

HOLMES Highlights

A NEWSLETTER
OF THE HOLMES
JUNIOR HIGH
SCHOOL PTA

www.dcn.davis.ca.us/go/hjh

March 2010 ♦ Issue 5

Upcoming Events

- 3/9 Positive School Climate Committee meeting, 10 -11:30 a.m., large conference room
- 3/5 Career Day
- 3/12 Secondary Articulation Day - early dismissal at 12:30 p.m.
- 3/13 DaVinci applications due
- 3/18 Band Spring Concert, 7:00 p.m., Davis High School IPAB
- 3/20 Single Lunch for leadership activity, lunch for all grades is 11:50 - 12:35
- 3/20 School Dance 7:30 - 10:00 p.m., Multipurpose room and gym
- 3/23 Site Council Meeting, 4 - 6 p.m., Holmes library
- 3/25 PTA Meeting, 7 - 9 p.m., Holmes library
- 3/27 Quarter 3 ends
- 3/28 Jr. High School band festival at DHS IPAB
- 4/5-4/9 Spring Break
- 4/12 Site Council meeting, 4 - 6 p.m., Holmes library
- 4/12 Positive School Climate Committee, 3:45 pm, Holmes Office

Please refer to Page 6 for 2010-11 course planning dates

-- **Debbie Martin,**
Vice Principal's Secretary

A Message from the Principal, Derek Brothers

Thank You for Your Support

I hope that you all enjoyed Open House on February 25. Visitors viewed student projects, listened to the music of the Holmes Band, purchased books at the Book Fair and watched students participate in activities in the gym. If you visited our science labs, library, computer labs, gym complex, home economics room and industrial arts facilities, you saw what our wonderful students are accomplishing.

Career Day

On March 5, Holmes students will enjoy Career Day where more than 40 community members visit our school. Each 2nd period class will hear six different speakers sharing information about their occupations, the training and preparation required for their careers, and what students can do to plan for their future career goals. Our Holmes community sends our appreciation to all who contributed their time and effort to this special day for students.

STAR Testing

Seventh graders throughout the state will be writing an essay for the
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A Message from Your PTA President, Cathy Farman

PTA Needs You More Now Than Ever

In almost every column this year, I have mentioned the upcoming budget cuts for the 2010-11 school year. It is hard to know exactly what those cuts will look like, but they will be severe and touch every DJUSD student. Soon beloved teachers and staff will receive pink slips, and this will begin the unpleasant process of cutting \$5.6 million from DJUSD's budget. I encourage you to read the District Dollars article in this newsletter and go to the website to understand more about DJUSD's budget process. Davis Schools Foundation (DSF) will begin a campaign to fund as many teacher and staff positions as it can; watch for announcements from DSF.

Meanwhile, PTA will be as important as ever next year. Your PTA is beginning the process of filling PTA positions for the 2010-11 school year. At the March 25 meeting, officer candidates will be nominated. If you haven't yet volunteered to help Holmes PTA, do it now!

At the junior highs and high school, the PTAs tend to operate a little more quietly than at elementary schools. But junior high PTAs still

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Principal's Message

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STAR writing assessment on March 2, and then our whole school will be gearing up for the state standards tests later in the spring.

Between April 22 and May 1 students will be taking the nationally-normed California Standards Tests in English/language arts, math, U.S. history and science. As all schools in the state will be testing during this testing window, at this time we are uncertain when the testing company will have the results returned to us. Although the state uses this testing for accountability purposes and general achievement information, our school staff finds the individual and group information very valuable; it tells us where relative strengths and weaknesses are in our instructional programs and when we are hitting those targets. For example, Holmes' science scores have risen steadily over the years.

The test results are also one of the measures we use when considering individual student's placement in certain classes. Following are a few suggestions to help prepare your student for the testing:

- Please do not schedule appointments or trips during this time. Students not testing during class testing times will be testing with a mixed class setting during make-up times. Research has found that students do their best testing in their own classroom with their own teacher.
- Try to get into a routine that includes early bedtime, breakfast and arriving to school on time. Students arriving late when a class is

testing will not be allowed into the classroom until that section of testing is complete.

- Encourage your student to do his/her best and to use the opportunity to practice test-taking skills which are increasingly important as students look forward to passing the high school exit exam and applying for college, trade schools, or employment.

It has become increasingly clear that our schools will be facing challenging times in the months ahead. Our district is experiencing declining student enrollment. These factors could reduce our school district budget next year by as much as \$5.6 million.

This significant decrease in funding will, inevitably, impact services, programs, and staffing for our schools. As parents, teachers, staff members, and administrators, our job is to make sure that our educational mission remains our top priority. As a community, we must keep our focus on our students and their welfare.

Times like these cause us to pull together. I ask your patience and understanding as we navigate through the difficult days ahead. To the fullest extent our resources permit, we will place first the welfare of the students we serve.

Thank you for supporting and motivating your children to make the most of their learning experiences here at Holmes!

-- Principal Derek Brothers

A Message from Your Vice Principal, Kerin Kelleher

Information on State and DJUSD School Attendance

There has been a great deal of discussion in the media about attendance and truancy rates in our region, highlighting the negative effects on a child's education as well as on the district's finances. We would like to clarify information that might help students and their guardians understand the latest efforts by the State and the DJUSD related to school attendance.

When students are absent from school, the State allows that absence to be **excused** for medical illness and appointments related to health, along with other less common reasons including court appearances, funerals,

religious holidays, etc. Students are allowed to make up assignments for **excused** absences. Other than the specified reasons allowed by the State, all other absences are **unexcused**. This is not a district decision; it is Education Code and part of required attendance accounting. When students are unexcused, they do not have automatic rights to make up the missed work, and they may be subject to truancy intervention if they accumulate more than 3 days of unexcused absences.

Please know that this effort to determine the status of absences is unrelated to collecting school

funding. The State does not fund a single day of absence for any reason, even the excused days.

This year at Holmes we have also seen an increasing number of students and families taking vacations from anywhere from a few days to a few weeks. Even though students are set up for travel study, this is no substitute for daily instruction directly from the teachers. We hope that if students do have to miss school due to travel, they sign up for travel study and also meet with their regular teachers before and after they return to clarify what they missed while gone.

-- Vice Principal Kerin Kelleher

PTA Needs You More Now Than Ever

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perform an important function at the schools. To give you an idea of what Holmes PTA does, I will share some of our budget details: This year, Holmes PTA is budgeted to raise just over \$35,000. Of that \$35,000, under \$1,000 is spent on administrative costs and another \$1,500 goes to pay our dues to the State PTA organization. That leaves \$32,500 available for the benefit of Holmes students and families. Annually, Holmes PTA uses the money raised to support Holmes programs such as:

- Library books and materials
- International Day
- Safe School Ambassadors
- WEB
- Staff education
- Campus beautification
- Red Ribbon Week
- Toy Shop

PTA helps teachers with individual requests for program support. Science dissection materials were purchased by PTA this year. Foreign language classes have reading materials this year courtesy of PTA. Finally, your PTA is supporting class-wide field trips at every grade level, relating to Social Studies (7th and 8th grade) and PE (9th grade) curriculum.

PTA also provides "hospitality." We feed our staff three times each year -- on the day they have to set up their classrooms in the Fall, on the day they are finalizing grades at the end of the first semester, and during teacher appreciation week. We also help with Holmes events such as Career Day. PTA also serves the families of Holmes. Do you receive listserv announcements about upcoming events? The listserv is maintained by Holmes PTA volunteers. Do you appreciate the monthly newsletter with detailed information about Holmes? The newsletter is produced by PTA volunteers. Do you use the PTA website? Thank a PTA volunteer for maintaining it. Have you ever attended a parent education event at Holmes? It was organized by Holmes PTA volunteers. Do you use your eScrip or Nugget card to raise money for Holmes? This service is organized by PTA volunteers. Did registration go smoothly for your student this Fall? PTA provided numerous volunteers.

I hope next year you will become a PTA volunteer. We need your help!

-- **Cathy Farman, Holmes PTA President,**
clfarman@sbcglobal.net

District Dollars

As part of the district's ongoing effort to keep the community informed, Superintendent James Hammond recently introduced District Dollars, a web-based, interactive program explaining the DJUSD budget. Found at www.districtdollars.org, this tool provides information on:

- How California pays for schools
- How much money the district gets and how it is spent
- Options for balancing the budget
- Superintendent's reduction plan

District Dollars lets you ask questions, provide feedback and share your own values about education priorities.

District Dollars will be available as a Quick Link on the DJUSD website (www.djUSD.net) through June, when the Board will adopt a final budget for the 2010-11 school year. You are invited to visit the site at your convenience.

Parent Education News

The Secondary Schools Parent Education Committee and Sutter West Medical Group present:

Making a Connection: Talking to Your Teen about Sex **Sue Simonson, Pregnancy Prevention, Teen Sexuality Educator**

Generously sponsored by Sutter West Medical Group, this program includes teen presenters, as well as the adult presenter. Parents hear from a teen as to the real sexual pressures teens face and how early that pressure begins. Parents learn assertiveness skills through a series of role-plays led by the teen presenters. The continued reality of STDs including AIDS and the risks of oral sex is presented to raise parent's awareness and knowledge. Parents are taught skills on how to keep the door of communication open in their home and help guide their teen toward healthy sexual decisions.

Date/time: Wed., March 10, 2010, 6:45 p.m.

Location: Harper Junior High School MPR

Questions: Please contact Harper PTO coordinator Ann Moylan, Moylan@csus.edu.

Making Good Choices for Life **Mary James, RN**

Date/time: Wed., May 12, 2010, 7:00 p.m.

Harper Junior High School MPR

Details coming in April.

Seussism Thank You

One book, two book,
red book, blue book
Black book, blue book,
old book, new book
Some are red and some are blue.
Some are old and some are new.
That is what we have bought
with money from you
I bet you'd like to know
some specific titles too

How about:

Blood on the River: James Town 1607
— it really is a read from heaven

Catching Fire—the new Suzanne Collins

Do you think it is set in N'Orleans?

Another series added to the mix

A sci-fi favorite by Garth Nix

The Seventh Tower set of seven books

Are enough to catch anyone with their hook

From there to here, from here to there,
things for students everywhere.

Oh me! Oh my!

Oh me! Oh my!

What a lot of great literacy things to buy—
posters, bookmarks, and the like

Did you see the new ones

we thought you'd like?

Magazines we have bought galore such as
People, *National Geographic*, *Science* and
more (most the kids really do adore and it
keeps them from buying them at the store)

Where do all these library resources
come from?

I can say—from our wonderful Holmes PTA

Our library sure has used the money to go
a long, long way

We see students come

We see them go

Some are fast

And some are slow

Some are high

And some are low

Not one of them is like another

But one thing is for sure--we couldn't
provide for them one and all,

Without your gracious gift of \$3,000 last fall

Thank you from the bottom of our
book reading hearts,

We really appreciate the parents
who do their part.

Thank you Holmes PTA

-- Amy Labson, Librarian

Rain, Rain Go Away

The winter weather has played havoc with our outdoor PE units. Luckily, we have a gym and MPR as alternative classroom locations, but that does not always result in a smooth continuation of units like tennis. Hopefully, we will see a few more sunny days in the weeks to come as we continue with more outdoor units like lacrosse, speed-minton, and multicultural games as well as more tennis.

Our school-wide track unit begins at the end of the month of March. Students will learn sprinting, relay racing, discus, shot put, hurdles, long and triple jumping, and high jump. Our unit precedes our most-popular team sport at Holmes, track and field, coached by Mr. King and Ms. Hogan. Have your student check with one of the coaches about when to report and/or watch the bulletin for any news. By far, the track team involves the most students of any of our 7th and 8th grade sports. The 9th graders have already started track and field at the high school on the NEW track!

We are likely to see a rise in our class sizes next year, so we are anticipating a need for additional equipment to run certain units. If you can help us by dropping off any of the following items in the main office, we will greatly appreciate it. We need gently-used tennis racquets, baseball gloves, a weight scale, a tug-o-war rope, and jump ropes. The girls' side always appreciates gently used socks.

Hopefully, the rain will stop soon and we will have an active and successful Spring Semester outside. Plan to drop by and cheer on our track athletes at one of their meets.

-- Paul Rooney, P.E.

News From the Math Department

Thank you for all the one-sided paper donations; it has saved the school reams and reams of paper. Donations of one sided paper (appropriate content for junior high eyes only) can be used for single sided class handouts. No staples please, and print side up would be helpful. Send to Mrs. King, B19, right next to the bike racks, or drop off in the office.

Honor Society News

Honor Society is a Holmes club to recognize students with a strong academic performance and good citizenship. Students need a 3.4 semester GPA and need to have 5 hours of community service by May 22. Their report card should have the GPA number on it. Applications can be obtained from the Attendance Office, Mrs. King in B19, Mrs. Agee, Mrs. Quenon, Mrs. Kennedy or Mrs. Mowry. All applications are due by March 31 for this school year (community service can be turned in later). Members who complete all requirements take a walking field trip Monday of the last week of school to celebrate their efforts.

Pi Week

Pi Week is coming! Holmes Junior High recognizes Pi week

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Musical Notes for 9th Graders

Auditions for the 2010-11 Davis High School Advanced Treble Choir, Jazz Choir, and Madrigals are March 29-April 1. Auditions are scheduled by mail; applications must be postmarked by March 7. A separate application is required for each choir. Applications are available at junior high and high school offices and online.

An informational meeting covering all three groups will begin at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, March 24, in the Richard Brunelle Theater at Davis High School. Applicants will receive notification by email of their scheduled audition time.

The Advanced Treble Choir is an auditioned chamber choir of 30 to 40 female singers, directed by Dr. Karen Gardias. The group performs a variety of music, both classical and contemporary. For audition information, email Sally Hirst at sally.hirst@sbcglobal.net. Website: www.dhstreblechoir.org.

The Jazz Choir consists of 30 to 40 students, led by Mr. William Zinn. The group performs in musical styles from the 1920s through today and includes jazz, musical theater, patriotic and pop tunes. Students will be taught dance/choreography patterns. For audition information, email Mr. Zinn at wzinn@djusd.k12.ca.us. Website: www.dhsjazzchoir.org

The Madrigals is an auditioned mixed chamber choir of 28 to 32 singers, also directed by Gardias. The group performs music from the 15th century to the present, wearing Renaissance costumes. For audition information, email Debbie Coppinger at DJDCoppinger@att.net. Website: <http://groups.dcn.org/madrigals>.

Orchestra Auditions Set

The Davis High School Orchestra Program, under the direction of Mr. Angelo Moreno, is well known for its level of musical excellence and high performance standards. There are two audition orchestras that are open to 10th, 11th, 12th grade instrumental students. The first audition group is called the "DHS Symphony Orchestra", which is an advanced level full symphony orchestra open to string, woodwind, brass, and percussion players. The Symphony Orchestra will study and perform music for symphony orchestra from the classical to modern era.

The second audition orchestra, brand new to the DHS Orchestra Program, is called the "DHS Baroque Ensemble". This unique string orchestra is open to violin, viola, cello, bass, as well as key board players who are interested in learning to play the harpsichord. The DHS Baroque Ensemble will perform on Baroque instruments.

Please note, if you are a string player and are interested in both the Symphony Orchestra and the Baroque Ensemble you may audition for both at the same time with one audition performance.

All auditions will be held at Davis High in the IPAB in PA-3 from March 18-26. Check your school music room for the sign-up sheet with available times and to obtain an informational sheet. The **sign-up deadline is Friday, March 5**. Contact Mr. Moreno if you need an extension or have questions, at amoreno@djusd.k12.ca.us. The final audition schedule will be posted the week of March 8th will include individual time slots. For information: <http://groups.dcn.org/dhs-orchestras/dhs-symphony-auditions>

Saveagallon Contest

Davis Bicycles' program Saveagallon is trying something different! We're calling it Musical March, with two contests: Always B sharp, and Never B flat.

To enter the Always B sharp contest, send an email attaching your own composition about non-motorized transportation in mp3 format to: info@saveagallon.org. Be creative and keep it PG-rated! If you've written a tune about walking, bicycling, skateboarding or scooting, send it in. The winner of this contest will receive a \$40 gift certificate to Watermelon Music.

The Never B flat contest is for school orchestra or band members. We are looking for a picture of you, your instrument, and your method of non-motorized transportation to school. Using a trailer to haul your tuba? The bus for your bass? Skateboarding your sax? Attach the picture and brief description of what you are doing to get you and your instrument to school without getting in a car. Email the picture and your info to: info@saveagallon.org. The winner of this contest will receive a \$40 gift certificate to Armadillo Music. Parents, please indicate if the photo may be used for publication in the Davis Enterprise.

Entries must be received by March 31, 2010. Questions about the contest? Contact Tim Starback at info@saveagallon.org.

Enjoy the spring temperatures and keep on entering your miles each day you bicycle, walk, take public transit or carpool; they count toward the end-of-year contest!

Counselors' Corner

School planning dates announced

“College: Making it Happen!” is an information day at Sacramento State, to be held on Saturday, March 20, from 8:30 a.m. - noon. This program is intended for 6th through 10th grade students and their parents and will convey the importance of early planning for college through motivational sessions, practical hands-on workshops, career exploration, campus tours, and informational sessions on preparing academically and financially for college. Local colleges and universities will be represented. The program is free and open to the public but pre-registration is recommended. Registration and more information are available at:

College Information

*Day is Saturday,
March 20 from 8:30
a.m. to noon at
Sacramento State
Campus*

Suicide prevention parent education night

On January 27, DaVinci High School counselor Jennifer McNeil assembled a group of school and community members to address parents/guardians/caregivers about adolescent and teen suicide risk and prevention. The objectives of the presentation were to help adults:

- Learn to recognize warning signs of suicidality in adolescents and teens
- Review key components of teen development in relation to risk factors for suicide
- Improve communication with children about suicide
- Develop strategies for supporting and helping a suicidal child
- Become aware of resources in the community

If you were not able to attend, the informative Powerpoint “Children and Teenagers: Warning Signs of Suicide and Mental Health” which was presented by Dr. Andrew Mendonsa, Psy.D., Licensed Clinical Psychologist, is available for viewing through the Holmes website.

Programming events and dates for the 2010-11 school year

This will be the first year that the district will be using our new student information system, Zangle, for course selection. There will be some redundancy built into the process this year as we figure out how to best use the many features of Zangle. Students will be selecting their courses online through a Zangle portal. More information and detailed instructions will be distributed at classroom presentations to students. Dates for next school planning are:

Incoming 8th grade

3/11: Holmes incoming 8th grade parent information meeting, MPR 7-8:30 p.m.

3/15-3/19: Classroom presentations

3/16: DaVinci JHS presentations to students in PE classes

3/22 and 23: DaVinci JHS parent information meetings at Emerson JHS

3/26: DaVinci JHS applications due

3/27: DaVinci JHS notification of acceptance

3/31: Course requests due for Holmes and DaVinci JHS

Incoming 9th grade

Note: The DaVinci JHS 2010-11 9th grade class is full

3/9: Holmes incoming 9th grade parent information meeting, MPR 7-8:30 p.m.

3/15-22: Classroom presentations

3/31: Course requests due

Incoming 10th grade

3/8: Parent information meeting, Performing Arts Building, DHS, 7 p.m.

3/15: DHS counselor presentations to students

3/16: DaVinci HS presentations in PE classes

3/16, 18, 24: DaVinci HS parent presentations

3/24 and 25: DaVinci HS student preview days

4/2: DaVinci applications due

4/13: Course requests for DHS and DaVinci pickup at Holmes

-- Ashley Nelson, Counselor

Davis Parents Who Host Lose the Most

Don't Be a Party to Teenage Drinking

The Davis Parents Who Host Lose the Most website has been updated! Check to see if your name is on a list of Davis families committed to stopping teen drinking and drug use at DavisParentsDo.org.

Consider this advice from the Drug Free Action Alliance:

As a parent, you have tremendous influence on your child, especially when it comes to his or her decision to use or not to use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. According to research, for better or worse, the things you do and say matter.

They're watching! Compared to teens who have not seen their parents drunk, those who have are more than twice as likely to get drunk themselves (in a typical month), as well as three times likelier to use other drugs, like cigarettes and marijuana.

They're listening! Kids whose parents talk with them often about the risks of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs are 50% less likely to use.

They're living up to your expectations! Adolescent behaviors are strongly associated with their parents' expectations. While parents want their children to remain substance-free, at least 50% believe it is unrealistic. According to prevention experts, "parents who expect their children to drink and use drugs will have children who drink and use drugs." (www.HelpThemKnow.com)

If you have questions or would like to join this committee, please contact a committee member: Cathy Farman, clfarman@sbcglobal.net
Cathy Sacks, cjsacks@comcast.net
Ellen Mark, ellenmark89@yahoo.com
Mary James, jamesclan@sbcglobal.net

Math News

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with the following events - get into the fun and be irrational!

Pi Trivia – Daily

Pi trivia questions are given to Math teachers to announce to their classes on a daily basis. Students have the evening to research. For example, the symbol for pi comes from what alphabet? The Indiana legislature tried to pass a bill declaring a value for pi; when did they do this, and what value did they want?

Pi Memorization

Students will recite as many digits of pi as possible, minimum of 25. Extra credit will be given in math for participation. Grand prizes are 'Pi'es

Pi Day Song Competition – “HJH Math Idol” – Tues, Wed, Thurs

Take a song and change the lyrics to be mathematical (e.g. Pi Pi Miss American Pi, did my homework in the ballpark but the homework was dry...) or write an original song with math lyrics. You must submit a written copy of your song (with lyrics and tune identified) and either perform live or submit a recording of your song. Categories are Best Original Song and Most Mathematical & Humorous.

-- Pat King, Math

Attention Shoppers

If you don't have a scrip card, get one! If you have one but it's lost in your wallet, find it and use it! Participating in these institutions' programs does not cost you a dime, but cumulatively they have the potential to generate some serious cash -- that is if you participate.

Signing up is easy:

- **Safeway:** Register online at <http://www.escrip.com/> for an eScrip card which can be used at Safeway, as well as a host of other merchants (holiday shopping anyone?). Click on the "about the program" tab, then click the "Sign up Now!" link and you're on your way. The Group ID for Holmes is 137700004.
- **Nugget:** Next time you're amicably chatting with the clerk as he/she is scanning your groceries at Nugget, ask for an application for Scrip. It's a short form that takes just a few minutes to complete- you'll have your card before you leave the store.
- **SaveMart:** Contact Holmes parent and program contact Wilda Knoesen at knoesen@yahoo.com to get your SaveMart S.H.A.R.E.S. Program card.

Questions? Assistance? Contact Julia Grim at glen_julia_julian@sbcglobal.net or 753-8932 and she'll be happy to help you help Holmes.

Holmes PTA Website Updated

If you haven't been to the Holmes PTA website lately, please take a look. It has been streamlined and updated and contains PTA agendas, minutes, budgets, and more. Check it out at: <http://dcn.davis.ca.us/~hjh/index.htm>.

Get Involved With PTA

Do you have an extra hour or two a month? Would you like to be more involved with your child's junior high experience? Please think about donating your time, talents and energy toward some aspect of the work done by Holmes PTA, and plan to attend the PTA Meeting on Thursday, March 25 from 7-9 p.m. in the Holmes Library. For information contact Cathy Farman at cfarman@sbcglobal.net.

Holmes Bands to Play

Please come to the glittering Davis High School's Performing Arts Center on Wednesday, March 17th at 6:45 p.m., to hear the Holmes Bands play their hearts out, dressed in their formal finest, under the direction of local treasure Clyde Quick.

Music starts at 7:00, with baked goods on sale before and after the concert. And remember: desserts which benefit the band program are guilt-free, so come and hear the joy!

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