

# W.E. BALMER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

## APRIL 2010 NEWS

Volume IV Issue VIII

### Class Placement

The placement of your child for the 2010-11 school year is one of our highest priorities. As in past years, our goal is to make the best possible placement for every child at Balmer as we work to create heterogeneous and balanced classes.

Creating student groupings for classroom assignments is a complex process. Our entire professional staff will spend a great deal of time carefully weighing each individual student's academic, social and emotional needs. Our classrooms are not grouped by ability. Homogeneous classrooms are classrooms that have students with the same or similar abilities. Heterogeneous classrooms are rooms that have students with mixed abilities. The classes at the Balmer School are heterogeneous. In today's divergent world, it is important that our students learn to relate to many different people. We hope that you will support your child in his/her endeavor to discover how to work well with a broad range of students and teaching styles. This is an important aspect of your child's education. *Thank you for your cooperation with this important process.*

### Struggling Learners

Perhaps the greatest struggle that we as educators face is helping struggling learners to succeed. At school, we provide all students with a variety of supports they need to keep up with their grade-level peers. However, there are many parents who are frustrated because they don't know how to assist their struggling learner at home.



The following are suggestions taken from the article "Helping Parents Help the Slow Learner" in the January/February edition of *Principal* magazine sponsored by the National Association of Elementary School Principals:

**“Develop patience.** *Show support and encouragement by learning the art of patience. This is not easy when children do not live up to parental expectations; however, it is a necessary asset in working with slow learners. They need to know that their parents have faith and trust in them and their capabilities regardless of their learning ability.*

**Accept and expect best efforts.** *Indicate parental respect by not pushing for achievement beyond children's abilities. On the other hand, accepting less than what they are capable of accomplishing is not in their best interest. School personnel can provide information on reasonable academic expectations.*

**Allow extra time.** *Provide the time necessary for the accomplishment of academic and nonacademic tasks. Slow learners take longer to complete most activities than their peers and siblings. Providing the necessary time requires patience and good time management on the parent's part. These are skills that can be learned with practice.*

**Recognize strengths.** *Pay attention to what the children do well. Help them build on those strengths. Some parents of children who are slow learners become overprotective. Allow them freedom to succeed, and support and teach them during failures”.*

### Spring Cleanup

Now that the warm weather is upon us and the mess left from winter is evident, it is time to start planning a Spring Cleanup of the Balmer Playground. On Friday, April 30<sup>th</sup> from 11:00am through approximately 1:30pm parents are invited to help the Balmer students clean our playground. Students will be provided with rubber gloves and a trash bag. If you are interested in helping supervise this event you can contact Donna Briand(dnabree@yahoo.com) or Tara Zanella(tarazanella@charter.net) .

### Support Our Troops

The Northbridge PTA and Balmer School are proud to sponsor a collection of needed items for our United States Troops serving overseas! During the week of April 12<sup>th</sup> we will collect non-perishable items that are often used by our troops.

You will be receiving a list of suggested items. If you can donate to this cause, please send items in with your child during that week. Your support is greatly appreciated!

### Evening of the Arts

Do you enjoy great music and appreciate fine art? If you do then you will want to attend *Evening of the Arts!* This will take place on Thursday, April 29<sup>th</sup> at the Northbridge Middle School. The schedule for the evening is as follows:

**6:00 P.M.** : District-wide Art Show and NHS Jazz Band

**7:00 P.M.** : Balmer School Chorus

Balmer School Show Choir

Middle School Band

Middle School Chorus

Middle School Beginner Band

*Intermission*

Faculty Performance

NHS Band

NHS Chorus and Acapella Choir

Finale: All performing groups

### MCAS Practice Question

This months MCAS practice question is from the 2009 Grade 4 Math Test.

Calvin drew a shape that has the attributes listed below.

- It has exactly 4 sides.
- It has exactly 2 right angles.

Which of the following could be the shape that Calvin drew?

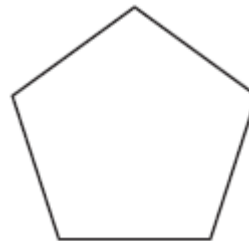
A.



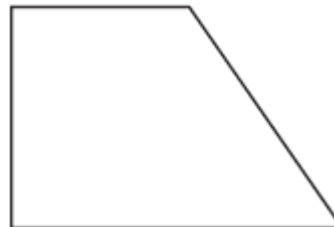
B.



C.



D.



**Good luck to all of our 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Students on the MCAS Tests!**