

# HOLMES Highlights

A NEWSLETTER  
OF THE HOLMES  
JUNIOR HIGH  
SCHOOL PTA

[www.dcn.davis.ca.us/go/hjh](http://www.dcn.davis.ca.us/go/hjh)

April 2010 ♦ Issue 6

## Upcoming Events

- 4/5-4/9 Spring Break
- 4/12 Site Council Meeting, 4 - 6 p.m., Library
- 4/12 Positive School Climate Committee, 3:45 p.m.
- 4/14 Incoming 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Info Meeting, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m., MPR
- 4/20 Combined Jr. High and High School Band Concert, 7:30 p.m., DHS Auditorium,
- 4/22 PTA Meeting, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m., Library
- 4/23 Single Lunch for WEB Activities, lunch for all grades is 11:50 - 12:35
- 4/26-4/30 STAR Testing
- 4/30 Mid-quarter progress report ending period
- 5/5 All-District strings concert, 7:30 pm at Harper Jr. High
- 5/7 Single Lunch for Mix-It-Up Activities, lunch for all grades is 11:50 - 12:35
- 5/10 Positive School Climate Committee 10:00 a.m., Large Conference Room
- 5/10 Site Council Meeting, 4:00 – 6:00 p.m., Library
- 5/13 Combined Jr. High Orchestra and Elementary Band Concert, DHS Auditorium
- 5/19 Last Late Start Wednesday
- 5/2 International Day, Single Lunch from 11:28 – 12:28 for all students
- 5/21 School Dance, 7:30 – 10:00 p.m., MPR and Gym

-- **Debbie Martin,**  
**Vice Principal's**  
**Secretary**

## Attend April PTA Meeting To Elect New Board

### Proposed Holmes PTA Officers

The PTA Nominating Committee has been working hard to fill in PTA positions for 2010-2011. Officers for next year's PTA board were nominated at the March 25, 2010 PTA meeting, as follows:

President	Christina Dicker
Executive Vice President	Nancy Loeb Williams
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Shelley Bronzan
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Julia Grim
Secretary	Claire Cole
Treasurer	<i>open</i>
Auditor	Jennifer Raven
Historian	Rachel Aptekar
Parliamentarian	Anne Ternus Bellamy

Officers will be elected at the April 22, 2010 PTA meeting, starting at 7:00 p.m., in the Holmes library.

If you are interested in one of the many committee positions with next year's PTA (or want to challenge one of the nominees for an officer position), contact nominating committee chair Nancy Loeb Williams, [nloeb@csus.edu](mailto:nloeb@csus.edu). PTA is looking for committee chairs for: toy shop, hospitality, newsletter layout, webmaster, International Day, and drug and alcohol prevention.

## A Message from Your PTA President, Cathy Farman

### PTA Looks Forward To Next Year

There are only two more chances to participate in PTA meetings this year:

On April 22, at 7:00 p.m., we will have our most important meeting of the year — when we elect officers for next year's PTA.

On May 27, at 7:00 p.m., we will have our most fun meeting of the year — when we finish up remaining business and celebrate the end of a successful year for the PTA. Both will be in the Holmes library. I hope you will be there.

I want to acknowledge the efforts of some parents last month. Alison Broaddus and Becky Marigo took on the new job of career day coordinators and did it well. Anne Finkelston organized a thoughtful and well-attended

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## A Message From The Principal, Derek Brothers

# District Faces Challenging Times Ahead

It has become increasingly clear that our school will be facing challenging times in the months ahead. A decrease in funding will, inevitably, impact services, programs, and staffing for our school. As parents, teachers, staff members and administrators, our job is to make sure that our educational mission remains our top priority. As a community, we must keep our focus on our students and their welfare.

Our school district is facing serious budget reductions of \$5.6 million dollars in the coming year. This has many of us very concerned about the cuts that may have to be made. At the elementary grade level, the District may lay off 30 classroom teachers, increasing class sizes for all students and decreasing the support our students need, such as reading aides and office staff. The proposed cuts at the secondary level are just as severe, including 31 full-time core subject teachers, campus safety support and school counselors.

### **Layoffs**

It is my unfortunate duty to inform you that last month the district began issuing first notices of possible lay-off, or pink slips, to 149 of our valued employees. Though it is a process no one welcomes, I would like to provide you the opportunity to understand how it works.

Following the Board's adoption of a resolution to eliminate particular services for the 2010-11 school year, teaching and counseling (certificated) staff affected will receive three separate notices.

- The first notice must be received by March 15 and informs the employee that their services may not be required next year.
- The second notice informs them of their right to request a hearing, so they may be certain their rights to seniority are fully protected.
- The final notice, delivered by May 15, informs them that their employment with the district ends on June 30.

Secretaries, custodians and maintenance staff affected by layoffs will be noticed later in the year, in accordance with state requirements for classified staff.

I want to emphasize that these notices in no way reflect upon the district's appreciation for an employee's performance or their contribution to our children's education. Many wonderful teachers, counselors, secretaries and paraeducators will receive notices. We sincerely regret the impact this will have on them, their families and the entire school community. As a staff, we will work to make sure

students are protected from the negative consequences of this necessary process.

We hope that improved budget assumptions will allow us to rescind some of these notices. We continue to work collaboratively with our employees to negotiate salary concessions in exchange for furlough days next year. In addition, the early retirement incentive offered by the district will help mitigate the impact on our newer, less senior staff members.

### **The Davis Schools Foundation**

One way we can help is to support our local schools foundation. The Davis Schools Foundation is a nonprofit (501(c)(3)) organization set up specifically to address this type of budget challenge by raising funds to sustain vital programs and positions at all of DJUSD's K-12 schools. The foundation has no paid staff and over 95% of all of the contributions made to the foundation go directly to school programs and to fund school positions.

The Davis Schools Foundation is asking members of our community to contribute to its annual "Dollar a Day" campaign. For the upcoming school year, the Davis school district will receive \$650 less per child. If the foundation receives \$650 per child in the District, \$5.6 million would be provided to the District to prevent cuts (this equates to \$55/month per child). Alternatively, a \$365 donation per child would equate to \$3 million dollars to mitigate District cuts.

Not every family is able to contribute at these levels, so some people have donated to cover the campaign not only for their own children, but for others as well. Businesses, grandparents and others are also contributing. One possible idea would be to check with your employer to find out if they will match your donation (Genentech, for example, does this).

### **STAR Testing**

Your students will be involved in the state STAR testing program during the last week of April and first week of May. The battery of tests includes California Standards Tests (CST) which tests how well our students are learning the state standards in English/Language Arts, Math, Social Studies and Science. All students in the school will be taking tests each morning for 5 days for a total of more than 12 hours. We all know that the state and federal government use these tests to evaluate our schools and hold us accountable. Are the tests good for anything else?

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## Sober Spring Break

Parent groups at Davis high and junior high schools have launched an information campaign, aimed at informing the adult community of teen alcohol and drug use. Many families have signed the Davis Parents Do pledge:

- To host only alcohol-free, tobacco-free and drug-free parties for teens
- To discourage teens from consuming alcohol, tobacco or other drugs in my home; and
- To discourage my teen(s) from attending unsupervised parties.

We are looking for representatives to this joint parent group committee, especially from Harper and Holmes. We have an updated website and are also looking for a webmaster. If you are interested in helping, contact committee chair Cathy Farman at [clfarman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:clfarman@sbcglobal.net) or 750-0321.

Our parent tip for the month comes from [www.helpthemknow.com](http://www.helpthemknow.com):

Spring Break is highly anticipated for most children, as they look forward to some time off school. But for many parents this means kids at home alone or kids hanging out with their friends. In either case, supervision is the "key" to keeping your child safe, as research shows that *unsupervised tweens are three times more likely to engage in risky behaviors like smoking, drinking and using other drugs.*

Do your best to reserve some time with your child this break, even if it's just an evening at the movies or family game night at home .

## Parent's Valued

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Parent education presentation on student study skills. As always, the contribution each parent makes to Holmes is valued and appreciated – from getting your student to school and supporting him/her, to responding to teacher classroom needs, to volunteering with the PTA.

Thank you all and have a great Spring Break.

**Cathy Farman, Holmes PTA President**  
[clfarman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:clfarman@sbcglobal.net)

## Holmes PTA Votes to Support Davis Schools Foundation

At the March 25 PTA meeting, the Holmes PTA voted to support the fundraising efforts of the Davis Schools Foundation. DSF is trying to raise funds to close a budget gap in the Davis public schools for next year, estimated to be \$5.6 - 6.2 million. Currently, in order to solve the budget gap, DJUSD estimates it will eliminate 68 full-time teaching positions and 20 classified staff. Holmes PTA encourages all parents to learn more about DJUSD's current budget issues by going to [www.districtdollars.org](http://www.districtdollars.org) and to learn more about DSF by going to its website, [www.davisschoolsfoundation.org](http://www.davisschoolsfoundation.org).

## Staff Appreciation Week

May will be a busy month for the Hospitality Committee! It is our long-lived PTA tradition to shower Holmes teachers and staff with an outpouring of appreciation and thanks for all the hard work they do all year long.

The teachers and staff are all so dedicated and hard working. They make Holmes an exceptionally great place for our students. So, I invite anyone who would like to join the Hospitality Committee in providing an outstanding Staff Appreciation Week to please get in touch with me via email at [sallyalbertson@comcast.net](mailto:sallyalbertson@comcast.net). Please mark your calendars now: Staff Appreciation Week is May 3 through May 7. We will have a wide variety of ways for you to help – whether providing food, helping decorate, doing a small "project" at home, or providing a gift bag or gift card for our "daily drawing". Any help will be greatly appreciated!

Thank you to our parent community who so generously offers assistance each time we request something. You are always there to lend a hand or bake some cookies.. I hope to be in touch with many of you after Spring Break, to help coordinate the Staff Appreciation Week efforts!

-- **Sally Albertson & Alden Le Verrier, Co-Chairs,**  
**Hospitality Committee**

## Mulch and Weeds, Mulch and Weeds

Special thanks to the Alpha Phi Omega Fraternity for a total of 9 hours of work in our garden spaces in March! Garden Coordinator Debra Ariola has been organizing support for the gardens and grounds at Holmes. Woodchips are next on the agenda, now that we have several areas weeded. Mulch, Mulch, Mulch!

If you would like to help with the gardens, grounds or special projects at Holmes Junior High, please contact Debra at [davisgardens@sbcglobal.net](mailto:davisgardens@sbcglobal.net)

-- **Debra Ariola, School Garden Coordinator**

## Battle of the Books

Congratulations to the over 100 seventh graders who participated in this year's Holmes Junior High *Battle of the Books*. Thank you to Woodstock's Pizza for the pizza coupons and for providing the winning teams with a pizza party. Baskin Robbins also generously donated some free scoop passes. We could not have had such a successful event without the support of the teachers and parents. A special thank you to Mr. Williams' leadership class judges. We can't wait until next year!

We had two teams who tied for first place: TEAM 3: Katherine D., Zora D., Alaina K. and Katie K.  
TEAM 13: Hirra A., Alex A., Serena E., Grace R. and Louise J.

### Book Fair

Our Scholastic Book Fair in February was a huge success. We earned over \$1,100 in free books for the library and for students to use for library events (such as *Battle of the Books*). Thank you for your support. Our next Scholastic Book Fair will be in early May.

## Ready, Attention, Go!

At the recent Winter Olympics, we heard the commands the race starters used to start races. "Attention" seems to have replaced "set", so to keep current; we replaced "set" with "attention" as well in our track unit this Spring. Our track unit, which began before the Spring Break and concludes later in April, is an all-grade unit. We have students rotate through six stations. Students learn sprinting from starting blocks, relay racing, long and triple jumping, high jumping, hurdles, shot put and discus. We have school records at each grade level for each station, and students can challenge those records in class and at lunch. We finish the unit with relay races in each period.

Our track unit kicks off our most popular Holmes team sport, track and field, coached by Ms. Hogan and Mr. King. Our home meets are held on the new track and field at the high school which should result in some team records falling this year.

Fitness testing begins at the end of April and concludes in the first week of May. Students are tested for strength (push-ups and curl ups), endurance (mile run) and flexibility (trunk lift and sit/reach). Students' height, weight, and body mass index (BMI) are also recorded.

In May, the PTA and the Holmes PE are sponsoring the third-annual "Take a Hike" field trip for the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Permission slips will be coming home along with a reminder sheet that tells students what to bring and how to be prepared for the day. This trip has been well-received and highly attended in the past, so encourage your student to participate.

You can help the Holmes PE Department with donations of baseball gloves, socks for girls PE, tennis racquets, and a tug-of-war rope. Thanks for your help in the past and in the future.

-- Paul Rooney, PE

## News From the Math Department

### Competitive Mathematical Experience

MathCounts is a national organization which encourages competitive mathematical experience for any 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grader. The Holmes Mathcounts Team recently won the Team Component at our Regional Competition (held at Sac State in February). This was the 4th year in a row that Holmes has won the team round. This year was the closest, as we tied with Churchill Middle School, but we won it in the end in tie breakers. In addition, Vivian K. came in 2nd overall and Jasmine Z., 4th in the individual round. Our team of Vivian, Jasmine, Jacqueline L. and Richard G. qualified for the state competition at Stanford on March 20. Thanks to the PTA and Mrs. Farman for financially supporting our school's entry fees. Congratulations to all 12 mathletes who competed at Regionals!

-- Kristopher King, Math

### Pi Week Winners!

Thanks to the support of the PTA, the Holmes Math Department celebrated Pi Week (3.14) with daily trivia questions, digits of pi recitations and our own versions of Math Idol. We had hundreds of responses to the trivia questions. 30+ students recited multiple digits of pi. Grand winners recited 675! 521! and 278! Math Idol winners ranged from rap to a full chorus. We had a great time and thank PTA for their support.

Also, a big thank you to the parents who have donated one sided recycled paper. We have made good use of it and the card stock disappeared in less than an hour! We appreciate your help in saving our budget as well as going green

-- Pat King, Math

## Donations Now Could Save Jobs

As you all know, the Davis Joint Unified School District is facing very difficult budget times. The Davis Schools Foundation, a non-profit (501(c)(3) organization, is set up to specifically address the type of budget challenge we are facing. The following are just a few ways that our students in grades 7-12 will be impacted:

- Students will face larger class sizes
- There will be fewer core and elective course offerings
- There will be fewer counselors (Just one at Holmes Junior High!)
- Students in seventh grade will have a six period day. All other secondary grades will have seven periods.)
- Campus supervision will be reduced!
- Office staff time will be cut, so services for students, parents and staff will be reduced.
- Janitorial services will be cut.

There are many changes that will take place in years to come.... How can you help? Please make a donation to the Davis Schools Foundation! There is a "Little Red Schoolhouse" in the front office. You can make a donation there at any time! You may also make a secure donation online at: [www.davisschoolsfoundation.org](http://www.davisschoolsfoundation.org). You may make a donation at the DSF table at the Farmers Market any Wednesday or Saturday by May 1. You may send a donation to: Davis Schools Foundation PO Box 1154, Davis, CA 95617. Finally, your student may bring your family's donation to school on Wednesday, April 28. On that day, he/she will be entered in a drawing to win a pizza lunch with Mr. Brothers! This will include three friends of the winning student.

Please consider making a donation!

-- Alison Broaddus, HJH Parent Liaison to DSF

## Principal's Message

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They do give us information. They provide teachers, students and parents with one measure, (certainly not the only one), of how well each student is progressing with the state curriculum. They also provide the school with information that we regularly use as part of the picture when we assess the appropriateness for student placement in certain programs (some high level, some interventions). Teachers will be able to review these scores at the beginning of the year to know more about their students as they plan instruction based upon skills and previous understandings. Teachers also pay attention to how well our students as a whole are progressing with the standards, and they work together to align their curriculum and instruction with the standards that are tested.

On the whole the Holmes staff tries to reduce pressure and anxiety about STAR tests and does not devote instructional time to test preparation except to provide a strong instructional program throughout the year. Although the commitment of time and resources to STAR testing is significant, the development of state standards and the testing program has resulted in increasing consistency in curriculum between different classrooms within schools and across the state.

Thanks for your support of Holmes Junior High.

-- Principal Derek Brothers

## Help Plan International Day

Calling all volunteers who would like to assist on Friday, May 14, anytime between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. We are in the planning stages of International Day and need volunteers to assist with the set-up, clean-up and food sales.

This is an awesome event where the students are able to experience delectable treats and entertainment from around the world. For those of you unable to assist on the day of the event, we are also in need of donations. Please see the list below and contact Kim Cornelious at [kimbernc@wellsfargo.com](mailto:kimbernc@wellsfargo.com) for additional details and donation drop-off information. Thank you.

### Donation Items:

- Cases of bottled water
- Garments from various countries and other representative items
- Large ice chests

-- Kimberly Cornelious,  
International Day Chair

## Parent Education

Wed., April 14, 2010 —  
Community College Options  
Don Palm, Dean Sacramento City  
College Davis Campus  
7:30 p.m.

Davis High School MPR  
315 W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street, Davis

Dean Palm will give parents an overview of the opportunities community colleges offer students. His talk will cover how community college certificates can lead students into certain career paths, as well as into other forms of higher education. For information, contact Eve Dunaway, [edunaway@sbcglobal.net](mailto:edunaway@sbcglobal.net).

## Career Day a Success

A huge thanks goes out to an amazing group of parents who donated their time to welcome over 50 speakers on Career Day, Friday, March 5. This event is organized by the Davis Chamber of Commerce, with the Holmes PTA organizing the welcome reception.

Families donated baked goods, fruit and drinks to nourish the speakers. There were also parents who volunteered their time to welcome and check in the speakers as they arrived. Energetic students from Mr. Williams' Leadership Class were on tap to greet and escort speakers as well. A warm thanks is extended to Bill Grabert, Kim Beck, Susan Strachan, Lesli Chuck, Carolee Gregg, Lisa Haas, Katja Greve, Kristen Muir, Malene Jensen, Kristy Powell, Wendy Weitzel, Christina Adamson, Tracy Fauver, and Liz Magnussun.

-- **Becky Marigo and Alison Broaddus, Career Day Co-Chairs**

## Track and Field

Practice starts the Monday after Spring Break (April 12). Practices will be held Monday through Thursdays from ~3:45-5:15 p.m. We will have meets on either Wednesdays or Thursdays depending on the week. The season ends with an all-league meet on Thursday May 20. We will also be hosting a meet on Wednesday May 12 and would greatly appreciate any and all parent volunteers. For information, please contact Miss Hogan at [khogan@djUSD.k12.ca.us](mailto:khogan@djUSD.k12.ca.us)

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