



A newsletter to keep the connection between school and home  
May 21<sup>st</sup>, 2009

**Notes from our principal, Stephen Billhardt**

Dear Cunniff School Parents and Guardians,

I would like to try and provide you with some updates as we work to plan for the next academic year with regards to the configuration of our classrooms. At this point we have budgeted 13 classrooms teachers, but hope to have 14. Please note the following TENTATIVE plan:

The anticipated breakdown of classrooms is as follows:

Grade Level	Number of Classrooms
PreK/K	One Classroom – Fitzpatrick
K	One Classroom - DiDomenico
1	Two Classrooms – Kearney/Lacy
1/2 Multiage	One Classroom - Uccello
2	Two Classrooms – Rono/Sauder
3	Two Classroom – DiMascio/Munger
4	Two Classrooms – DiLeso/Palermo
5	Two Classrooms – Ciarlone/Sees

The “philosophy” behind the 1/2 multiage is due to the fact that the current kindergarten and first grade classrooms could benefit from 2 ½ sections rather than just two. Both grades do not warrant three sections, but would greatly benefit from more than two. We will strive to construct this classroom with equal number of students from each grade and the range of students will be within the grade span of a typical single graded classroom. Like any other classroom, the instructional supports will be provided to ensure that the educational opportunities in this classroom are optimal. If you feel that this type of classroom would not be the right environment for your child, we request that you notify me as soon as possible. If we do not hear from you by Friday, May 29th, we will assume that you are willing to have your child be a student in this classroom.

With the retention of a 14th classroom, we will be able to maintain class sizes that are similar to this year. If this 14th classroom does not occur, class size in some grades will be higher.

Placement for next year is well under way as we speak. It is imperative that if you have any thoughts about your child’s

placement that we hear from you in the next week. Information that is sent to me after this will not be able to be factored into consideration.

This is an extremely busy time of year for schools. Basically, we are programming for the present and planning for the future every single day until we finish on the 24th of June. However, as always, do not hesitate to contact your child’s classroom teacher, or special education liaison if you have any questions or concerns. I would like to reiterate that it is very important to follow this process, not only for your child, but to ensure a continuous and seamless transition into our next school year.

Happy May to all of you!

Sincerely,

Stephen L. Billhardt

**The value of exercise and the importance of safety**

Dear Parents,

In the next two weeks I will be teaming up with Sensei Craig to teach our kids the value of exercise and the importance of safety. Sensei Craig is going to come to our physical education classes to teach our students about karate, confidence and his “stranger danger” program. This will be an excellent opportunity for our students to learn an alternative way to exercise and gain overall wellness. It is also a chance for the students to learn about how to avoid strangers, what to do if you are approached by a stranger and how to get help. This is a great opportunity for you as well to have a conversation with your kids about the importance of avoiding strangers. Thank you so much for your help and support. Let’s get active and healthy together as a community.

Greg Marcotte  
Cunniff Physical Education

On-line Translation Services

Our most recent School report cards indicate that 27 percent of the Cunniff families have a language other than English as their primary language. Given the desire and need for our school to provide greater translation services we have added a new component to the Cunniff (and district) School's homepage. On the bottom right of the Cunniff homepage, you will see Google Translate which allows the user to choose up to 35 languages for our school's web pages/information to be translated.

I would strongly encourage you to explore this tool and take a new look at the many web pages that teachers have created to help communicate with you at home. They already provide strong auditory and visuals for you to get a glimpse into student learning projects that are occurring regularly at the school and now with Google Translate, it opens up another way for you to keep up with your child's learning at school.

I would also like to encourage you to share this information with others as this helps us communicate with all families.

2009-2010 School Calendar

Dear Parents,

Please mark your calendar: **the first full day for students in grades 1-5 is Tuesday, September 8th.**

You can get a copy of the 2009-2010 school calendar here: [http://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/wps/pdf/wps\\_09\\_10\\_cal.pdf](http://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/wps/pdf/wps_09_10_cal.pdf)

WATERTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS CALENDAR  
2009 - 2010

■ PD Day/Half Day   
 ■ Faculty PD Mtg   
 ■ Department/Grade Level PD Mtg   
 ■ District/School-based PD Mtg

September							October							November							December											
S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31		

■ Staff Report Full Day   
 ■ Professional Development   
 ■ Full Day Professional Development   
 ■ Labor Day   
 ■ First Day of Classes

■ 7: Half Day Professional Development   
 ■ 10: Columbus Day   
 ■ 11: INDICATES NO SCHOOL DAY   
 ■ 12: INDICATES HALF DAY/EARLY RELEASE

Reminder Notice:



Watertown Savings Bank is offering Student Banking Day on Wednesday mornings in the cafetorium between 8:00 a.m. and 8:15 a.m.

Bank representatives will be available during the school year to assist students in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grades to open accounts and make weekly deposits.

Box Tops and Campbell's



Please remember to keep clipping Box Tops labels and Campbell's UPC codes. It is a free and easy way to earn money for the school.

Also consider visiting the websites [www.btfe.com](http://www.btfe.com) and [www.labelsforeducation.com](http://www.labelsforeducation.com) to earn bonus points for the school.



Thanks for your help.  
Marilynn O' Connor

Box Top winners to be announced

Thank you

Cunniff Elementary School, 246 Warren Street, Watertown MA 02472. -617-926-7726

Please send your submissions to: [cunniffnewsletter@yahoo.com](mailto:cunniffnewsletter@yahoo.com)

Submissions for the Cunniff Connection must be received by Monday, 3:00 PM to appear in Thursday's publication, every other week.

You may also find all the previous editions of the Cunniff Connection at: <http://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/cunniff/index.html>