

# SMS COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Volume 6 Issue 6

February 2010

STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL

## Principal's Forum

The month of February signals the beginning of the second semester of the 2009-10 school year and this event should be important to all Stafford students and their families. At this point in the year, students should be into routines that are helping them be successful. Expectations for completing homework, preparing for tests and quizzes, and staying organized should be automatic at this point. Unfortunately for some students, this is not completely true and it is these individuals that need parents following up and supporting the efforts of the school staff.

Please review your child's 2nd

quarter report card that will be mailed home February 10th. This document should provide you with information relative to all of the mentioned areas necessary for your student to be successful with the curricular expectations of each class. If there are deficits indicated, I strongly suggest that you request a parent conference with your student's teachers to develop a plan to assure that the second semester is as productive as possible.

The beginning of the new semester is also a signal that many students will be changing their exploratory courses. Check with your student to determine if this is the case and



discuss any new expectations or materials that might need to be obtained to assure their success in these areas. Exploratory classes are an important component of our middle school model. They often allow for the development of skills that may transfer directly to the "real" world experiences of the students.

I hope everyone has an opportunity to enjoy a little quality family time during the upcoming winter break.

Patty Amo, Principal

## SMS Donated Generously to Earthquake Relief

Led by students in Mrs. Messner's ELA classes, students and staff at Stafford took up the relief cause and raised over \$2000 for victims of the recent earthquake in Haiti. Donations of money were solicited in

each homeroom. Students also sold healthy snacks and participated in "Hat Day" to contribute to the fund. The money raised will be sent to "Doctors Without Borders" and hopefully will provide services and/or supplies for

the thousands of Haitians injured or left homeless by the earthquake. We should all be proud of the generosity of our school community.

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### Special points of interest:

- Please call the school by 7:30 AM if your child is absent. Request homework at this time - 563-6800. Choose Option 2 for attendance or email absences to [smsattendance@plattscsd.org](mailto:smsattendance@plattscsd.org)
- SMS FSO meeting - February 3, 2010 6:00 PM. SMS Auditorium
- Student Early Release - February 4, 2010 - 1:20 PM
- Winter Break - February 15-19, 2010

## Encourage Your Child to Help Make School A Better Place



Students can give back to their school.

The late President John F. Kennedy famously said, "Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." This also applies to your child's school.

At school, your child receives an education, but he/she can also give something back. This giving back happens

when your child's presence makes the school a better place to be.

It's not as hard as you might think. Your middle schooler can give back to his/her school in many ways, including:

- Being respectful to adults and peers.
- Making his/her classes a better place to learn by paying attention, raising his/her hand to make a constructive comment and asking thoughtful questions.
- Following the school rules—even when no one is looking.

## Start Talking Before They Start Drinking

2nd Quarter  
Report Cards  
Mailed Home  
February 10,  
2010

While many teens drink alcohol, underage alcohol use is not inevitable. Families are not helpless to prevent it. The national campaign, *Start Talking Before They Start Drinking*, focuses on helping families direct their efforts on the factors that protect teens from alcohol use. In the first of a five-part series, check out some ways to help start the conversation with your teens about alcohol:

Talking With Your Teen About Alcohol Use:

- When you talk with your teens about drinking, listen to them and respect what they say.
- Make clear expectations that your teen will not drink.
- Teach your children about the dangers of underage drinking.
- Discuss laws about underage

drinking, including the age 21 law.

*U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, Office of the Surgeon General. (2007) The Surgeon General's Call to Action to Prevent and Reduce Underage Drinking.: A guide for Families.*

For information, please call the Drug Free Communities Support Program at 564-3366 or go to [www.stopalcoholabuse.gov](http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov)



**NOTICE TO PARENTS - We have begun sending electronic copies of all written messages to parents via our new Stafford parent distribution list. If you have not signed up for this list and would like to be added, a form to do so will be included with 2nd quarter report cards. We welcome feedback on this new service. Please send comments to [pamo@plattscsd.org](mailto:pamo@plattscsd.org).**

## Stafford Middle School's Family/School Organization News

This month's FSO meeting will begin with a very important and timely presentation by Ms. Mary Ann Cox, from NAMI-CV (National Alliance on Mental Illness of the Champlain Valley) to increase awareness on depression, anxiety disorders, bi-polar disorders in children as well as share available services. This very current and important discussion will begin at 6:00 PM in the SMS

Auditorium on February 3rd. Time for questions will also be provided. Please make plans to join us.

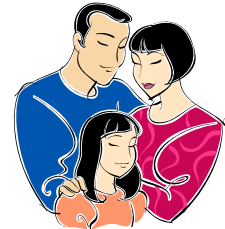
Other news from the FSO includes continued efforts by the group to raise funds through the various "free" projects that parents are encouraged to support. These include:

- Bottle Drop at Check-erhill Farms

- Campbell Soup Labels
- Box Tops for Education
- Papa John's Night 2nd Thursday of each month - 3-9PM

All of these efforts help raise funds for SMS students through the FSO sponsorship. Please participate if you can. Questions on these or any other FSO issues can be

addressed to the group's President, Robert Hall @ [robert.e.hall@charter.net](mailto:robert.e.hall@charter.net)



FSO needs parents' support at SMS.

## Community Open Swim Program Is Back!!

### PLATTSBURGH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

#### COMMUNITY OPEN SWIM PROGRAM IS BACK!!

- WHAT?** A 6 OR 7-WEEK PROGRAM OF OPEN SWIM FOR ALL ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS OFFERED IN AN EFFORT TO ENHANCE HEALTH, WELLNESS AND OVERALL PRODUCTIVITY.
- WHERE?** STAFFORD MIDDLE SCHOOL POOL
- WHEN?** FEB. 25, MARCH 4, 11, 17 (WED), 25, APRIL 1, 8 (?) 6:30-8:00 PM  
**{THE FIRST 15 MINUTES WILL BE FOR INTRODUCTORY SWIM LESSONS ONLY-LIMIT 6 SWIMMERS-FLOTATION DEVICES REQUIRED.}**
- COST?** \$.50 PER STUDENT AND \$1.00 PER ADULT  
 ALL PROCEEDS ARE USED TO PAY LIFEGUARDS/SUPERVISOR
- OTHER?** CERTIFIED LIFEGUARDS WILL BE ON THE PREMISES  
 MAXIMUM PARTICIPANTS ARE 50 ON A 1<sup>ST</sup> COME BASIS  
 ALL CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT & CHILDREN MAY NOT BE DROPPED OFF  
 MAXIMUM 3 CHILDREN TO 1 ADULT. NO EXCEPTIONS  
 SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN IN LOCKER ROOMS IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ACCOMPANYING ADULTS  
 INAPPROPRIATE AND UNSAFE BEHAVIOR WILL RESULT IN BEING BANNED FROM OPEN SWIM  
 APPROPRIATE SWIM ATTIRE ONLY-NO DIAPERS!!  
 APPROVED FLOTATION DEVICES MAY BE USED AND PROVIDED BY PARENT. WATER SHOES ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED  
 PERSONAL BELONGINGS ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF OWNER  
 IF A CHILD IS UNABLE TO SWIM HE/SHE MUST BE AT LEAST 46 INCHES IN HEIGHT, WEAR A FLOTATION DEVICE AND HAVE AN ADULT IN THE POOL WITH HIM/HER. NO EXCEPTIONS!
- SPONSORED BY:** EXCELLUS BCBS & PLATTSBURGH CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
- QUESTIONS?** KIM QUINN: [KQUINN@PLATTSCSD.ORG](mailto:KQUINN@PLATTSCSD.ORG) OR 957-6024

