presentation: Guidance Department; Textbook adoption: Social Studies; Textbook adoption: Foreign Language

Meetings will be held at **7:30pm in the JGMS Multipurpose Room unless otherwise noted.** All agendas include a regular "Comments from the Public" item. Full agendas are available 48 hours prior to each meeting at www.bedford.k12.ma.us and at Town Hall. All are welcome to attend, and meetings are taped and shown on channel 10. Check the BCAT website at www.bedford.tv/schedule or the Bedford Minuteman for the schedule.

Block Party Guide Available: The Violence Prevention Coalition, or VPC, would like to encourage residents of Bedford to consider having a Block Party this fall. Called "A Guide to a Successful Neighborhood," the Block Party Guide starts off with a letter of introduction and table of contents and includes tips on how to start organizing, sample invitations and checklists, a block party registration form, and a sheet of useful phone numbers. In all cases with block parties, there are many families, multiple generations, games for all ages, much diverse food, music, fun, laughter and sometimes, even door prizes. Block parties leave the partygoers with a good feeling, a sense of community, a cooperative spirit. For more information contact 781-275-7727. *The VPC meets the first Tuesday of each month at 7:30am at First Church of Christ Congregational, 25 the Great Road, Bedford. For more information about VPC meetings call 781-275-7951; www.town.bedford.ma.us/youth/violence_prevention_coalition.html.*



International Walk to School Day: International Walk to School Day is October 8, 2008 and the Youth Task Force (YTF) is planning an event for Bedford. Please join us at a planning meeting on **Wednesday, September 10 at 7pm in the Training Room at the Bedford Police Station.** Representatives from MassRIDES, the Board of Health, DPW, Police Department, and the schools will be present to help plan. Contact Lea Susan Ojamaa, Board of Health Member, at LSO-jamaa@gmail.com or 781-271-9143 with questions or to express your interest in helping with the event. Look for more information about the event at Bedford Day on September 20. In the U.S., International Walk to School Day is expected to include 5,000 schools from all 50 states. Walkers from the U.S. will join children and adults in 40 countries around the world. Walk to School events work to create safer routes for walking and bicycling and emphasize the importance of issues such as increasing physical activity among children, pedestrian safety, traffic congestion, concern for the environment and building connections between families, schools and the broader community.



Bedford Education Foundation: Dear Friends—I am excited and pleased to announce the formation of the Bedford Education Foundation (BEF), a community-based group dedicated to encouraging classroom creativity and innovation in the Bedford Schools. Bedford is blessed with a well-supported, fiscally responsible school system. Currently, Bedford's active school based parent organizations, BEST and the middle and high school PTOs, and interest based parent groups, i.e. POMS and the Bedford Athletic Association, offer much support to the schools. While working collaboratively with these groups, it is the BEF's goal to provide additional resources for teacher initiatives. In the coming months, at back to school nights, Bedford Day, and other town events, you will have an opportunity to meet our board and garner more information about our group. With co-president Ann Marie Bernardon, I am inviting you to visit our website, www.bedfordeducation.org, or email us at ilsa@bedfordeducation.org or anmarie@bedfordeducation.org. We hope you decide to offer your skills to make this effort a success. Volunteers are welcome! Sincerely, Ilsa Gottlieb, Co-president BEF.

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Community Corner (continued)

Bedford Youth and Family Services: The BYFS is here to support and nurture the social, emotional, and developmental needs of children, youth, adults and families in Bedford. The BYFS offices are located on the 2nd floor of the Town Center Building. Office hours are 8am-4pm Monday-Friday, with late afternoon and evening appointments available as schedules permit. Appointments can also be arranged for other town or school locations or at the Community Agencies Building in Concord, MA next to Emerson Hospital. Please call 781-275-7727 for more information or to make an appointment or visit the BYFS website at www.town.bedford.ma.us/youth/youthindex.html for their newsletter and information related to resources such as *new resident support*, *Bedford WIC program*, and *Bedford Housing Authority*.

Parent Education Series: Fall - Spring 2008-2009 brochures have been mailed out to each Bedford residence. These can also be found on our Town of Bedford, Youth & Family Services website, www.town.bedford.ma.us/youth/youthindex.html, as well as available in hard copy at our offices in Town Center. One October offering of interest is Dr. Richard Lerner's program on "How to Build Resilient and Successful Children", **Wednesday, Oct. 29, 7-9pm** in the Bedford Town Hall Auditorium.

Community Social Service Reference Guide: BYFS is pleased to announce the availability of their Community Social Services Reference Guide at their offices at Bedford Town Center. Published every other year, the guide offers a revised and updated listing of local resources to help residents with basic information and general questions about local resources. An electronic version is also available on the BYFS web page at www.town.bedford.ma.us/youth/youthindex.html. For more information please contact Sue Baldauf, Director, at 781-275-7727 or email at sueb@town.bedford.ma.us.

Volunteer Opportunities

Lane School Library: The Lane School Library is chock full of wonderful books, magazines, and reference materials, but it's missing one thing - you! Lane classrooms typically need fewer parent helpers than Davis classrooms so volunteering in the library offers a



great opportunity to help your child's class and school. As a library volunteer you will help with checking materials in and out, reshelving books, and helping children find what they need. We typically schedule you once a month during your child's library time. No experience necessary! Training will be scheduled for early October for new volunteers. Please fill out the Lane Library Volunteer Form in the BEST packet and return by Kidmail to the office. The form includes the current library schedule for all classes. A volunteer schedule will go out for October once the forms are received. Please contact Judy Kelly at (781)275-4762 or jkelly275@verizon.net if you have any questions. **Attention Experienced Lane Library Volunteers:** If you can help out during the month of September please contact Judy. We really need you—thanks!

Davis School Library: Volunteering in the Davis School Library is a fun and rewarding way to provide service to our school and to spend some "quality time" with your child and his or her classmates! Library volunteers check books in and out, reshelve returned items, help children find materials, and perform special projects and tasks at the request of the library staff. The Library coordinator will schedule you during the library shift that includes your child's classroom visit—once per month for a pre- or post-lunch shift is typical, but we'll be happy to try to accommodate you if you'd like to do more or have particular needs. Please fill out the 2008-2009 Davis Library Volunteer Form (which includes the schedule) in the BEST packet and return it via KidMail. As volunteer information is received, scheduling will begin for October and November shifts. Also, volunteers new to the Davis library will be asked to attend a training session/orientation sometime late in September; watch for more information. Please contact Carla Bradford at 781-275-6395 or at carlajbradford@yahoo.com with any questions.



Davis and Lane Hospitality Committees: Want to get involved in elementary school volunteer activities but don't have a lot of spare time to devote to it? Then the Hospitality Committees for the Davis and Lane schools just might be the right answer for you! The Hospitality Committees of the two schools provide meals for teachers and staff approximately four times per year on early-release/staff development days, as well as a "Welcome Back!" breakfast prior to the beginning of the school year. A few weeks before the scheduled luncheon, an email message will go out to all Hospitality Committee members detailing food and supply needs for the upcoming event: you can then respond with your proposed contribution (home-made or store-bought are equally acceptable) and make sure that it is delivered to the school at the appointed time, which is usually before 10:00 AM the day of the luncheon. Any non-disposable personal serveware used (which is encouraged in order to be environmentally-friendly) will be washed and available for pick-up at the school after 2:00 PM that day. If you have any time-flexibility, help in setting up before or cleaning up after the event would be appreciated but is certainly not necessary! If interested, please note so on the checklist of volunteer activities that will be sent home by BEST, and/or contact Carla Bradford for Davis (carlajbradford@yahoo.com or 781-275-6395) or Serena Danielson for Lane (serenad@verizon.net or 781-275-2760).



Bedford Farmers Market: BEST will be present at the community booth at the Bedford Farmer's Market on Monday, Sept. 22 from 2-6:30pm. It is our chance to let the community know just what we do and we will be selling wrapping paper as well! Volunteers are needed in 1-2 hour shifts to cover the table. For information about the booth or to volunteer, contact Marge Heckman, 781 275-5167, maheckman@gmail.com.

Volunteer Opportunities

Davis Cafeteria Volunteers: Volunteers are needed to help during lunchtime at the Davis School Cafeteria. Help keep the lines moving while visiting with your children and their friends. Volunteers are expected to monitor the number of children using "the facilities" at any given time, and to generally help the kids (opening Thermoses, aiding in zipping them into their jackets on the way to recess, etc.) and our excellent lunchroom staff. This is truly a great way to see your kids and their friends in a relaxed, happy atmosphere. And as a bonus, you get to see if your children are actually eating their lunches! Any commitment is fine—once a year, once a week—anything is greatly appreciated. Please contact Carla Bradford at 781-275-6395 or carlajbradford@yahoo.com.



Davis Art Room: We are currently scheduling Art Room volunteers! Your presence in the Art Room greatly improves the children's experience as it free our Art teacher, Jill Frazier, to spend more time helping the children with their projects. No artistic ability is necessary to help with setup, supplies, putting names on artwork, and cleanup (plus a little reminding, suggesting, and praising for the children!). Take this opportunity to see your child and his/her classmates in action! We have a NEW volunteer sign-up system online where you can sign yourself up for the days and times you would like to volunteer. Just send a note to our new email address, davisartroom@yahoo.com and we'll tell you how! We GREATLY APPRECIATE your help!! Davis Art Room Coordinators—Soraya Stevens 781-275-4354 and Sumiko Goldbaum 781-275-6556, davisartroom@yahoo.com.



It's Easy Being GREEN!

Welcome! For those of you returning to the BEST newsletter, the Green Committee hopes you used some of the ideas we presented last year. For those of you new this year, we hope you find some helpful ideas and begin to use them. As school starts we offer the following ways to Reuse-Reduce-Recycle. We expect many of you will be using the Kid Mail system at some point. You know those return envelopes you get in junk mail? Keep them and use them to send Kid Mail; just cross out the mailing info. It saves you an envelope, and reuses another. Instead of buying drinking water in single serving containers, fill a reusable bottle. Keep an empty one in the car, and fill it when needed. This saves you money and saves resources as well. Reusable bags are another big resource saver, when used properly. Pick a few up. Keep them in the car. That way you always have them when going grocery shopping. This has stopped a bunch of plastic bags from entering the house, and many places give you a credit for bringing in a bag. Bring old compact fluorescent light bulbs to Hazardous Materials Days for safe disposal. While these bulbs save energy, they also can contain mercury and need to be disposed of properly. The next **Hazardous Materials Days** for Bedford are **Sunday, Sept. 21** and **Saturday, Oct. 18**. Contact the Board of Health for an entrance form.



Tips of the Month: Scotch® Tape dispensers are marked with a 6 for plastic recycling! And did you travel this summer? Travel shampoo bottles from hotels are often marked for recycling, yet we often don't look and just throw them in the trash. Keep up the search in finding those recycling numbers and get them into the bins, instead of the trash. *Peter Ricci, for the Green Committee*

BEST MEETING – SEPTEMBER 16

Come learn how to get organized! The first BEST meeting of the school year will be held on **Tuesday, Sept. 16 at 7pm** in the Lane School multi-purpose room. This is your opportunity to meet the members of the BEST board and committee chairs and ask any questions you may have about getting involved. We need lots of volunteers to keep all of our committees running smoothly. A special treat will be a talk by Karen Kenny of Organizing Works. Karen will share with us her tips for getting organized for the school year. Hope to see you there!

2008-2009 BEST/PTO Officers

Marge Heckman, President
maheckman@gmail.com; 781-275-5167
Kristin Ferrari, VP Davis
kferrari@comcast.net; 781-276-0591
Annette Brown, VP Lane
pgbanb@comcast.net; 781-275-1081
Lore Griffith, Secretary
lgriffith@itsma.com; 781-275-4112
Diane Bernstein, Treasurer
ddm.bernstein@verizon.net; 781-275-1769



Important BEST Board/Committee Chair Positions Still Open

President-Elect/Co-President - get to know the workings of the BEST officer's board this year and be ready to assume presidency next year.

Chairpersons for the following committees:

- World Languages Program - Davis School
- Greeters - Davis School
- Events - covers Lane and Davis
- Enrichment - need one additional co-chair at Davis

www.bedford.k12.ma.us/davis/index.html
www.bedford.k12.ma.us/lane/index.html