

## December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Citywide PTO

- The State of Massachusetts conflict of interest law forbids public servants, including teachers, from receiving gifts with value in excess of \$50. Violations are subject to civil penalties. Melrose is complying with state recommendations, and principals, staff, and parents will be notified of the new policy. Parents will be allowed to contribute to a charity in the teacher's name, or contribute classroom items and supplies. Teacher stipends will have to come out of a student activity/revolving account. Donations of classroom items and supplies may be tax deductible. A December 7<sup>th</sup> Boston Globe article details the new state recommendations...  
[http://www.boston.com/lifestyle/family/articles/2009/12/07/schools\\_caution\\_against\\_pricey\\_teacher\\_gifts](http://www.boston.com/lifestyle/family/articles/2009/12/07/schools_caution_against_pricey_teacher_gifts)
- The Melrose Community Coalition is sponsoring a Citywide Master Calendar. The goal is to help prevent event conflicts between civic, cultural, and school groups throughout the city. The website is already up and running at [www.melrosecalendar.com](http://www.melrosecalendar.com). The coalition is looking for one PTO district representative to post school events on the website. PTO's would e-mail event dates to this person, who would then post them on the master calendar. For more information, please contact Emily Rubenstein at the Bridge at [erubenstein@melrose.mec.edu](mailto:erubenstein@melrose.mec.edu), or call 781-979-2299.
- Does the district still follow the informal rule of scheduling elementary events on Monday-Wednesday, and MVMMS-High School events, Thursday and Friday? It appears that this has not been the case for the past year. Could this informal guideline be reinstated? Mr. Casey will discuss the issue with principals.
- What will the reporting mechanism be for the revolving account if all student activity and stipend money must be deposited there? Will the business office issue a report of expenditures?
- We briefly discussed issues surrounding the use of visual media in the classroom. Superintendent Casey will be working with the principals to develop some guidelines.
- We discussed the current controversy surrounding the proposal to use money from the Mount Hood Enterprise Fund to help offset city side budget cuts to education. Currently, state law prohibits use of the funds for anything other than support of Mount Hood. Some residents want to use the funds to build an athletic

field at Mount Hood. Parents who want more information should contact their alderman.

- We discussed playground safety and district liability. One elementary school playground has seen a high incidence of serious injuries, including broken bones. Is there a playground safety consultant PTOs could hire to inspect and evaluate equipment and make recommendations?
- Lincoln School teacher Sheryl Breda wrote a children's book titled "Abe's Big Adventure". Autographed copies of the book will be available for purchase through the Lincoln school PTO.