



UNION MEMORIAL SCHOOL

Parent Newsletter
December 9, 2011

Parent Conferences: We had a great turnout for parent conferences. This year, 94% of our students had one or both of their parents attend a conference. Thank you for taking the time to support your child's education in this important way.

No December PTO Meeting: There is no PTO meeting in December. We will meet again on January 10 at 6:30 PM in the library. All are welcome.

UMS Sling Bags for Sale: Don't forget the UMS sling bags are still on sale in the office for \$9. Checks should be made payable to UMS PTO.

Holiday Help: Here are some resources for families who might need support during the holidays:

- **Salvation Army** (864-6991) – They provide gifts (toys and clothing) and food baskets. You must apply by December 16. You will need to bring a picture ID, proof of address, social security card or Medicaid card for each family member and proof of income (one month of paycheck stubs or a letter from DCF or SSI). The Salvation Army is located at 64 Main Street and their hours are 9:00 AM to noon.
- **Chances for Christmas** (578-9242) – An application is required for eligible families with children from birth to age 18 up until December 21. You cannot be involved with any other program. Call for an appointment. They do accept walk-ins on December 22 and 23.
- **Colchester Community Food Shelf** – Located right next door to our school, the food shelf is open from 11:00 – 1:30 on Tuesdays and Thursdays and 3:30 – 6:00 on Wednesdays. They are open year-round, not just during the holiday season.
- **Hilltop Light Ministries** (863-0524) – They provide gifts for kids and food baskets. You must call to make an appointment to complete the intake. Eligible families may apply between now and December 22.
- **Junior's Pizza** – They offer a free Christmas meal on Christmas day between noon and 3:00 PM at their downtown location. It is located at 176 Main Street in Burlington.

Respectfully,

Chris Antonicci
Principal

UPCOMING DATES

December 22-30	Holiday Recess
January 10	PTO Meeting

Children can often be delightful. They can also sometimes be deceitful or unkind, bullies or victims. Sometimes the difference can be in the lessons they learn, both at home and at school. Here are some ways to help your children grow up to be respectful and kind and to have the self-respect they need to make the right choices:

- **Trade places.** TV shows and movies can be helpful in teaching children how to be more sensitive to others' feelings. When you're watching a program together and one character behaves unkindly to another, pause the movie or ask at the commercial, "Did you notice how mean that character was? How do you think that made the other character feel? What would you do in that situation?" Talk it through together and stress the importance of treating people with respect.
- **Face the mirror.** Too many children are very skilled at being angels in front of teachers or parents and the opposite when adults are not around. One of the most powerful lessons parents can teach their children is this: The real you is the way you behave when no one is watching.
- **Read up.** From the time your children first hear bedtime stories through the time they're old enough to read for themselves, look for books that quietly impart messages about self-discipline, kindness to others, dealing with peer pressure and telling the truth. Talk about the stories and see if they've ever been in a situation like the character in the book.
- **Truth or consequences.** Every child, at one point or another, will try to lie. Discuss with your children that trust is one of the most important characteristics a person can ever have and that it is very hard to earn that trust if people think of them as a liar. Ask them how they would feel if they found out someone had lied to them.
- **No excuses.** Sometimes, parents are unaware that their children are misbehaving in school until they're notified by a teacher. The problem is that parents too often react with denial. But that doesn't help anyone, particularly not the child who learns that he or she can get away with bad behavior at school as long as the parents are fooled.
- **Stand strong.** It is difficult for children to deal with situations in which their classmates, neighbors, siblings or friends are behaving in a bad or cruel manner. Help them be prepared by role-playing ahead of time – act out situations they may face and see how they'd react.

SOURCE: Adapted from *NAESP Report to Parents* brochure.