



Harper HERALD

a monthly publication provided by
the harper pto
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Frances Ellen Watkins Harper Junior High School 4000 E. Covell Blvd., Davis, CA 95618 530.757.5330

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

The 2010-11 school year is off to a great start! Many students and staff have commented about how much they are enjoying their classes, and I have heard from numerous parents that their children really like school this year.

In late August, we received the results of the state achievement tests taken by our students last spring. Our data shows that our CST scores have improved again, and our API score is nearing 900. I am extremely proud of what our students have been able to achieve and am pleased that the Harper Junior High staff and community are working together to help our students succeed.

Our API score is not the only factor that matters when it comes to educating our children, however. While averages of 80% of our students show proficiency in English language arts and math on the STAR, there are still approximately 20% of our students who are not showing academic success on the state tests or in their classes at Harper. Many students are scoring at basic or below on the reading/writing portion of the STAR and are also earning two or more failing grades in their classes. These students cause us the most concern.

Our goal for this year is to continue to close the achievement gap with those students who are struggling at school. We see these students as having untapped potential, and it is our intent to assist them in becoming more successful at Harper. We are researching other schools and best practices to learn what works best with students who are underachieving, identifying specific factors that might be contributing to a student's performance, and developing programs and intervention strategies to address these students' individual needs. We know there is not one single answer or solution for every student, yet we want to do all that we can to inspire students to learn and achieve.

One factor that has a direct impact on student achievement is a student's feeling of self worth, and a student's self worth is frequently dependent on having a positive relationship with one or more caring adults. In many cases, that bond or rapport exists between a child and his/her parents or another significant family member. The relationship may also be with a teacher, employer or even a member of the community. As members of the Harper community, we each have the potential to influence our students' success in very meaningful or powerful ways.

Continued on page 2



NUGGET CARDS

If you shop at Nugget, you have the opportunity to donate 3% of your total purchases to Harper Junior High when using a Nugget Scrip Card. Nugget Cards will be available at all PTO events or you can ask for one at any Nugget check stand. To change your current Nugget Card non-profit beneficiary, call the Nugget Corporate Office at (530) 669-3300.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE (continued from page 1)

Perhaps you know a student or students who need a little extra assistance, guidance or attention. It may be a friend of your son or daughter, the son or daughter of a friend of yours or simply a child in your neighborhood. However you know of the student, I encourage you to take the step to become actively involved in that young person's life. You may be able to affect a student in a significant way or to truly change a student's life with just a few minutes a day. Here are some ideas:

- Take time to listen and really hear what the student has to say.
- Provide the student with breakfast or lunch.
- Offer to give the student a ride home if she/he wants to go to Homework Club in the library after school.
- Attend a school event with the student.
- Assist him/her in getting organized by demonstrating how to use a planner to keep track of assignments and other important dates or events.
- Show the student how to log on to Zangle to check assignments, scores and grades.
- Let the student read to you or read with him/her.
- Help the student review for an upcoming test.
- Proofread or help the student edit a paper before submitting it to the teacher.
- Offer to go with the student to talk with his/her teachers or counselor.
- Volunteer in a class or classes at Harper where the student may be encountering difficulty.

These are just a few ideas; I am sure you can come up with others. The point is, it takes very little effort to show love and kindness to someone, and the payoffs can be huge. Just giving a student attention can make a difference in that young person's life.

Help us remove the barriers or obstacles that are keeping some kids from being successful at school!

Zena Ingles

COUNSELOR'S CORNER

The 2010-11 school year is progressing rapidly and the first progress reports were sent home last week. Progress reports are mailed home every 4 – 5 weeks and are used by teachers to give feedback to students and families on their students' progress. Many teachers will only indicate grades below a C on the progress report, so do not be alarmed if you do not see a grade for all classes.

For specific feedback, students and parents can log on to Zangle to check assignments, test scores and academic grades. Students may also contact teachers directly for updates and ideas of how to improve. Your counselors, Ms. Trigilio and Ms. Leppington are also excellent resources to help with academic questions.

I would like to take a moment to focus on grades and discuss steps you may want to take if the progress report you receive is not what you had hoped for. While it's natural for parents to be concerned when a child brings home a report card that is less than perfect, showing frustration or disappointment won't help your child get better grades. Nor will giving up on your son or daughter.

Here are some thoughts that I tried to keep in mind when my own children's grades were less than expected.

- **Put grades in perspective.** Allow your student to own his/her success or failure in school. While it is tempting to want to do it ourselves or live our children's lives for them, this is not in our teen's best interest. Speak with your student about his/her classes, the course expectations, the student's favorite and least favorite subjects, and his/her feelings about the progress grades. Try not to overreact or under react. Remain calm and caring throughout the discussion.
- **Focus on the facts.** Each progress report is based on a specific period of time. It is not the final grade. A student's grade may fluctuate as much as two full letter grades in a matter of a week's time, depending on a certain test score or an incomplete assignment.
- **Accent the positive.** Talk about what your child is doing well in an academic subject or an extra-curricular activity. Ask your child what they are most proud of. Build on success and look for ways to reward improvement in those areas of deficiency.
- **Look behind the grade.** Grades are just one indicator of a student's progress. Ask your son/daughter what he/she thinks the problem is. Sometimes it's not academic ability, but poor study habits, lack of motivation, fear of failure or too many extra-curricular activities.
- **Take time to inspect your child's back pack.** It can be extremely beneficial to look inside that very heavy pack. It is not uncommon to find piles of papers that have

never been turned in or to discover that your student is really struggling to get organized. Spending time each week purging the extra papers in ones back pack can be a very effective strategy for helping students get better organized.

- **Provide your student with a 3-ring binder.** A three ring binder with dividers for each class is a must!



Many students have difficulty keeping track of their papers and assignments, resulting in confusion and feelings of being overwhelmed. A binder with a clearly labeled section for each class will make it easier for a student to find the necessary handouts or assignments when the teacher requests it.

- **Monitor assignments and daily progress.** Each student should have a day planner. It is vital that a student use that planner to keep track of assignments. Check your student's assignment calendar and if he/she has not been using a calendar or planner to record due dates, test dates, etc., assist him/her in getting started. With six or seven classes in a day, it is unrealistic to think a student can remember all important dates and timelines in one's head.

- **Set realistic goals for improvement.** Don't expect all A's if your child is getting all C's. Set weekly and monthly goals. A single poor grade is not fatal to a student's overall success in school.

- **Contact, but don't attack, teachers.** Sometimes children try their best but still fail, or they blame teachers for their troubles. Don't assume there's something wrong with the program or teachers. Gather more information by asking teachers their view of "What's going on?" Seek help and try to understand, rather than attack or judge the instructor or his/her methods.

Being a successful student is important to a student's self esteem and future plans. If you find your son or daughter is experiencing failure or not doing as well in school as he/she would like, it is imperative that we provide assistance to your student. Call or email your student's teachers or counselor, seek help, and follow through with your child.

We want all students to have a successful junior high school experience and perform well in school!

A Message from Vice Principal Matt Duffy

The 2010-2011 year is off to a great start! Seventh graders are making a great transition to Junior High as our upper grade students have been welcoming and helpful.

Now that we have transitioned to one lunch on September 27th, students have many more opportunities to get involved in clubs and activities as well as visit their teachers' classrooms to get academic help. A list of all the opportunities each day at lunch is posted on campus and read in the announcements each day. To view the menu visit our website at <http://www.djUSD.k12.ca.us/harper/>.

Wednesday mornings are a great for sleeping in, but also to enjoy friends at Harper. We've had between 80-100 students attending the first few weeks. If your student is not coming to school, please make sure you know where they are going and what they are doing. A recent trend of students bringing large quantities of highly caffeinated energy drinks has come to our attention. These drinks are not allowed on campus and will be confiscated if discovered. It is also forbidden for students to distribute and/or sell these drinks on campus. In a recent conversation with the Target store manager, we learned that they cannot legally regulate the sale of these drinks, but agreed to notify us if they saw the trend of purchasing large quantities of these drinks on Wednesday mornings.

Lock your bikes! Please lock your bike when parking at Harper. Each bike that has been stolen this year has been left unlocked in the Harper bike racks. On one day last week, 14 bikes were seen unlocked during a walk through by our School Resource Officer, Dan LaFond. Don't make your bike a target for a bike thief!

Homework Club is in full swing. Two of our teachers, Mr. Richardson and Ms. Morris, staff the club each day after school and U.C. Davis tutors, specializing in Math help, will be joining us shortly now that UCD is back in session. The club is located in the library Monday-Thursday after school from 3:35-4:35. For students who would like to continue studying or reading quietly, the library is open and supervised until 5:15. This is a great chance to get some help on HW and be able to enjoy and relax the rest of the evening.

The Dress Code needs to be followed. With the weather remaining warm, we have seen a tendency to remain in "summer-mode" of dress. Please review page 14 of the Student Planner with your students and discuss appropriate attire to create a professional learning environment at school.

The Student-Family-School Agreement has been reviewed by an administrator with all students and signed by a staff member. If you have not had a chance to discuss this important partnership with you students, please take some time to do so in the coming days. It is the goal of EVERY staff member to create a safe, positive learning environment where every student feels respected and can succeed.

School Climate Corner

The first Climate Committee meeting of the year was held during lunch on Oct. 7. The Harper Climate Committee seeks to promote positive student/staff/family events that bring our school community together. This is a place for students to share their experiences as Harper students (positive and negative). Representatives from on-campus clubs/groups including Leadership, Peer Helpers, Davis Teen Center, GSA club, and Chicano club attend and the School Climate meetings seek to align their efforts to common goals of positive student experiences and connections at school. All students, staff, and parents are invited to attend the meetings. We meet the 1st Thursday of every month in room A-4 from 12:05-12:45.

For parents that cannot attend the meetings at lunch, Mr. Duffy will be sharing the topics of the meeting and seeking additional parent input at the monthly PTO meetings held the first Tuesday of each month at 7:00 in the Harper Library. Please inform Mr. Duffy of any agenda items you might like discussed.

Some current and upcoming events that will be covered include:

- **Weekly Video Announcements:** The first broadcast debuted on Friday, September 24 and the Leadership video production team will be creating weekly broadcasts that highlight the many events at Harper and celebrate our diverse population. The School Climate Committee will discuss and share ideas for these video productions.
- **Transition to one-lunch:** We transitioned to a single lunch schedule on September 27th. Many clubs, activities, and intramural events are offered daily. We'll be looking for feedback on the climate during lunch and soliciting ideas for new clubs and activities to engage students.
- **Positive School Climate Day:** On October 14th there will be two assemblies at Harper; both addressing the topics of bullying and school violence.
 - 7th graders will view and discuss the documentary "Let's Get Real". This will be the 2nd of 3 discussions with counselors and administration. The final discussion in subsequent weeks will occur in core classrooms and will debrief the film as well as give students skills and encouragement to respond positively when they witness or are targets of bullying or harassment. Parents can get more information about the video at: <http://groundspark.org/our-films-and-campaigns/lets-get-real> . If you would like to preview the film please contact Mr. Duffy at mduffy@djUSD.net to make arrangements.
 - 8th and 9th graders will participate in the "Teen Truth" assembly. This assembly will be at all three Junior Highs on this day and is brought to us through the collaborative efforts of the City of Davis Teen Center, Davis Police Department, and the DJUSD Student Services department. This assembly addresses bullying, name-calling, and school violence. The overall message is one encouraging students to take a stand against bullying and harassment and make a personal commitment to promoting a positive school environment.

Science News:



We're off to a great year in science! Thanks to all our generous community members for their past, present, and future time, treasure, and talent! We anxiously await the outcome of the Harper Kid Fund-raising event to see what hands-on labs we can plan this year. Thanks to all the parents that have relayed their concerns and questions via their student (student advocating for him/herself, a parent-written note in the planner, etc.). And thank you for waiting a reasonable amount of time for resolution. If needed, please contact science teachers via the following email addresses. Please note also, that some teachers maintain websites where information about agendas, homework, and assignments might be found. These are linked to the Harper library website.

8th Grade Science:

Mr. O'Brien, Mr. Dimond, and Mr. McKim's classes have been using timers, photogates, and energy tracks to carefully design and execute experiments. We've been learning how to manage data, find range and scale for graphs, using graphs for predicting, and studying the different types of relationships between variables. 2 tests (with 2 parts each) have been returned. A notebook organization grade will be coming soon! It's worth a lot! Please encourage completion of this important task. Soon, we'll be using this investigative knowledge to explore buoyancy and density. Somebody might be demonstrating burning bubbles. Coming Soon!

STUDENT NUTRITION NEWS...

- | | | | |
|---------------|--|---------------|--|
| • Mr. Dimond | cdimond@djUSD.k12.ca.us | • Mrs. Rounds | hrounds@djUSD.k12.ca.us |
| • Mr. McKim | kmckim@djUSD.k12.ca.us | • Mrs. Salim | isalim@djUSD.k12.ca.us |
| • Mr. O'Brien | jobrien@djUSD.k12.ca.us | | |

PROPS NEEDED

Harper's Theater Production "The Diary of Anne Frank" is in need of a few used items: a couch, single bed frames/mattresses, dinner table & chairs, menorah, old sheets.

If you have anything on the list that you want to get rid of, please get rid of it our way by contacting Julia Hodges jhodges@djUSD.k12.ca.us .

Thanks so much, & we hope to see you at Harper's 1st play of the school year on the nights of Dec. 3rd & 4th. More information to come later!

HARPER PTO NEWS

Now that all the beginning of the year activities, with registration and budget meetings are over, we are looking at what we want to see for Harper in 2010-11. At the first Harper PTO meeting in September, we passed around a question WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE FOR HARPER IN 2010-11? Since many parents/guardians are not at the meeting, we want to make sure you have the opportunity to share your input. If you have suggestions for Harper PTO this school year, please email us at harperpto@gmail.com.

If you would like to come to one of the meetings and share your ideas (ALL ARE WELCOME), please do. Harper PTO meetings will be held on Tuesday nights on the following dates:



October 12 - in Room A-3
November 2 - in Library
December 7 - in Library
January 11 - in Library
February 1 - in Library
March 1 - in Library
April 12 - in Library
May 3 - in Library
June - TBA (PTO social)



Hope you can make it!

Box Tops for Education Program



Dear Harper Families,

Welcome back to school, and welcome to our new and improved Box Tops for Education program!

With a little help from you, we can turn tiny 10-cent coupons into a real source of income for our PTO. Here's how....

STEP ONE: IDENTIFY THE TARGET

Box Tops are located on over 100 common grocery items, including GO-GURT yogurt, GENERAL MILLS breakfast cereals, NATURE VALLEY granola bars, PILLSBURY refrigerated dough, BETTY CROCKER baking mixes and fruit snacks, ZIPLOC bags, PROGRESSO soup, personal care products from COTTONELLE and KOTEX, HUGGIES baby items, paper products from HEFTY, SCOTT, and VIVA and office supplies from AVERY (labels to binders) and many other products you likely have in your fridge or pantry. Each one is worth 10 cents in cash when redeemed by a participating school.

STEP TWO: CUT IT OUT

When you see a Box Top, cut it out.

STEP THREE: TURN IT IN

You can bring them in one at a time, or collect them at home in an envelope or plastic bag whichever is easiest for you. There are collection boxes located in the library and office, simply turn all your Box Tops (and bonus certificates) in one of these places and rest assured they will be sent in for CASH for OUR SCHOOL!

DON'T THINK A DIME IS WORTH YOUR TIME?

Think again.

Schools in our own community routinely earn in the thousands of dollars per year by redeeming Box Tops, let's join them!

Here are a few tips to make your collection effort even more successful:

- *Always check your recyclables for Box Tops before disposing of them
- * Go online to www.boxtops4education.com to learn more about the program or to download a list of participating products.
- * Ask friends, neighbors, co-workers and relatives to collect Box Tops on your child's behalf. Consider putting a collection box in your workplace (break rooms are great).

Questions? Please email fpmd39-coupons@yahoo.com

Sincerely
Tasha Laubly-Diaz
Harper JHS Box Top Coordinator

HARPER
KID FUND

IT'S NOT TOO LATE

Harper PTO is in the process of tallying the latest donations to the HarPer Kid Fund, and if you haven't had the chance to drop off your donations, we are still collecting them.

D AVIS PARENTS DO

Davis Parents Do What?

Davis Parents Do sign the following pledge, that's what:

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

If you have already signed the pledge, go to the recently updated website (DavisParentsDo.org) to make sure your name is there. If you haven't signed the pledge, please consider doing so.

The parent groups at Davis high schools and junior highs have launched a parent information campaign, aimed at informing the adult community of teen alcohol and drug use. Our hope is that as parents learn about the prevalence of substance/alcohol use and the risks to teens who use alcohol and drugs, parents will take more active steps to prevent use by teens.

If you want to make this pledge, have questions or would like to join this committee, please contact committee chair Cathy Farman, cfarman@sbcglobal.net or 750-0321.

Davis Parents Do Tips for Parents:

October offers lots of potentially unsupervised time for Davis high school and junior high students. Students have late starts on Wednesdays. And high school students have an early release on October 15 for homecoming. Also, high school students without a 7th period get out of school at 12:10 on Thursdays. If parents and guardians are working, these blocks of unsupervised time become opportunities to party undiscovered. If you are at work, don't forget to check in on your student. Insist on knowing where your teen is and whom s/he is with. Double-check the location by calling a landline. Every now and then, if you can, come home early or leave late on Wednesdays as a surprise.

October also holds two big party weekends—DHS homecoming and Halloween. Both of these events can be fun without drugs and alcohol. Have a talk with your student about your expectation for sober celebrations. Consider offering your home as a safe and sober place to celebrate. Let your teen plan the party, and you can plan the supervision. Davis Parents Do supervise their teens!

SCHOOL DANCES

This year, Harper Junior High will be conducting six dances for our students. Dances begin at 7:00 and end at 9:30 PM. Students must arrive before 7:30 unless prior arrangements are made and the student is accompanied by a parent/guardian. If, for some reason, a student must leave before the dance is over, she/he must be picked up by a parent or guardian.

These dances are for Harper students only. **To enter a school dance, a student must present a current photo student identification card.** All students receive these at the beginning of the school year. Replacement cards may be purchased in the Library for \$5.00 during the school year. In addition, students must be in good standing, have no outstanding discipline issues, and have attended school the day of the dance in order to attend.

Casual dress is appropriate for all dances, and dress for dances must follow the Harper dress code. There are **no "formal"** events at Harper Junior High School.

Attention All 7th & 8th Grade Athletes!!!

Students wishing to participate in Harper Sports programs such as basketball, soccer and track and field, must have a physical form completed prior to the season starting. These forms may be picked up in the office.

Families having trouble getting doctor appointments for the physical may wish to contact Troy Stevens a licensed chiropractic physician and owner of Dixon Family Chiropractic. Troy is a parent of a Harper Student and his company has been providing physicals for local area athletes for over 20 years. The cost is only 15 dollars and appointments can usually be made within 2-3 days of contact. This could be a valuable resource for any families having trouble getting quick appointments with their regular physician. Dixon Family Chiropractic is located at 1330 N. Lincoln Street in Dixon. Office phone is 707-678-0170. Let's get those physicals in ASAP!!

Tom Taylor
Harper JHS Athletic Director



Congratulations to the Freshman student athletes playing sports at Davis Senior High School

Girls Frosh Volleyball

Anna P.
Danielle G.
Lauren S.
Julia F.
Emma M.

JV Volleyball

Emma P.

Boys Water Polo

Sam B.
Ben D.
Garrett F.
Graham F.
Tyler U.

Girls Water Polo Frosh-Soph

Jane G.
Monica F.
Heather J.
Yasmin K.

Cross Country

Kendra F.
Natalia K.
Hanna L.
Sophie M.
Kian R.
Daniel R.

Freshman Football

Joseph D.
Emilio B.
Brett B.
Tyler R.
Alex T.
Eli C.
Andrew S.
David K.
Nicholas Y.
Jordan W.
Max H.
Carson M.
Blake D.

JV Football

Bailey M.

JV FIELD HOCKEY

Emmanuelle C.
Carolyn I.
Jenna P.
Kelly R.
Allyson W.

Girls Golf

Kaity H.

JV Soccer Boys

Alexander N.
Alex P.
Oscar A.
Rami R.



Harper's Book Fair is coming October 29 – Nov 5!

The whole school is excited about our upcoming Book Fair. An amazing selection of books is headed our way! At the Book Fair you will find the latest and finest titles for kids, as well as books of interest to parents. Mark your calendar for our Family Event October 30th, from 12 - 3 pm where the whole family can join in the fun. And, you can contribute books to your child's classroom library. See you there! For more information see <http://bookfairs.scholastic.com/bookfairs/cptoolkit/publish/harperjhs>.

PARKING LOT IMPROVEMENT

We would like to give a HUGE thank you to all of you who have made the necessary changes in your drop-off and pick-up procedures at Harper each day. Keeping the front lanes open from 7:50 – 8:30 AM and from 3-3:45 PM has made an incredible difference in getting all our students (and vehicles) out of the parking lot in a timely manner. Not only are the parent drivers able to come and go quickly, but the bus drivers are so appreciative that they can now pick up their riders right in front and are able to do so without a 10 to 15 minute wait.

We recognize that this will be a greater challenge when the rainy season starts, but we will still be asking parents to park in a parking space or arrange to pick up students a little later if they don't want to park in a space and make the child walk to the vehicle. Keeping the front lanes clear of parked and waiting vehicles has dramatically improved the flow of traffic through the entire front lot, and we are hoping to maintain this throughout the school year.

Parents are welcome to drop off and pick up in the front lanes during these peak traffic times if they can do so without parking or waiting for more than a minute. We encourage all parents to speak with their students and make the necessary arrangements for pick-up in advance.

Thank you again for your cooperation and assistance. These changes have really helped!

Frances Harper Junior High School

4000 East Covell Blvd
Davis, California 95618

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PERMIT NO.5**

TIME DATED MATERIAL

ATTENDANCE

If your student is going to be absent or needs an early dismissal, please contact our attendance office or call 757-5330 Ext. 112 and leave a message prior to 9AM. Students have just 24 hours to clear an absence or that absence will be considered unexcused.

OFFICE HOURS

Due to recent budget reductions, Harper has experienced a reduction in our office staff. Our main office hours for 2010-11 are:
**8AM – 4PM on most days, and
9:15AM – 4PM on Late Start Wednesdays**