



HARWOOD HAPPENINGS

SPRING 2009

Important Dates for May and June

Wednesday, May 6	6 pm	Vermont All State Parade Essex at Essex High School
Wed. May 6 - Sat. May 9		Vermont All State Music Festival at Essex High School
Mon. May 11 - Fri. May 15		Harwood Union Spirit Week
Friday, May 15		Quarter 4 Progress Reports
Saturday, May 16	7 pm	Prom at the Sugarbush Resort
Monday, June 1	6:30 pm	High School Academic Awards Evening
Tuesday, June 2	7 pm	High School Concert #1
Tuesday, June 9	7 pm	High School Concert #2
Thursday, June 11	All Day	Step-up Day
Thursday, June 11	Time TBA	High School Jazz Band to Church Street
June 15 - 18		Final Exam Week
Friday, June 19	6 pm	Graduation Scholarship Night
Saturday, June 20	10:00 am	Graduation

Updates for the Harwood Community

SCIENCE NECAPS FOR JUNIORS: On Monday - Wednesday, May 18, 19, and 20, all juniors will participate in the New England Comprehensive Assessment Program in Science. During these days, juniors will participate in the examinations in science classrooms from 8:10-9:05 am. An alternative schedule will run on Tuesday and Wednesday. Students who attend HCLC or the Barre Technical Center will be tested on the Harwood campus. After the exam, a bus will transport students to these off-campus programs. Case managers will provide assistance to students eligible for accommodations during the exam. Make-up days will be May 21 and 22. Please contact Dorinne Dorfman with any questions at 882-1103.

POWERSCHOOL: On the Harwood website, www.harwood.org, a button now links directly with PowerSchool. Parents, guardians, and students need their login names and passwords in order to view grades online. Please contact Wendy Gilbert at 882-1101 for assistance.

SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS: Harwood Senior **William P. Ronci** has been selected as the 2009 Horatio Alger National Scholar.

With this award, he has been honored in Washington, DC for his determination and hard work and will receive a \$20,000 scholarship to the college of his choice.

Harwood Union Middle School associate principal **Lisa Atwood** and teacher Donna Cook have been awarded membership in Alpha Delta Kappa, an International Honorary Sorority for Women Educators who are "united in the common goals of educational excellence, altruism, and world understanding."

Harwood Associate Principal **Dorinne Dorfman** has published "Every Minute Counts: A Case Study in Democracy in Berlin Secondary Schools," as a chapter in the recently released book [Globalization Develops Civic Education](#).

At this time of year, many students and staff members have received wonderful news about college acceptance, awards, or opportunities for academic or professional pursuits. If you would like to share the great news in Harwood's electronic Daily Bulletin, please email **Nancy Mytro** at myrton@harwood.org or call 882-1100.

UPDATE ON THE HARWOOD STUDENT HANDBOOK: The section on students bringing knives to the Harwood Union Middle/High School campus, buildings, and parking lots is lengthy and deserves greater clarification. The handbook mentions a distinction between knives with blades under 2 inches (such as penknives and pocketknives) and larger knives. To clarify, no person may bring a knife of any length or size onto school grounds. Only knives being used as tools for a class assignment, such as utility knives, that have been provided by a teacher may be permitted for the assigned use during class. If a student is found with a knife, a teacher or administrator will confiscate the weapon. An administrator will inform parents/guardians and the school superintendent. Parents/guardians can pick up the knife from the principal a few days later. Consequences for bringing the knife to school will be determined by school administration, which may include up to 10 days of suspension, notification of police, and/or an expulsion hearing with the Harwood School Board.

A student who finds a weapon on the way to school, on school property, or in the school building and takes the weapon immediately to an administrator's office, shall not be considered in possession of a weapon. If a student accidentally brings a knife onto campus and voluntarily gives it to an administrator before s/he is found with it, then it will be confiscated without disciplinary consequences. Parents/guardians can pick up the knife once the administrator contacts them.

This notice is an addendum to Harwood's Student Handbook.

PREVENTING SCHOOL VIOLENCE: In February, a student had brought a gun to the Harwood Community Learning Center (HCLC) located in Waterbury. The steps taken by staff and administration were in strict accordance with safety procedures and, in the view of a police officer involved, "The school did an A+ job." Nevertheless, we can always improve. Since the incident, the Harwood Administrative Team is reviewing current safety practices and is considering additional measures to ensure the safest learning community possible. Only with the active collaboration of all staff members, students, parents, and community partners, can we achieve this goal. Based on our research, here are a few important facts:

A quarter of students in America report that guns are easily accessible at home. There is a positive correlation between this quick access and the increased likelihood of a student committing suicide and/or perpetrating violence. Our best hope to prevent gun violence is for parents/guardians to take every safety precaution when storing weapons in the home. The most effective means is to lock up unloaded weapons and ammunition in separate locations and hide the keys from youth.

Most violence involving youth happens outside of school. Less than 1% of youth homicides occur on a school campus or coming to and going from school. Research demonstrates that in communities where adults maintain "informal social control" over children and teens, youth crime

and violence are substantially reduced. When adults confront young people hanging out and missing school, delinquency decreases. Harwood leadership asks that all community members take part in this effort to show their caring support for the younger generation by talking with them about doing the right thing.

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While Harwood is fortunate not to have the characteristics of a school threatened by frequent violence (such as overcrowding, poor instruction, and high student and staff turnover), every member of the school community may be a bystander, witnessing prohibited, dangerous activities. The bystander encourages rule-breaking simply by keeping silent, watching others in distress, or assisting the perpetrator. Or the bystander can inform a teacher or administrator as soon as possible to prevent the situation from starting or worsening. Harwood's staff rightly recognizes students as partners in maintaining a positive and safe school climate, and the school board has instituted policies to protect bystanders from retaliation.

The bystander may also hear someone make threats towards a specific person, a group of people, or the school. A student writing for a national essay contest, "When Not to Keep a Secret," stated, "All these [problems] could have been prevented if any of these kids' friends had just told someone about what was going to happen... It's our responsibility to make sure that nobody has a gun or knife in their locker" (American

Psychiatric Association Alliance, 1999).

Youth violence cannot be solved by schools alone. Psychological, familial, social, and community problems that manifest themselves in lawbreaking or violence are addressed by Harwood Union, police and court services, and social service agencies. Ongoing parent/guardian participation in school and community-based programs designed to help their children succeed can make the critical difference in turning a troubled young person around, overcoming barriers, and reaching success.

In keeping with best practice in schools, Harwood has instituted a restorative justice process to prevent and respond to conflict and rule-breaking. This includes mediation, circle conferences that bring all those involved to dialogue together, meaningful community service, boys and girls groups, and an array of counseling, anti-bullying, and multicultural training. If any members of the Harwood community would like to become involved in these efforts, please contact Dorinne Dorfman at 882-1103.

