

HOLMES Highlights

A NEWSLETTER
OF THE HOLMES
JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL PTA

www.dcn.davis.ca.us/go/hjh

December-January 2009/10 ♦ Issue

Upcoming Events

- 12/1 Choir and Band Winter Concert, 7 p.m., Performing Arts Building, Davis High School
- 12/3 PTA Meeting, 7-9 p.m., library
- 12/4 Mid-quarter progress report ending period
- 12/7 9th Grade Secrets assembly
- 12/11 Single Lunch Leadership activity, lunch for all grades 11:50-12:35 p.m.
- 12/11 School Dance, 7:30-10 p.m., multipurpose room and gym
- 12/11 Holmes Parent Social, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Room B-19
- 12/14 Site Council meeting, 4-6 p.m., library
- 12/14 Holmes Toy Shop, 6-8 p.m., room G-45
- 12/15 Jazz Concert, 7 p.m., multipurpose room
- 12/16 Junior High School Combined Orchestra Winter Concert, 7 p.m., Performing Arts Building, Davis High School
- 12/21-1/1 Winter Break – no school
- 1/4 School resumes
- 1/7-1/10 “The Taming of the Shrew” performances, multipurpose room
- 1/11 Positive School Climate Committee, 10 a.m., large conference room
- 1/11 Site Council Meeting, 4-6 p.m., library
- 1/18 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday – no school
- 1/22 End of quarter 2/semester 1
- 1/22 Single Lunch for WEB activities; lunch is 11:50-12:35
- 1/23 Junior High/Elementary Strings Workshop at Emerson
- 1/25 Teacher Work Day – no school for Junior High students

A Message from the Principal, Derek Brothers

Sensitivity Remains Important

Although this time of year can be uplifting and exciting for most of us, we need to remember that for some, the holidays are very difficult. Some of our students may be living with painful loss, poverty, mental illness, or crisis in their families. It is very hard for these young people to hear about the family trips, holiday gifts and other benefits that so many others enjoy at this time of year. This might be a good time to help our young adolescents not only appreciate and value the privileges they enjoy, but also remain sensitive to the struggles of others. As we take time to celebrate the holidays let us remember that our families are our support systems, and we should always be working on keeping that system strong.

Student Connectedness

The Holmes staff is continuing to focus on the following guiding principles as we work on the goal of student connectedness at our school:

- ✓ Students are connected and motivated
- ✓ Interactions and relationships at our school are respectful
- ✓ Students are successful at learning the knowledge and skills they need for the future

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A Message from Your PTA President, Cathy Farman

Holiday Generosity and Compassion

Our un-Fundraiser, Holmes PTA's only fundraiser of the year, had an end date of November 20. My thanks to parent Carolee Gregg and her group of volunteer envelope stuffers who put this (the PTA's only) fundraising effort together. If you haven't sent in a check yet, please do so if you can afford to. Think of it as a way to say thank you this holiday season to the Holmes teachers who work so hard to educate your student(s).

State funding for education continues to be the primary issue facing our school district. Superintendent Dr. James Hammond and his staff are diligently working to identify an additional \$3.5 million that will have to be cut from our school district budget for the 2010-11 school year. As always, the district's goals are to maintain fiscal solvency, maintain existing programs, and ensure student safety.

Principal's Message

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This year, during some of our meetings, the staff will be discussing ways to support our students through the various stresses and pressures they experience in early adolescence.

Un-Fundraiser

Thanks to our generous parent community, the PTA Un-fundraiser hopes to raise over \$10,000 to help support the following activities:

- 7th grade social studies field trip to see a reenactment of the Renaissance Period
- 8th grade social studies field trip to see a reenactment of the Civil War
- 9th Graders take a hike. The Holmes Physical Education Department is sponsoring a 9th grade Day Hike. Students will be invited to spend the day hiking in Marin County. This activity meets some of our California PE Standards for Grade 9.

- Speaker from the Museum of Tolerance
Matthew Boeger is the general manager of operations at the Museum of Tolerance and will speak about his past experiences when he was beaten up and left for dead in an alley in Los Angeles. This occurred after he was thrown out by his mother when he "came out" to her at thirteen years of age.

The video/documentary about his story was shown on *Oprah* as well as at the Museum, and there is a new book that details his story and the coincidental meeting of his abuser, Tim Zaal, a neo-Nazi, who changed his violent views after he became a father. Many years later, both men become fellow docents at the Museum of Tolerance and to their surprise, met each other.

They both speak about the importance of forgiveness, and how hatred, when it is held close to the heart, "chains" the body and prevents that person from moving on.

I want to thank all of you who have taken time out of your busy schedule to support and participate in the many Holmes activities. I feel fortunate to work with such a positive and generous community of parents, students and staff

News from Attendance and Vice Principal's Office

Happy Holidays from all of us in the Attendance Office! We hope you all have a safe and restful holiday and are ready to welcome in the New Year. January is a busy month for students in their classrooms because they are often working on end-of-semester projects and exams. The semester ends on January 22, 2010.

Parent Education Nights

Please consider attending one of the Junior High Parent Education Nights planned and presented by our very supportive Davis Police officers. Detective Trease Petersen has taken the lead on these informative sessions, and we hope you may be able to attend at least one of them this year.

The final two presentations are January 28 and April 22 from 7-8:30 pm. The January 28

topic is "What You Should Know about Inhalants, Alcohol and Marijuana". The April 22 presentation is at Harper and the topic is "Dangers of Over-the-Counter Drugs, Prescription Medications and Ecstasy."

We Need your Help

Thank you very much to all of you who remembered to call in absences each day your student was absent in 2009. Please continue to do this in 2010!

We really appreciate your efforts to keep our attendance records current. Each day your son or daughter is absent you do need to call in with an explanation about why he/she is absent. The attendance line is (530) 757-5445. You can also write an email to Cheryl Ozga, our Attendance Secretary, explaining why your student is missing school. Her email is: cozga@djUSD.k12.ca.us. Students can also bring in a note

Education Code asks all of us to explain absences within 3 days. After that, unexplained absences are classified as permanent.

How Is the Weather at Holmes?

Each month our Holmes Climate Committee meets to discuss how we can support all students at Holmes. Parents, students and staff are invited.

Our goal is to promote activities and programs that keep our weather calm, safe and pleasant, which promotes a healthy learning environment. Please feel free to join us at our next meeting which is on Monday, January 11, at 10:00 a.m. in the Holmes Office.

We will have an update on how the Safe School Ambassadors Program is going and will also hear about the outcome of our first Mix-It-Up Lunch, which was on November 20.

From Your PTA President

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The primary mechanism by which DJUSD receives state funding for education is through the payment of ADA (average daily attendance) dollars. Our district gets about \$40 per student per day, as measured by our ADA. When a student is absent, whether excused or unexcused, our ADA goes down and our district loses money.

The district expects and plans for student absences due to illness or family emergencies. But absences due to family vacations take an unnecessary bite out of our district budget. If half the students in the district are absent one day due to vacation, then the district loses \$176,000 for the school year. That may not sound like much, but that would fund 1 full-time teacher, 1 counselor, 1 secretary and a half-time custodian. Keep this in mind if you are considering extending your vacation plans into school days this holiday season. And if

your vacation does take your student away from school, please think about donating lost revenues back to the school.

The next PTA newsletter will arrive in your mailboxes by February 1, 2010. In the meantime, if you have any comments or questions, please contact me at 750-0321 or visit clfarman@sbcglobal.net.

Remember to show everyone you meet an ounce of extra compassion this holiday season -- you never know the stress others are under. And if you need support this holiday -- either financial or emotional -- I wish you the strength to ask for it. We have an amazingly generous community but we don't always know who needs our help.

-- Cathy Farman

Flu Clinic

The Davis community is invited to take advantage of the seasonal flu clinic scheduled for Wednesday, December 16, 2009, from 2-5 p.m. on the DHS campus (315 W. 14th Street).

Davis High School PTA is hosting this clinic, and the hours of the clinic can be extended if we have a large response. Location on campus is TBD. This clinic is sponsored by National PTA through Flu Busters.

To take part in this clinic please visit the website

www.flubusters.com/pta and pre register and pre-pay. You will be given an appointment window for your vaccine. Students can only receive a vaccine with a signed waiver and a parent in attendance. More information can be found on the flubusters.com website or DHS PTA website www.dhspta.org.

Nurses or doctors interested in volunteering for this clinic, please contact PTA president Lea Darrah darrahs@yahoo.com.

Un-Fundraiser Update

Thanks to 100 families who have donated to the Un-Fundraiser, we are over 70% of the way to achieving our goal of \$10,000! Over \$7,000 in donations has been received, and many thanks go to those who have given so generously. If you haven't yet had the chance to donate, donations are still being accepted. Donation forms are available at the HJH attendance office, by emailing clbgregg@aol.com, or you can just mail a check to HJH PTA, c/o Holmes Jr. High, 1220 Drexel Dr., Davis, 95616-2123, with a notation of Un-fundraiser on the check.

A new and easy way to help raise funds for this Un-Fundraiser is to check to see if your employer offers a charitable donation matching fund program. If you're not sure, ask your employer or your HR department. Even if you donated earlier this fall, you can still do this. The Holmes PTA non-profit tax ID number is 237-08-4131. As an added incentive, anyone who contributes via this matching fund program by December 31 will be entered in a drawing to win a \$20 Starbucks gift card!

The funds go toward curriculum-based activities for each grade level. These unique educational opportunities cannot happen without these donations. Specifically, the funds will be used for:

- A class-wide 7th grade Renaissance Day
- A class-wide 8th grade Civil War Reenactment Day
- The annual 9th grade all-day hike at Mt. Tamalpais

In addition, Un-Fundraiser money sponsors a school-wide assembly with a guest speaker who brings a personal and powerful message of tolerance.

Each of these activities has been requested by the teaching staff, who best knows how greatly these activities will enhance the learning that goes on in the classroom throughout the year. Please consider donating to the Holmes Un-Fundraiser today!

Library News

Students and staff can earn money for the February Scholastic Book Fair in the library by writing a book review on a book in our library. Students and staff can earn \$2 per book review, up to \$6. "Reward" money will be given out in Scholastic book dollars, and reviews will be posted in the library. The program runs November 15 through December 15.

Displays in Library

Please stop by to see some of the wonderful displays we have in the library:

- In honor of Native American month (November), the library has books on display as well as information about locals Frank LaPena and Jack D. Forbes
- Thank you to Ms. Leveque's art classes for their inspiring character masks and wire sculpture
- AVID students, for sharing your college and university pennants you worked so hard on in Ms. Sabot's class
- The International Club display celebrates Diwali, an Indian festival of lights celebrated in the fall.

Adopt-A-Book

Also, we have a list of books in the library that could use your help. Please consider donating these books, new or used, to our library. Please stop by for a look at the list.

-- Amy Labson, Librarian

Reminders

This is a reminder to parents to check those backpacks for school supplies. Paper, pencils, pens, etc seem to be disappearing quickly.

-- Pat King, math

Ms. Quenon's December trip to the Academy of Sciences has been cancelled.

Students Come Together

On November 12 and 13 forty-one SSA (Safe School Ambassadors) and five family leaders, including Mike Dufresne volunteering, participated in two days of training. The purpose was to teach Holmes student ambassadors 1) how to support each Holmes student in developing positive interactions with all students on campus, 2) how to defuse acts of bullying, exclusion, and vandalism to school property, and 3) how to foster positive communication between all school "groups."

Students took part in simulations of harassment, bullying, and exclusions; watched videos; and scripted dialogues on how they can interact with their peers in setting examples for Holmes students. After the training, students commented in their evaluations on how they "never felt they would have interacted with someone from that group, let alone become friends", and how they "would work to help Holmes become a safer place for all to be."

SSA family groups, comprised of 6-8 students and one family leader, meet bimonthly to discuss concerns and role play situations. Family groups help ambassadors deal more effectively with their peers and enable them to bond as leaders while demonstrating positive role modeling. Family leaders for 2009-2010 school year Deanna Leveque, Kerin Kelleher, Jennifer Sommer, Lisa Mowry, Joanna Littell, and Georgene Fritz want to thank the Holmes PTA for providing the funding to make this two-day training available to students. The ambassadors will continue to play a key role in making Holmes a safer place to be!

Dancing into the New Year

All grade levels will be dancing in the month of January in Physical Education. Our 7th graders will be learning folk dances from around the world, complementing the 7th grade social studies curriculum. Seventh graders will also learn the swing dance. We teach students the swing all three years, so by the time they exit for Davis High, they are top-level swing dancers. Our 8th grade students learn square dancing, complementing the 8th grade study of U.S. history. By the end of the unit, 8th graders can swing their partners as well as any square dancer in Davis. Our 9th graders learn social (couples) dancing from around the world, complimenting the 9th grade English curriculum which focuses on the classics of literature. Ninth graders also learn a special dance that they perform for the school at the end of the unit. This year's selection is "Jai Ho", the dance finale of the film "Slumdog Millionaire."

Plans for the P.E. Department-sponsored "9th Grade Take a Hike Day" are taking shape. Ninth graders will be hiking in Marin County on Tuesday, May 18. This is our third year sponsoring a day hike field trip, and it keeps getting better. The PTA has stepped up again as financial sponsors of the event through the Holmes Un-Fundraiser.

The P.E. Department is interested in donations of baseball gloves, socks, and a large, tug-o-war rope. You can drop off donations marked for "PE" in the main office during normal business hours. As always, thank you for your support of our department - we really

PTA UPDATES

Attention Shoppers

If you don't have a scrip card, get one! If you have one but it's lost in your wallet, find it and use it!

Participating in one or all of these institutions' generous programs does not cost you a dime, but cumulatively could generate some serious cash - IF YOU PARTICIPATE. So far this school year, these programs have added just over \$4,200 to your PTA's coffers – that's \$4,200 that will be used to support our kids and our school. But here's the rub: \$4,200 is only about 30 percent of the \$14,700 that our school assumes (hopes) will be there to support the library, for International Day, staff education and hospitality, drug and alcohol prevention, campus beautification and more. We're about one-third of the way through our school year, so we're running at or below our target.

Signing up is easy:

- **Safeway:** Register online at <http://www.escrip.com/> for an eScrip card which can be used at Safeway, as well as a host of other merchants (holiday shopping anyone?). Click on the "about the program" tab, then click the "Sign up Now!" link and you're on your way. The Group ID for Holmes is 137700004.
- **Nugget:** Next time you're amicably chatting with the clerk as he/she is scanning your groceries at Nugget, ask for an application for Scrip. It's a short form that takes just a few minutes to complete.
- **SaveMart:** Contact Holmes parent and program contact Wilda Knoesen at knoesen@yahoo.com to get your SaveMart S.H.A.R.E.S. Program card.

Contact Julia Grim at glen_julia_julian@sbcglobal.net or 753-8932 and she'll be happy to help you help Holmes.

"Growing" Concerns

Our new Holmes Garden Club is getting a late start, but is joining forces with the Service Club in the sharing of projects this fall. There was a great harvest of summer vegetables including zucchini, tomatoes, basil and chard.

We'll be meeting Wednesdays after school. We've been weeding and planting, and are finding that having groups "Adopt a Garden" is working out well! There are many areas around campus that need improvement and keeping the gardens that we have tidy is the first step towards progress. Please consider adopting an area to work on weekends or after school!

Holmes has the opportunity for the addition of as many as ten large boulders on campus! We want these "sitting rocks" just south of the gym and the lunch tables to provide additional seating and to make better use of the area. Debra Ariola (our new Garden Coordinator) will be organizing the project, but we are looking for help with the installation of these beautiful greenstone boulders. Please let either Debra Ariola (400-3652) or Mr. Brothers know if you can help with this project!

Holmes Parent Social

The Holmes PTA and Climate Committee are organizing another chance for Holmes parents to meet and talk, just after the winter dance starts. Come meet other parents, find out what's happening on and off campus. Come with questions, ideas, or just come to socialize. We look forward to seeing you there, December 11, 7:30-8:30 p.m., at Holmes, in room B-19 (near the east bike racks at the front of the school and across from the attendance office). If you have questions, contact PTA President Cathy Farman, at 750-0321 or clfarman@sbcglobal.net

Parent Community Book Project

The Parent Education Committee is organizing groups to read and discuss *The Price of Privilege* by Madeline Levine, PhD. This book is a thoughtfully written analysis of the plight of teens in the middle- and upper-middle class suburbs. Dr. Levine was a practicing youth psychologist who noticed that her patients seemed disconnected from their communities and felt "empty". Others teens were seriously depressed and self-destructive. She spoke to colleagues around the country and found that this phenomenon was widespread and that this community of children is at risk for serious psychological problems, developmental setbacks, and substance abuse issues. If you've ever wondered why "kids who have so much can feel empty" or "how affluence can get in the way of emotional development", this book will answer your questions in a sensitive and informative tone.

We look forward to reading and discussing the book this winter and hope you'll join us! Look for more information about groups in the January newsletter. If you're interested in hosting a group, please contact me!

-- Trish Price trish@notsonoblepath.com

Counselors' Corner

Two Independent Options for 7th-Grade Health

The 7th grade Exploratory Cluster of elective courses includes a required quarter-long health course. Students who take both music and foreign language classes in 7th grade may waive taking the Health 7 class during the school year but are still required to complete it before entering 9th grade.

There are two independent options available to fulfill this requirement:

One option is a variety of assignments and activities in eight different topic areas, including communication, problem solving and refusal skills. When completed, the health course

teacher will review the work and verify satisfactory completion. Details about this option are available in the counseling office.

Another option is to complete the on-line course "Health 31: Seventh and Eighth Grade Health Education" offered through Brigham Young University Independent Study (www.byu.edu). This is designed as a semester-long class and includes family life topics. There is tuition and materials fee for this course and the final must be proctored. Proof of successful course completion should be brought to the counseling office. Students choosing this option will

still be required to participate in the two-week course on family life that is taught in 8th grade science classes.

Academic Talent Search Testing

In summer 2010, Sacramento State's Academic Talent Search (ATS) will offer 4th through 9th grade students the opportunity to take accelerated classes in a collegiate environment. The ATS qualifying exam will be given for students in grades 6-9 at Holmes on Tuesday, February 9th, at 3:30pm. Sign-up forms, fee waiver forms (the fee is \$15), and additional information are available in the counseling office and at <http://edweb.csus.edu/Projects/ats>

Parent Education Evenings Planned

The Secondary Schools Parent Education Committee (a joint project of Da Vinci Charter Academy, Davis High, Emerson Junior High, Harper Junior High, and Holmes Junior High parent groups) is planning a full year of parent education nights. Some of the dates have changed since our last announcement, so be sure to mark your calendars for:

Wed, February 10, 2010—Time Management for Teens
7:00 p.m.
Holmes Junior High School MPR

Wed, March 10, 2010—Making a Connection: Talking to Your Teen about Sex
Sue Simonson, Pregnancy Prevention and Teen Sexuality Educator
7:00 p.m.
Harper Junior High School MPR

This event is generously sponsored by Sutter West Medical Group and includes teen presenters, as well as the adult presenter. Parents hear from a teen as to the real sexual pressures teens face and how early that pressure begins. Parents learn assertiveness skills to teach their teens through a

continued reality of STDs including AIDS and the risks of oral sex is presented to raise parents' awareness and knowledge. Parents are taught skills on how to keep the door of communication open in their home and help guide their teen toward healthy sexual decisions.

Wed, April 7, 2010—Community College Options

Don Palm, Dean Sacramento City College Davis Campus
7:30 p.m.
Davis High School MPR

If you have any questions or would like to help organize these or future parent education events, please contact a parent education committee member:

Davis High PTA Coordinator, Eve Dunaway.
edunaway@sbcglobal.net;

Emerson Junior High PTA Coordinator, Anne Happel, atnchappel@gmail.com;

Holmes Junior High PTA Coordinator, Anne Finkelston, afinkelston@sbcglobal.net;

Harper Junior High PTO, Ann Moylan,

Parents Who Host Lose the Most

At the end of October, the Secondary Schools Parent Education Group sent out a listserv announcement advising parents that some prime party days were just ahead—Articulation (minimum) Day and Homecoming. Our committee members heard of many parties on these days, and more on Halloween. Did you take any steps to secure your supply of alcohol? Did you hold your teen accountable for his/her location at all times? If not, you have another chance because the holidays are here! Our teens have lots of free, unsupervised time. And once again, many of them are ready to party! Again, we challenge you--what will you do to prevent the teens you know from partying over the holidays?

Insist on knowing where your teen is. Ask for a landline number if you don't know the home where your teen is going, and call it to make sure a parent is supervising the gathering of teens. Count your bottles of beer and mark the levels of open bottles of alcohol. Lock your prescription drugs. Even if your teen isn't using, you may be an unwitting supplier to other students who know you don't keep track of your drugs and alcohol. Open your home to teens that want to gather and supervise the party. And most importantly, make your expectations clear with your student: no drugs, no drinking.

Parent Tip (from HelpThemKnow.com): Make it easy for your child to leave a place where substances are being used. Discuss in advance how to contact you or another designated adult in order to get a ride home. If another adult provides the transportation, be up and available to talk about the incident when your child arrives home.

Discussion Topic with Your Teen: Brainstorm situations they might need to get out of and how they

would do so. Assure your student if they call for a ride, you will give it to them **no questions asked**. It might be awkward for them to explain the situation over the phone. Perhaps you might want to come up with a codeword with your teen—for them to use when they are in a bad situation and need to get out fast.

We challenge you -- what will you do to prevent the teens you know from partying over the holidays?

To put your name on a list of Davis families committed to stopping teen drinking and drug use, or to find out more about the Secondary School Parent Education Group's public information campaign, check out DavisParentsDo.org. If you have questions or would like to join this committee, please contact a committee member:

Cathy Farman, cfarman@sbcglobal.net

Cathy Sacks, cjsacks@comcast.net

Ellen Mark, ellenmark89@yahoo.com

Mary James, jamesclan@sbcglobal.net

Remember: It is illegal, unsafe and unhealthy for anyone under 21 to drink alcohol. For more information about the *Parents Who Host Lose the Most: Don't be a Party to Teenage Drinking* public information campaign, go to www.drugfreeactionalliance.org.

Also check out www.dontserveteens.com, for good information about why and how to prevent teen drinking.

Blue Devil Pride

Davis High Stadium is being renovated . . . after 50 years of faithful service to the community and to generations of Davis Blue Devils, Halden Field has finally undergone some major modernization, but there is still work to be done.

The bleachers, bathrooms and concessions need serious capacity, function and accessibility overhauls. So think "Blue Devil Pride" . . . not just for yourself but for the generations to come, and give generously to finish the project. Be part of the future, part of the Big Blue Machine and give today. Visit www.dhsblueandwhite.org and find out how you too can be part of the solution. Go Blue Devils!

Hospitality Help

The Hospitality Committee is recruiting volunteers to help with the various hospitality events which take place at Holmes throughout the year. If you are interested in helping with one of the staff appreciation lunches (January 25 and June 11), or with staff appreciation week (May 3-7, 2010), please contact either Alden LeVerrier or Sally Albertson if you would like to join our team. Thank you.

Drama Club Presents *The Taming of the Shrew*

The Holmes Junior High School Drama Club will proudly present *The Taming of the Shrew* by William Shakespeare on January 7, 8, 9, and 10 in the Holmes Multipurpose Room. Performances are at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and at 2 p.m. on Sunday. Tickets are \$5 and can be purchased at the door.

This production sets the play in America in the 1950's, and puts the action of the play, with its focus on the battle of the sexes, against the backdrop of cold war America, with its emphasis on gender roles. It specifically comments on the role of women and on the painful choices and personal sacrifices women were forced to make in a sexist society.

Please come out and support these young people as they perform in this compelling and entertaining production.

-- Jeff Bryant, Drama Club

Sound Bite

The 7th, 8th, and 9th grade Davis bands, under the direction of Clyde Quick, performed in the delightful formal Winter Concert on Tuesday, December 1 in the Davis High School's glorious Performing Arts Center. The program also included the meltingly lovely songs of the choir, singing under the direction of Bill Zinn. The audience brought a sense of sentimentality, nostalgia and love of the fleeting joys of childhood, and thoroughly enjoyed an evening of music.

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