

Meredith Hill Messenger

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January, 2008

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Please Vote on the Replacement Levy

Federal Way Public Schools will run a replacement levy February 19, 2008. This four-year Educational Programs and Operations Levy (EP&O), formerly called a Maintenance and Operations Levy, will replace the current levy which will expire at the end of 2008. If the levy passes on February 19, current programs and services will be maintained and the tax rate will not increase.

The EP&O Levy provides funds for the day-to-day operations of the district's educational programs. It enables the district to pay for teaching staff not included in state allocations. The levy pays for 20% of ALL regular instruction in Federal Way schools. It pays for 43 teachers and 41 classified full-time equivalent (FTE) employees, including information technology, security officers, crossing guards, assessment staff and other key support staff. This funding also bridges the gap between state allocations and what the labor market demands to attract and retain quality administrators, support staff and teachers. The levy also pays for 17% of Special Education Services, 7% of Transportation Services, and slightly less than 2% of the English Language Learners program.

The school district is a good steward of the public's money. Federal Way taxpayers pay less per student than most Western Washington taxpayers. For more information, go to www.fwps.org/info/levy. Please vote February 19, 2008.

Track Volunteer Needed

Meredith Hill Elementary is looking within the school community for a coach/coordinator, with current First Aid/CPR certification, to lead its 2008 track program. Practices begin mid March and continue through the middle of May, with meets scheduled on Saturdays at Federal Way High School Memorial Stadium. There is a stipend available for the position. If you are interested, please contact the Meredith Hill office at (253) 945-3200.

Juggling Club News

Permission slips for Juggling Club will be given out at the end of January. Club dates will be Friday's from 8:45-9:20 a.m. Our first juggling session will begin on Friday, February 15th.

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From the Counselor: Talking with Your Children Effectively about Drugs

From Growing Up Drug-Free,
A Parents Guide to Prevention

One way to talk to your children about drugs is to take advantage of everyday “teachable moments”: Newspapers are full of the consequences of alcohol and drug abuse. Take your examples right off the front page. Ask your child if she heard about the adult who used drugs and was arrested. Did she/he make a good decision when she/he used drugs?

Watch TV with your child and ask them what they think. Do the programs and advertising

make drug use look acceptable and routine, or do they show its downside?

When you see a news item involving drug use, point out the story’s full implications to families and all of society: Drug addiction can cause or aggravate many tragedies. Also, whenever you see an anti-drug commercial on TV, use it as an opening to talk with your children about drugs. Ask them what they think about the commercial.

Children of substance abusers are much more likely to be-

come addicted if they use drugs; they may have inherited genes that make them react to alcohol and drugs differently, and they may have had more difficult upbringings. When you use the example of a family member to illustrate why your children should be careful about trying alcohol and other drugs, you make a compelling argument.

For more ideas on preventing drug abuse : <http://www.toosmarttostart.samhsa.gov/>

Patty EagleCruz
Meredith Hill Counselor

From the Nurse: Seeing Spots or Chicken Pox?

Yes, it’s time for chicken pox. Chicken pox is a common, highly contagious illness caused by the varicella-zoster virus. It is seen most commonly in winter and early spring when people spend more time indoors in close contact. The virus is spread through droplets in the air when infected children sneeze or cough, through direct person-to-person contact or contact with contaminated articles. The incubation period (time from exposure until symptoms appear) is usually two to three weeks.

Symptoms may include a general feeling of illness- fatigue, headache, fussiness, and loss of appetite. Children often develop a mild fever for a day or two before the rash develops, or as the rash develops over the first few days. The most common symptom is the rash. The red spots change to fluid-filled lesions, then to crusts. New spots continue to break out so that at the height of the rash, red spots, lesions, and crusts can appear at the same time in the same area. The lesions typically appear on the scalp and trunk, then spread to the face, arms, and legs.

Contact your health care provider with any questions about diagnosis and treatment. Recommendations may include a fever reducer such as acetaminophen (Tylenol), an antihistamine such as diphenhydramine (Benadryl), topical Calamine or Caladryl lotion, or cool water baths, possibly with baking soda or oatmeal to lessen itching. To decrease the risk of infection by scratching, trim fingernails, and keep your child comfortable and occupied with light activities. Encourage rest and fluids.

Infected children are contagious a day or two before the rash appears and until all the lesions have crusted over. During this time, they should stay home from school. Please notify the school if your child develops chicken pox.

It’s best to keep the infected child away from others who haven’t had chicken pox or the vaccination as much as possible. Infants, pregnant women, individuals taking steroids, those with chronic diseases or weakened immune systems are especially at risk. Your health care provider should be contacted regarding these individuals and for information on the Varivax (varicella or chicken pox) vaccine.

January Calendar

- 10- Cookie Day
- 15- Martin Luther King Jr. Assembly 2:45-3:30
- 17- Class Pictures
- 21- NO SCHOOL
MLK Jr. Holiday
- 22- Honor Choir/Steel Drum Concert s
2:40 and 7:00 p.m.
- 24- Cookie Day
- 28- NO SCHOOL
End of First Semester

Martin Luther King Jr. Assembly

On Tuesday, January 15, 2008, Meredith Hill students and staff will celebrate the birthday and life of Dr. Martin Luther King, the legendary American civil rights leader. Our assembly will begin at 2:45 in the gymnasium and all are welcome to attend. Songs, poetry, and art will be featured.

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★ **Jump Rope for Heart** ★

★ Jump Rope for Heart ★

★ will be Monday 2/11 ★

★ through Wednesday 2/13 ★

★ during P.E. classes. ★

★ Look for more informa- ★

★ tion to be coming home ★

★ soon from Mr. Navilio. ★

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February Calendar

- 7- Cookie Day
- 8- PTA Family Night
Bingo 5:30-8:00 p.m.
Report Cards Go Home
- 12- Grades 3/4 Concerts
2:40 and 7:00 p.m.
- 18-19-NO SCHOOL
President's Holiday
- 21- Cookie Day

Battle of the Books

The 2008 Annual Battle of the Books will take place in March at Meredith Hill. Third, Fourth, and Fifth grade teams will compete at Meredith Hill on Tuesday, March 18th at 2:00 p.m. The winning team of the school Battle of the Books will participate in the district "Battle" at Decatur High School on Thursday, March 27th, 7:00 p.m.

Participating students are already reading sixteen books on which they will be questioned at the competition. Each person is on a team of 3 or 4 students who will support each other in answering the questions. Meredith Hill parents, Mrs. Nesbitt, Mrs. Condotta, and Mrs. Flanagan, are working with students weekly during lunch recesses starting in January to practice questions and to have book discussions. This is a great activity for readers of all levels.

You can get more information about Meredith Hill's Battle of the Books by contacting Mrs. Kelsey.

Picture Day is January 17

Buteau's Photography will be taking class pictures and activity pictures on Thursday, January 17th at Meredith Hill. Order envelopes will be sent home soon, and parents can also order "Individual" packages for their students in a variety of background choices. If you are interested, please fill out the envelopes and send them back to the homeroom teachers by the 17th.

Music Concerts

This is the beginning of music concert season at Meredith Hill. We invite you to attend either the afternoon concerts or the evening concerts, or both! Afternoon concerts usually start around 2:30 or 2:45, and evening concerts always begin at 7:00. Watch the school newsletter and the newsletters sent to you by your child's teacher. Here are the specific dates! Put these dates on your calendar so that you can celebrate the musical excitement with your child!

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| January 22 | Honor Choir and 5th grade Steel Drums |
| February 12 | 3rd and 4th grade Concert |
| March 11 | 1st and 2nd grade Concert |
| May 20 | Honor Choir and 5th grade Steel Drums |