

Lowell Lowdown

October, 2009

James Russell Lowell School is a community of learners.

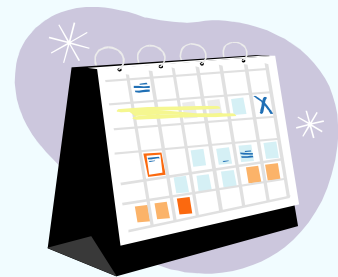
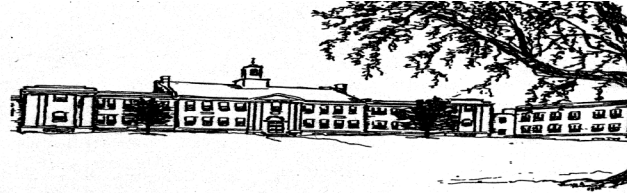
As a caring and responsible community:

We **care** about ourselves, others, and our learning environment,

We **share** our thoughts and feelings in kind and respectful ways,

We **dare** to try our best, be creative and explore new ideas.

We care, share, and dare.



Upcoming Events

- ◆ Oct 27th Site Council Meeting 7:00pm in Library
- ◆ Nov 3rd - No School (Professional Development)
- ◆ Nov 3rd Election Day Bake Sale 8:00 am - 6:00 pm
- ◆ Nov 10th - Half Day School for Teacher Conferences
- ◆ Nov 10th PTO Meeting at 7:00 pm in Library
- ◆ Nov 11th - Veteran's Day Holiday, No School
- ◆ Nov 12th - Evening Teacher Conferences
- ◆ Nov 17th - Evening Teacher Conferences
- ◆ Nov 18th - Half Day School for Teacher Conferences
- ◆ Nov 25th - Half Day School No Lunch Served 12 Noon Dismissal
- ◆ Nov 26th-27th Thanksgiving Holiday Break
- ◆ December - Watch for a family event!

From the Principal's desk

Parents and teachers work very hard to instill in our students a sense of responsibility, along with respect for others, our environment, and ourselves. We also want to balance those challenges with fun and opportunity. It is a tall order.

As a faculty, we have drafted some reasonable expectations that support our goals. Please read the following protocols carefully and help your children understand the reasons behind our requests and set the expectations that they can and will cooperate.

Lunchtime Expectations:

- Seating for Grades PreK through 3 will be at classroom tables. Children are asked to sit with classmates at 2 designated tables. Once they have selected a seat, we ask that they keep it throughout the lunch session. Making sure all children have the opportunity to eat is our highest priority.
- Grades 4 and 5 students may sit with a friend at their grade level, as long as they seat themselves quickly and do not spend time jockeying for spots.

- Basic respect and cooperation are expected. In addition, we ask that children don't yell - just talk, and don't run - just walk.
- The sanction for inappropriate lunchroom behavior may be assigned seating for individual students.

Protocols regarding phone calls:

Having fair, enforceable expectations for phone calls can be a dilemma in an elementary school. Permitting children to make phone calls home during the day takes away from learning time. In addition, the natural consequences of not having what one 'forgot' may delay the taking on of important responsibilities. As you will see below, too many occasions provoke requests to make phone calls.

No child will be permitted to call home from the office for any of the following incidents. We believe that this teaches responsibility to the child.

- He/she needs to bring the necessary items to school each day and teachers need to discuss this with classes and make a plan for how to

deal with forgotten items, such as homework.

- Forgotten lunches can be taken care of in the cafeteria with Sevim.
- Forgotten sneakers for gym result in sitting out of gym if safety issues are considered by the PE teacher.

In the rare instance that a parent realizes their own oversight and chooses to drop off any of the above, please deliver them to the office only. Someone from the office will deliver the child's materials to the doorway of the classroom and not disrupt the class.

Students in 4th and 5th grade, who forget their instrument, will GO to instruments with a book to read. This will allow the student to be present for instruction.

Students who report that his/her parents do not know it is a half day...same protocol as if the parent is not at dismissal. Wait the ten minutes and return the student to the office to make the call home.

Cell Phone use for students is difficult for elementary schools to manage. Many students have not developed enough decision making skills to balance use appropriately. Therefore, at this time, we ask that the following be the expectation:

- ❖ Student cell phones are not to be used or turned on during school hours for any reason. Students need to be taught to turn them off before entering at 8:05 and back on at dismissal at 2:30 outside the building.
- ❖ If a student uses a cell phone during the school day, the following

consequences should occur:

- 1st offense - phone is taken to the main office and the student must go to retrieve it at the end of the day.
 - 2nd offense - the cell phone is taken to the main office and the parents must come into school to retrieve it.
- ❖ Any staff member can take a cell phone from a student and brought to the main office.

All calls from the office to classrooms interrupt the entire classroom environment and learning. The office will not call a classroom during the day regarding parent messages or dropped off student belongings. In the case that there is an item dropped off by a parent, it will be delivered, without interruption, to the doorway of the classroom. The item will be left outside your door with the student's name attached. Phone calls from parents - unless a teacher is expecting it and has let the office know ahead of time, will be emailed to them in the form of a message. It is important that teachers check email prior to school dismissal. If the message were urgent, then the message would be brought up to teacher's classroom.

LUNCH NUGGETS!

We have received many phone calls about applications for free and/or reduced breakfast and lunch. The applications are available throughout the school year - online and at your child's school at the main office.

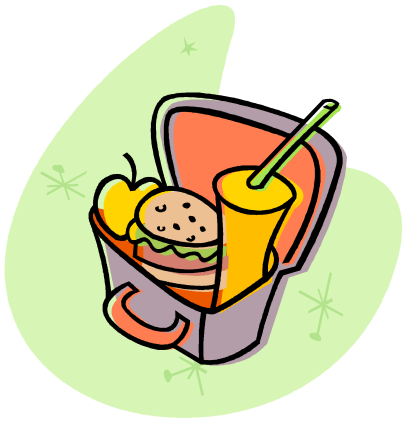
The computer system used for the breakfast and lunch program ensures anonymity of all students - whether they receive free, reduced, or is a paid student.

Also, please note that November's school menu will be the last hardcopy distributed from school. You can now access the menu, as well as lunch applications, by logging onto: www.watertown.k12.ma.us/food. We ask that you please not call the school for menu information.

As always, if you should have any questions, please call Food Services at 617-926-7756.

LOWELL SCHOOL WEBSITE:

<http://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/lowell/index.html>



From the Nurse's desk



Flu Notes!

Viruses spread easily among school-aged children. Parents can help their children with a few simple steps:

- ✚ The CDC recommends flu shots for you and your child, if possible.
- ✚ Disinfect frequently touched surfaces and shared items at least once daily.
- ✚ Teach your child not to touch his/her mouth, nose and eyes.
- ✚ If your child is sick and has a fever, keep him/her home to prevent the spread of illness to others.

At the Lowell School, students and teachers are very fortunate to have a sink and soap in every classroom, as well as hand sanitizer. We encourage our students and staff to wash their hands several times a day, as needed.

Students in Grades Pre-K thru 2 have had a mini-lesson in cough and sneeze etiquette, hand washing, and universal precautions. The children viewed "Crawford the Cat", a hand washing and sneezers pleaser video from www.youtube.com. If children have access to a computer

at home, these videos would be a great resource.

Flu booklets and information about H1N1 were also sent home to our new Pre-K and K students.

Check these websites for current and accurate information about the flu.

Center for Disease Control website at www.flu.gov and Watertown Health Department website at www.watertown-ma.gov.

Yours for a healthy school year,
Mrs. Taverna

THE LOWELL LOWDOWN BULLETIN BOARD



Bike and Scooter commuters!
If you are a student that rides your bike or scooter to school, please be sure to lock them up outside and not bring them into the school.

The 4th and 5th grades will be starting a Parent/Child Book Club in November. The organizers are Lorraine Evans, Grade 5 teacher and Dganit Toledano, Reading Specialist.

Sign up at the BOX TOPS website and earn 5 Box Tops for our school! If you have not yet done so, please consider it. For each new parent/family that signs up, the school will receive 5 Box Tops. If 20 new parents register, it earns our School \$10! So please be sure to visit this website: www.boxtops4education.com

Service Learning Project

This year the Lowell School will develop one school-wide service learning focus. We are in the process of selecting our focus now and anticipate the project growing into a yearlong opportunity for our students. Stay tuned for more details!

December Family Event!

Next months Lowell Lowdown will have details on a school wide family event planned for December!

Calling all Volunteers!

There are many areas of the school that needs volunteers: the library and help getting materials photo copied for classrooms are just two of many ways you can help at the school.

Contact the PTO if you are interested in volunteering!

School Site Council News

Lowell School Site Council Members Announced!

As only 3 candidates chose to run for the open parent representative positions of the Lowell School Site Council, all have been selected as members for the current academic year. Please congratulate them at the Site Council meeting on Tuesday, October 27, 2009 at 7:00 pm in the School Library, or whenever you see them!



The following persons are the teacher and parent representatives for the Site Council for Academic Year 2009-10:

Nicole Brown (Kindergarten)
Dari Donovan (Principal)
Myrto Flessas-Finocche (Parent)
Michelle Gasseau (Parent)
Jean Qualters (Speech/Language)
David Stokes (Parent)
Stacey Vachon (Instructional Assistant)
Stephanie Venizelos (Parent)

Lowell School Site Council Meeting:

The Lowell School Site Council will hold its monthly meeting on Tuesday, October 27, 2009 at 7:00 pm in the School Library. All parents are encouraged to attend and participate. The agenda for the meeting includes the following topics:

"FeedForward" -- *What improvements have been suggested by the Lowell community during the last month?*

"Lowell, Did You Know?" -- Demographic data highlighting changes in the Lowell and Watertown communities

SIP/Subcommittee Progress Updates:

- * School Website Improvements
- * Communications Planning
- * Annual Family Survey
- * Assemblies
- * Awards & Recognition
- * Annual Schoolwide Service Learning Project

For the full agenda, you can go to the Site Council link off the Lowell School web site:

<http://www.watertown.k12.ma.us/lowell/sitecouncil.html>

PTO Announcements

PTO Election Day Bake Sale:

The bake sale will be held November 3rd from 8:00 am-6:00 pm. If you are interested in baking, please email Linda Tracy at tracy92@rcn.com. Bake sale items can be dropped off at the school on Monday afternoon or Tuesday morning. Volunteers are needed to work the bake sale table. Contact Linda Tracy if you can help out for an hour. Please stop by our table and pick up some goodies for breakfast, lunch or dinner!

Fall Fundraiser:

Thank you to everyone who participated in the catalog fundraiser. The exact date of delivery is yet to be determined, but it should be late October or early November. The winner of the bike raffle was Brendan King. Congratulations!

PTO Committee Updates:

All the PTO committees (family events, book fair, fundraising, parent events) are currently meeting to plan upcoming events. Please contact PTO if you are able/willing to help.

New This Year: PTO Website!

In the upcoming weeks, the PTO will be posting a link to our new website. You will be able to find it on the main page of the Lowell School website.



ART ROOM NEWS/Mrs. Lochiatto

It's another exciting and creative year at the Lowell School. This year, 4th and 5th grade students will be learning about the arts and culture of South Africa. This cultural enrichment program is in collaboration with all specialists and will culminate in "World Tour", an all-school assembly in the spring.

In January, all students and parents will be able to view Teacher's Discovery Traveling Exhibit on artist Vincent Van Gogh, funded by the Harvard grant. Throughout the month of January, students will be creating their own masterpieces inspired by Van Gogh's work.

Mark your calendar: the annual Watertown Art Show will be held April 12-26, 2010 at the Watertown Mall. Everyone is welcome to come and enjoy artwork created by Watertown students K-12.

I would like to thank all families that are sending in egg cartons and small yogurt containers with lids...keep them coming!



MUSIC ROOM NEWS/Mr. Spano

The Lowell Elementary music department is happy to announce that it will be starting group keyboard lessons for Grades 2-5 thanks to generous donations from two Lowell staff members and a former Lowell parent.

Lessons will be part of weekly general music classes in Mr. Spano's room. For updates and new songs to sing, check our Mr. Spano's website, available from the Lowell website, under the [Classroom Sites](#) link.



LIBRARY NEWS/Mrs. Phipps

October Book Recommendations

Hello from your librarian, Mrs. Phipps. The weather is getting cooler, the leaves are changing color, and it is getting darker earlier...perfect time to read a good book! Maybe even a scary one! Check out my October book recommendations. They can all be found in the Lowell Library:

Grades PK-2:

Ghosts in the House! by Kazuno Kohara

A witch's house is haunted with ghosts, what can she do? Find out her silly way of living with the ghosts in this beautifully illustrated book.

The Little Yellow Leaf by Carin Berger

A tale of a little yellow leaf not quite ready to let go of her oak tree. Read how she was brave enough to finally do it.

Grades 3-5:

The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman

Winner of the Newbery Medal, 2008. Nobody Owens has been raised by ghosts! Read about his adventures living in a graveyard.

The Dark-Thirty: Southern Tales of the Supernatural by Patricia C. McKissack

A collection of spooky stories inspired by African-American history. A Newbery Honor book, 1992 and winner of the Coretta Scott King Award, 1992.
