

STONINGTON SCHOOL NEWS

JUNE 2006

Stonington Public Schools/860-572-0506

ISSUE 10



“Exercise Your Right to Vote”

**by Michael L. McKee
Superintendent**

Voting in a budget referendum is important.

Every year only between thirteen and eighteen percent of the town's registered voters go to the polls to decide on the services that the town will provide the next year.

My bias is of course the schools. Each year the Board of Education works from October until March to develop a responsible budget to submit to the Board of Finance. The budget expresses the costs of providing the same level of teaching and learning next year that it provided the previous year and usually includes new programs that would help the system grow.

Since the Stonington Public Schools are recognized as a quality system in a state known for quality education, it would seem that the town would support the sustenance of its educational program and provide resources to enable the system to continuously grow and improve. Sales for new homes have been brisk in the town for years, and people report that one of the reasons that people choose to reside here is because of the schools. The state-of-the-art high school is shiny and new and offers an learning environment that is as good as can be found anywhere in the country.

Yet the high school and the other facilities are expensive to run, and the budget must reflect that expense. Utility and fuel costs cannot be reduced; the town

has no control over these costs, and they are increasing exponentially. However, for the school system to meet contractual obligations and stay competitive with salaries, to provide technology for instruction and administration, and to ensure that the faculty remains current in pedagogy and educational philosophy, the school system must have more revenues than those needed to just open its doors.

The people who are most likely to understand the implications of the school budget are the parents of the children who are consumers of the education provided. It could be assumed that these are the people who are most likely to participate in referenda concerning the funding of the schools.

But that is not the case in Stonington.

Since the voting records are public records, research has been done to determine the voting patterns of parents in the school system. About 30% of the parents are not registered to vote; over 40% of the parents don't vote; and less than 30% participate. The result is that the budget referenda in Stonington fail one, two, or more times before being passed. After each failure the Board of Finance reduces the education budget further.



With each reduction, fewer new services and even fewer existing programs can be funded. Some years, like this one, certified (educator) and classified (support staff)

positions are eliminated. As a result, class size increases, fewer courses are offered at the high school meaning more study halls, less support for extra-curricular activities ensue, and other drastic reductions occur.

Your vote counts. Don't let some other parent who votes care more about your child's education than you do. Vote!

JUNE 2006

SPS DISTRICT CALENDAR

SUN	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SAT
				1 9:00 MMS Gr. 4 DMS Orientation Visit 6:00 SHS WISE Dinner	2 9-9:30 DMS All School Assembly 7:00 PMS Grade 8 Talent Show	3 6:30 SHS POPS Concert
4	5 9:30-10:30 WVSS Kindergarten Orientation, Last Name A-L 9-11 & 1-3 DMS Field Day 6:30 SHS Academic Achievement Night 6:30-8:00 WBSS Parent Book Chat 7:00 PMS SBIT	6 9:00 SHS Upcoming 9 th Grade (MMS/PMS) Activities Fair 9:30 WVSS PTO Mtg. 9:30-10:30 DMS Kindergarten Orientation (Last name A-K) 9-11 & 1-3 DMS Field Day 6:00 MMS SBIT 6:30 WBSS PTO Mtg. 6:30 SHS Spring Sports Banquet	7 9:30-10:30 WVSS Kindergarten Orientation, Last Name M-Z 9-11 & 1-3 DMS Field Day – RAIN DATE 9:05-9:45 (Gr. 3&4) 9:50-10:30 (Gr. K-2) DMS – MMS Jazz Band Performance	8 9:30-10:30 DMS Kindergarten Orientation (Last name, L-Z) 9:30-10:30 WBSS Grade 2 WVSS visit 7:00 PMS Grade 4 Parent Mtg. 7:30 Central Office BOE Mtg.	9 6:30 MMS Grade 8 Graduation Party 7-11 Senior Prom at Mystic Aquarium MMS 6 th Grade Career DAY	10 8-1 SHS Swim Team Car Wash 4:30-9:30 PMS Grade 8 Year End Party
11	12 12-8 Town/School Budget Referendum 4:30 WVSS SBIT Mtg. 4:30 DMS SBIT Mtg. 7:00 SHS K-12 Committee Mtg. 7:00 PMS DARE Graduation WVSS Kindergarten Field Day	13 12-1:30 PMS 4 th Grade Orientation 1:15 MMS Talent Show 6:30 SHS SEF Mtg. <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; text-align: center;">6/12-6/13 Senior Exams 6/14-6/15 Grades 9-12 Exams 6/16-6/19 Grades 9-11 Exams</div>	14 9:30-10:30 DMS Flag Day Ceremony 6:00 PMS Panther Dinner	15 9:30 WVSS Awards Assembly 9:30-10:30 DMS Flag Day Ceremony-RAIN DATE 12:30-3:15 WBSS Field Day 6:00 SHS Senior Banquet	16 12:30-3:25 DMS 4 th Grade 12:30 WVSS Grade 2 Picnic Graduation Party 6-8 DMS PTO Family Picnic	17
18	19 7:30 SHS Senior Breakfast 1:00 MMS Awards Assembly 1:30-3:00 WBSS 4 th Grade Promotion Celebration PMS Grade 5 Field Day	20 9:15 DMS All School Sing- Along 10:00 MMS 8 th Grade Completion Ceremony 10-1 DMS Ice Cream Social 6:30 SHS Graduation WVSS Grade 1&2 Field Day	21	<div style="border: 3px double black; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;">Congratulations Class of 2006</div>		24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Summer Fun



T U O K O O C V R I
 E X M P H C A E B C
 K C I I T O W E L E
 N P R C Z Q G D D C
 A S A N D A L S L R
 L S W I M S U I T E
 B F C C S N P A S A
 O U R U T B O O I M
 N N N A G Z A V O P
 P W N N T J W P P L

FIND THE HIDDEN WORDS

BEACH	POOL
BLANKET	SANDALS
COOKOUT	SUN
FUN	SUNTAN
ICECREAM	SWIMSUIT
PICNIC	TOWEL