

# Lapham Lookout Elementary

#3 Nov 2008

Lapham Elementary School  
1045 East Dayton St.  
Madison, WI 53703

Dr. Michael Hertting  
Principal

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Dear Parents:

The first quarter is almost over and parent/teacher conferences are just around the corner. It is my hope that everything is going well for your child. Parent conferences are a wonderful way for us to communicate and work with parents. It is my hope that we get 100% attendance at our conferences. Please feel free to contact your child's teachers if you need a different time.

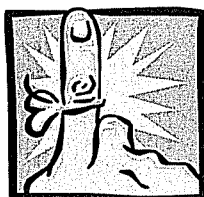
The winds of November also arrive on our playground, although not too often. Please be sure your child is dressed for the weather. We go out every day and rarely stay inside during the winter. We know that our children have better days when they have had a chance to run around outside.

We invite all parents to have lunch with their child on Friday, November 14, 2008. This is a day after conferences and the Alternatives will not be in session. We are asking parents to bring a sack lunch for themselves. We are hoping parents will not bring in fast food as a special treat for your child or yourself as it causes other children sadness if they do not get the same. This is the first time we are trying this lunch. More information will be sent as it gets closer. We likely will have our second graders eat lunch later on the day so we have room for everyone.

Last month I presented an assembly to our students. The theme of the assembly was responsibility. This is part of our Above the Line program. We defined and presented examples of students being responsible. We also showed a short piece of video on Unicef to our students. We finished by singing our Lapham song. I hope your child talked to you about this assembly. Our students were an excellent audience.

Have a great November and I hope to see all of you sometime in the next month.

Your Principal, Mike Hertting



### Dates To Remember

Nov 10	Windy City performance 8:30 in Aud.
Nov 11	2nd grade field trip to the Planetarium
Nov 11	PTG meeting—6:30pm Lapham
Nov 13	No School Parent Teacher Conferences
Nov 27 & 28	No School Thanksgiving Break

## Questions and Answers



**Why does Lapham start so early at 7:40?** The start time is another item affected by budget issues. In the past many schools had their own bus routes. A particular bus served just one school morning and afternoon. In an effort to save money MMSD moved to one bus having two routes each morning and afternoon. That means several schools must start early and several start late. We are an early start school and after our routes all of our buses go to routes in the Frank Allis attendance area. Many districts across the state have buses doing more than one route each day.

**Who should I contact if my child is having trouble on the school bus?** If you meet the driver on a regular basis you can talk with the driver. If the problem is with another student or driver, please call Dr. Hertting. Our buses have attendants on them and we rarely hear about problems on the bus or receive bus discipline reports.

## Fire Prevention Month

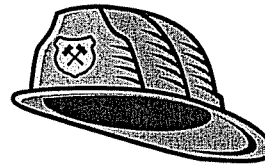
While much of Wisconsin zeroed in on the Milwaukee Brewers entry into the playoffs, the City of Madison Fire Department took that theme to Madison's elementary schools for Fire Prevention Month. The Department's Community Education Unit brought a miniature baseball diamond set up with "coaches" at each base to share information on key safety concepts. The ultimate goal – just as in baseball – is to be "Safe at Home".

Students began "on deck" at the Hazard House, moving on to the batter's box for a safety question. A correct answer gave them a "base hit" sending them down the first base path where they crawled low under simulated smoke. Students were also able to practice making a call to 9-1-1.

Red Cross warmed everyone up in the "bullpen" with information on items to be included in an emergency kit.

Please work with your children at home to ensure that all smoke alarms are working, and that your family has an escape plan and a meeting place. Then take time to practice your plan with your whole family to make sure that you are always **Safe at Home**.

Lori Wirth Community Education Officer  
City of Madison Fire Department  
325 West Johnson Street  
Madison, WI 53703



## Wish List



**Plywood or Lumber for shelves** – we want to add additional shelves for paper storage in our lounge. They can be either 12 x 30.25 or 21x 34. We can cut them if they are larger pieces.

**Extra Mittens, Snowpants, Hats** - we use these both for children who do not have any and also when students lose theirs and need a loaner set.

## Meet Mark Richner!

As the saying goes, "Allow me to introduce myself." My name is Mark Richner and I am excited to be teaching second grade at Lapham School this year. I love working with kids!

My path to teaching is different than some. I returned to Madison four years ago to study education at the University of Wisconsin after working in a northern Minnesota wilderness area, doing conservation work out West, and completing a bachelor's degree in journalism. These were important experiences, which I believe bring some unique perspectives to teaching.

I am drawn to teaching, because I think that this profession is an important way for me to be a useful part of the community and make a difference with young people as they develop the knowledge and skills needed for academic achievement and a successful life.

A main emphasis of this room is helping the kids become strategic learners. My goal as a teacher is not only to help kids understand and master the prescribed curriculum, but I want them to be independent, curious learners as well. One area of my current interest is using art as a teaching tool.

## **Mark Your Calendars!**

**Thursday, December 11, 2008**  
Talented and Gifted Education Parent Meeting

Jackie Drummer, Wisconsin Association for Talented and Gifted (WATG) President and South Milwaukee educator, will be the guest speaker at a meeting on Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:00 PM in the O'Keeffe Middle School all-purpose room at 510 S. Thornton Ave on Madison's near east side. The topic of her presentation will be "Advocacy: Making It Happen for Gifted Kids Now" and will examine why the time is ripe for gifted education advocacy and what to do about it.



This prestigious recognition is presented annually to employees, citizens and students.

## 2009 MMSD Recognition Awards

Now accepting nominations

**Nomination Deadline  
January 21, 2009**

[www.mmsd.org/awards](http://www.mmsd.org/awards)  
for information and nomination forms

### Lost and Found

The next time you are at school, please check our lost and found which is under a long bench near the auditorium. You would be amazed at how much we collect during the year. Each semester we deliver about three to four bags full of items to St. Vincents. Items at Lapham are rarely stolen, but often forgotten or misplaced. Occasionally we do throw out a lunch box when the odor is unbearable. Making sure your child's name is on the inside of his/her belongings is helpful.

### From the Health Office:

Lapham will be having the annual vision screening in November, and hearing screening on December 3, for kindergarteners. If a student does not pass the initial screening, the student will be retested at school at another date. A parent will be notified of any vision or hearing concerns found after the second screening either by mail or phone call.

We welcome parent volunteers to help the health office staff, in the morning, on the hearing screening date of December 3. If interested, please call Nancie Cotter at 204-4147.

## Lapham/Marquette PTG Meeting Minutes

Secretary Kerry Motoviloff

6:30 Tuesday October 14<sup>th</sup> in Marquette LMC

Something new this year... we will include a very brief minutes summary in the school-wide newsletter . The full minutes will be posted on the PTG website.

WOW 30 MEMBER TURN OUT- Including 5 staff members!

\*Principal updates

\*Ice Cream Social survey feedback about PTG goals for the year

\*Referendum DVD and discussion

It is a 3-year recurring referendum. Estimated tax increase \$27 year 1, \$47 year 2 and \$20 year 3. Informational DVD available for viewing and see MMSD website.

\*Advocacy chair update- Lit Drops happening with CaSt (Community and Schools Together) every weekend until election.

\*Traffic safety program

Looking for volunteers to observe traffic patterns. Interested parents please e-mail PTG.

\*Grant Requests and Applications

Applications were submitted to committee and will be submitted to district this month.

\*Fundraising

Innisbrook extended. Much lower sales than last year. Seeking volunteers and donations for Election Day bake sale. Home Grown holiday fundraiser coming. Just Coffee started in Oct. Order on website. Bucky Books are available to be sold for \$40. E-mail PTG presidents.

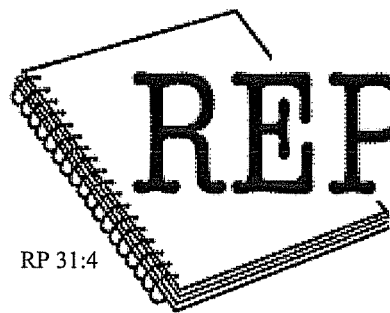
\*After school clubs

Peggy Gartes coordinator. Goal to plan them for 2 four-week blocks or one 6-week block in the spring next semester.

\*Room Reps.

All teachers now have a room rep. Teachers and room reps should try to connect and establish goals for the year.

NEXT MEETING AT LAPHAM IN LMC 6:30 ON NOVEMBER 11



# REPORT to PARENTS

RP 31:4

## Having Successful Parent-Teacher Conferences

It doesn't matter if you're the student, the teacher, or the parent, parent-teacher conferences are bound to cause some anxiety. Yet these one-on-one meetings are priceless opportunities for families to get a better understanding of their children. By preparing well for your meetings with teachers and following up with both your children and their teachers afterward, you can strengthen your children's school success.

### Before the Conference:

**Listen.** Any time you hear your child talking about something he or she is doing really well in or is having trouble with—either with school-work or with classmates—make a note of it. When it's time for the conference with the teacher, you'll have a ready-made list of things to discuss.

**Ask.** When it's time to schedule the conference with the teacher, sit down with your child and ask him or her what you should discuss with the teacher. Encourage your children to open up and tell you what it's like for them in the classroom. Do they feel like they're falling behind academically? Or are they bored because they understand the material that the rest of the class is struggling with? Are there any troubling issues with any of their classmates? One thing that's guaranteed to get your children to open up is asking them what they think their teacher is going to tell you about them.

**Bring notes and papers.** Write down questions you want to address with the teacher. Bring copies of any assignments you have questions about. Think ahead of time how to be tactful and kind in wording concerns you have about the teacher or the class.

### During the Conference:

**Be on time.** Schools tightly schedule parent-teacher conferences because there's only so much time available and dozens of families to see. Show up at least a few minutes early, so you know you'll be set to begin when it's your turn.

**Hire a babysitter.** It's important to make sure that the

time you have with the teacher is as productive as possible. Having other children in the room is distracting. Either hire a babysitter or trade off with another parent so that your children don't tag along.

**Take notes.** In addition to presenting the questions and concerns you brought to the meeting, make sure to take notes about what the teacher is telling you about your child. Be sure to address these important areas: strengths, weaknesses, and social skills.

**Keep emotions out of it.** It is always difficult to hear that your "angel" or "young Einstein" isn't exactly the person you thought he or she was in the classroom. Keep your cool and bear in mind that the teacher is offering constructive criticism.

### After the Conference:

**Talk to your child.** Sit down with your child and tell him or her what you and the teacher discussed. Emphasize the positive things the teacher said. Remember that it's important for your child to feel positive about

learning, the teacher, and the school.

**Follow up.** If there were important issues that need to be dealt with, such as finding a tutor or getting counseling for your child, make sure to follow up in writing with the teacher soon after the conference. Specify exactly what you discussed with the teacher, what steps will be taken, what your responsibilities and the school's responsibilities will be, and what the timetable is for action.

**Remember the principal.** If, after meeting with your child's teacher, you still feel like you have serious issues that weren't adequately addressed, set up a time to talk to the guidance counselor or principal to see what other options are available.

**Follow through.** Once you know what you can do at home to help your child succeed in school, make sure to actually do it. It's understandable that finding the time might be difficult, but remember—your child needs you.

