



September Newsletter

MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL:

Welcome back to a new school year. The 2009-2010 school year promises to be a year of great challenge, requiring focus, collaboration and high energy. Over the coming weeks, administration and staff will be engaging in the analysis of student performance and implementing initiatives that will target improvement.

During the spring of 2009 we restructured our grade seven and grade eight teams to better meet some of our anticipated needs. While change is always challenging, teachers and students have adjusted to their new structure and I believe that student service will be enhanced. As I write this first principal's message, intense evaluation of content specific student performance in the areas of mathematics and English Language Arts is underway. Taking what we learn from our review, we will, in a well informed manner refine our programming. Some adjustments will most likely impact instruction, assessment and/or scheduling. Any alteration of our current programming will be made with the best interest of our students at the forefront.

I would like to take a moment to welcome new staff to our building:

Katie Ross - Mixed team math teacher
Janelle Comer - Gr. 6 Special Needs teacher
Gail Johnson - Secretary
Liz Taylor - moving to 6th grade
Christine Reidy - moving to Gr. 8
Heather Ramsey - 1:1
Kate Pisano - Journey program
Jessica Cruickshank - Gr. 6 teaching assistant

I look forward to a new year. As we progress through the upcoming ten months of this academic year, as always, we will look to you for your support and participation. Please support and encourage your child's full commitment to active and engaged learning. Your encouragement and high expectation is a critical component of their success. A proactive approach will always yield more positive results than a reactive response.

I wish you and your family health and happiness throughout the upcoming year.
Mr. Peloquin

GENERAL INFORMATION:

The beginning of the school year brings renewed interest in setting proper procedure and ways to handle situations that might occur. Let me remind you of a few situations that need your attention.

It is extremely difficult to get messages to students. THIS SHOULD ONLY BE DONE IN AN EMERGENCY. Please try to make plans with your child at home before school. This also reduces

the number of interruptions to the classroom when the office staff tries to get messages to individuals.

In another effort to minimize classroom interruptions, please remind your children that if they find that they have forgotten their lunch or lunch money to stop by the office reception window to see if it has been delivered to school for them.

Lunch: Lunch tickets may be purchased in the cafeteria each morning between 8:05 and 8:20 a.m. Please report to homeroom first and get a pass to the cafeteria. The cost of a lunch ticket is \$45.00 for twenty lunches. Having a ticket reduces the need to handle money on a daily basis. Daily lunches cost \$2.25; reduced lunches are \$.40 and ala carte milk is \$.50. Applications for free/reduced lunches are available throughout the year.

Pick Up/Drop Off: I am asking parents to use the large parking lot on the south side of the PMMS building when dropping off students before school or when picking them up at dismissal time. Please leave the circular drive free for the buses. This area is not open to traffic from 8:00-8:30 a.m. and 2:15-3:00 p.m. **PLEASE DO NOT DROP OFF STUDENTS BY THE AUDITORIUM ENTRANCE.**

We ask parents to come into the office to pick up their child when he/she is dismissed early. We will not allow students to wait outside. This procedure is necessary for the safety of our students. Also, students arriving late to school must check in at the office before going to class.

Many of our students are walkers and will be crossing the street before and after school. Please be aware of the 20 mile per hour school zone.

BREAKFAST PROGRAM:

PMMS breakfast is served in the cafeteria at 7:45 a.m. It is open to all students. Enter the cafeteria through the main doors. Cost is \$1.00 unless student is eligible for free or reduced lunch.

CORI CHECKS:

Massachusetts General Law requires that upon application to serve as a chaperone or volunteer, an individual must include a copy of a government issued photo ID with the CORI. Regardless of the number of field trips or activities for which you serve as a chaperone, one CORI will suffice for the year.

We encourage anyone considering serving as a chaperone during the 2009/2010 school year who is also planning on attending our Open Houses to please complete the CORI application that evening. Remember to have a photo ID with you and a member of the administration will take a copy of it.

SCHOOL HOURS:

Students are not to arrive on school grounds prior to 8:05 a.m. unless they are going to breakfast in the cafeteria from 7:30 - 8:00 a.m. This is a safety issue as there are no teachers on duty until their workday

begins at 8:05. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

HOURS: 8:05 – 8:15 students arrive; 8:15-8:20 homeroom; 8:20 classes begin; 2:41 students are dismissed. Students are marked tardy after 8:15 a.m.

Throughout the year we try to keep you informed of early release days, parent conferences and holidays. The school year calendar is in the Student Handbook; perhaps the calendar could be posted in an appropriate place in your home for quick reference. No school, delayed openings, or early release announcements will be broadcast on radio stations WHYN, WTIC, WAQY, WMAS, WSPR and also on WGGB-TV40.

LATE BUSES:

Late buses will be available Monday-Thursday for students participating in after school activities. The buses will leave Powder Mill at 4:00 p.m. Late buses will not run on faculty meeting days (usually the third Tuesday of each month). **METCO students must personally request a late bus through the office before 10:00 a.m. THE TOLLAND LATE BUS DROPS STUDENTS OFF AT THE TOWN HALL ONLY.**

SCHOOL PICTURES:

School pictures are scheduled for October 5, 2009. More information will be forthcoming.

OPEN HOUSE:

Grades 5/6 and Encore: Tuesday, September 15, 2009
Grades 7/8 and Encore: Thursday, September 17, 2009

MAGAZINE DRIVE:

This year's fund-raiser will begin on September 10. With the support of the community this fund-raiser will generate money for field trips, assembly programs, etc. Information will be sent home to further explain this program.

SCHOOL COUNCIL:

We are looking for parent representatives to serve on our School Council. If you would like to be a part of our School Council, please send us a letter of intent and the reason you would like to serve on our council. The council meets on the third Wednesday of the month from 3:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Voting will take place on our Open House nights.

SCHOOL LUNCH PROGRAM:

Prices: Student lunch \$2.25
Reduced Lunch \$.40
Ala Carte Milk \$.50
Paid Breakfast \$1.25
Reduced Breakfast \$.25

Lunch tickets sold @ \$45.00 for 20 day ticket.
Assorted snacks are sold between \$.25 - \$1.00

If a student forgets his/her lunch money, they will receive a sandwich and milk for \$1.00. **This will be paid the next day.**

Free/reduced student lunch applications are available throughout the year. If your child is eligible for free/reduced lunch, he/she is entitled to free/reduced breakfast daily.

GRADE 5

The fifth grade staff welcomes students and parents to Powder Mill. We're looking forward to an exciting school year. Your child should bring home an Agenda, which is an assignment book. This is a valuable tool which allows parents to know what homework is expected. It's a good policy to check that the homework is completed and then a parent can sign off on that day. There is also space provided for teachers and parents to communicate in writing.

Because of school committee policy field trips are limited. However, we are hoping to attend a play in Springfield and to hopefully travel on the Boston Freedom Trail in the spring. Please contact your student's teacher if you have any questions or concerns.

The fifth grade teachers want to work with you to make this year a successful one for your child.

GRADE 6

Grade 6 is off to an enthusiastic start. We are lucky to have some new additions to our team: Ms. Batton, Mrs. Comer, Mrs. Taylor and Ms. Cruickshank. The configuration of our team has changed a little this year as we are now three teams; the Apollo, the Voyager, and the Endeavour. Although we are now three separate teams, we all have the same mission – to provide a safe, enjoyable and challenging environment for your children.

You can help your child be successful by making sure they have the necessary supplies and checking their agenda books each night. Please send in your contact information including your e-mail addresses and feel free to contact us at anytime.

CAFETERIA CLUB:

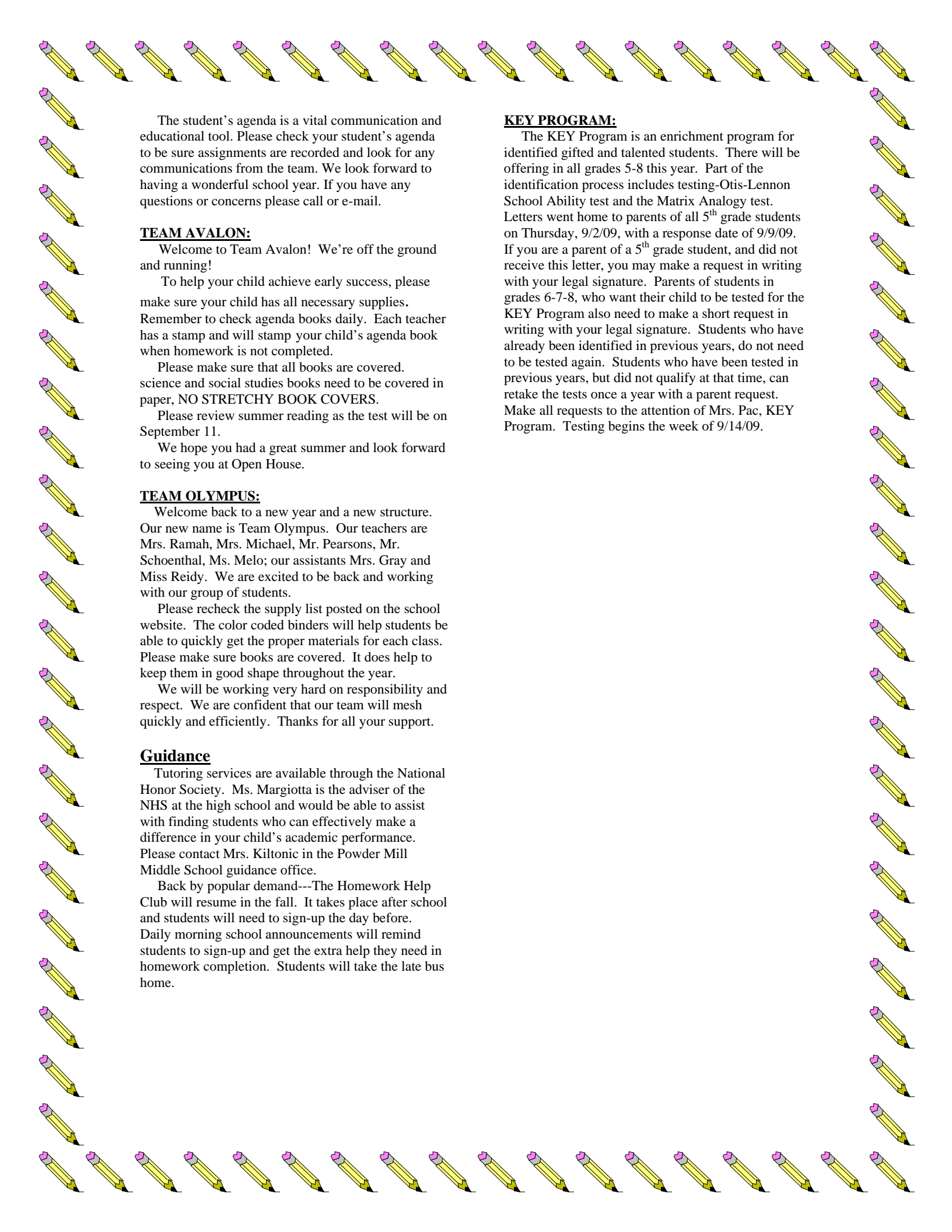
We will be starting a Cafeteria Club on Wednesday, September 9, 2009 from 2:45 to 3:45 in the cafeteria. We will then meet the first Tuesday of each month, October 6, November 3, December 1, January 5, February 9, March 2, April 6, May 4 and June 1. Agenda will be: sign ups for working in the kitchen. You will have to attend this meeting if you plan on working in the kitchen. So come one, come all. We'll chat with snacks!
Mrs. Despard

TEAM ATLANTIS:

Welcome to Team Atlantis. The staff of Team Atlantis is: Mr. Goddard science in room 111, Mrs. Mahoney social studies in room 109, Ms. Cusick language arts in room 112, and Ms. Ross math in room 108. We would like to welcome Ms. Ross to our team and the PMMS family.

We were pleased to see so many smiling faces the first few days of school. We look forward to meeting you at Open House on Thursday, September 17.

We are sorry about the confusion over the supply list. Hopefully all students have the needed supplies for each class. If we can help in any way with supplies, please let us know.



The student's agenda is a vital communication and educational tool. Please check your student's agenda to be sure assignments are recorded and look for any communications from the team. We look forward to having a wonderful school year. If you have any questions or concerns please call or e-mail.

TEAM AVALON:

Welcome to Team Avalon! We're off the ground and running!

To help your child achieve early success, please make sure your child has all necessary supplies. Remember to check agenda books daily. Each teacher has a stamp and will stamp your child's agenda book when homework is not completed.

Please make sure that all books are covered. science and social studies books need to be covered in paper, **NO STRETCHY BOOK COVERS.**

Please review summer reading as the test will be on September 11.

We hope you had a great summer and look forward to seeing you at Open House.

TEAM OLYMPUS:

Welcome back to a new year and a new structure. Our new name is Team Olympus. Our teachers are Mrs. Ramah, Mrs. Michael, Mr. Pearsons, Mr. Schoenthal, Ms. Melo; our assistants Mrs. Gray and Miss Reidy. We are excited to be back and working with our group of students.

Please recheck the supply list posted on the school website. The color coded binders will help students be able to quickly get the proper materials for each class. Please make sure books are covered. It does help to keep them in good shape throughout the year.

We will be working very hard on responsibility and respect. We are confident that our team will mesh quickly and efficiently. Thanks for all your support.

Guidance

Tutoring services are available through the National Honor Society. Ms. Margiotta is the adviser of the NHS at the high school and would be able to assist with finding students who can effectively make a difference in your child's academic performance. Please contact Mrs. Kiltonic in the Powder Mill Middle School guidance office.

Back by popular demand---The Homework Help Club will resume in the fall. It takes place after school and students will need to sign-up the day before. Daily morning school announcements will remind students to sign-up and get the extra help they need in homework completion. Students will take the late bus home.

KEY PROGRAM:

The KEY Program is an enrichment program for identified gifted and talented students. There will be offering in all grades 5-8 this year. Part of the identification process includes testing-Otis-Lennon School Ability test and the Matrix Analogy test. Letters went home to parents of all 5th grade students on Thursday, 9/2/09, with a response date of 9/9/09. If you are a parent of a 5th grade student, and did not receive this letter, you may make a request in writing with your legal signature. Parents of students in grades 6-7-8, who want their child to be tested for the KEY Program also need to make a short request in writing with your legal signature. Students who have already been identified in previous years, do not need to be tested again. Students who have been tested in previous years, but did not qualify at that time, can retake the tests once a year with a parent request. Make all requests to the attention of Mrs. Pac, KEY Program. Testing begins the week of 9/14/09.