

# SECONDARY SCOOP

*everychild. onevoice.®*

*Newsletter of the Massapequa Jr/Sr PTSA® Parent-Teacher-Student Association  
Serving Berner Middle School, MHS Ames Campus, Massapequa High School  
Nassau Region  
New York State Congress of Parents and Teachers, Inc.  
-Branch of the National PTA-*

May 2008

[www.MASSAPEQUAPTA.org](http://www.MASSAPEQUAPTA.org)

Volume 4, Issue 3

THE SECONDARY SCOOP IS PAID FOR BY PTSA FUNDS, PREPARED BY VOLUNTEERS AND PUBLISHED THREE TO FOUR TIMES A YEAR.

## *From the President's Desk*

Another year is rapidly coming to a close, and so is my term as President. The past two years have certainly been memorable. I have so many people to thank for making my job relatively stress-free.



First and foremost, I would like to thank my family for their never-ending support. Thank you to the members of the Executive Committee. It's been a pleasure working with you. Thank you to Dr. Grossane, Dr. Williams and Mr. Scarallo for always being there to answer questions. Thank you to all of the administrators for collaborating on programs and workshops. Parents are a little less frightened by the secondary experience when they become more informed.

I hope you had the opportunity to join us at our two big spring events. Our Reflections ceremony took place in March. It was one of the most fun Reflections ceremonies that I have ever attended. Peggy Alter and her committee did an amazing job. I can't wait to see what she has planned for next year.

Our other big event was the Annual Prom Fashion Show. Laura Coiro and committee again did a fantastic job. The real stars of the evening of course are the students of Massapequa High School. Thank you to all the models and the fine musicians of the Jazz Band. It was an unforgettable evening, with all profits going to fund this year's Senior Awards. Congratulations to the graduating seniors! This is such an exciting time. We wish you much luck and success on the next step of life's journey.

I would like to remind you that May 20<sup>th</sup> is the budget vote. Please go out and cast your ballot and let your voice be heard.

In closing, I would like to thank all of the wonderful, hard-working volunteers who help to make Jr/Sr a success. Please come out and support PTSA next year. Become a "Helping Hand", join or even chair a committee. An interest sheet for next school year can be found inside this newsletter.

Have a great summer! See you in September!

*Maureen Geier*

Please join us for our final Jr/Sr HS PTSA General meeting for this year on Monday, May 19th at 7:30PM in the Ames Cafetorium.

The program will include the election of next year's officers and the presentation of awards. We hope to see you there!



**Congratulations  
to the graduating**



**Class of 2008**

Volume 4, Issue 3  
May 2008

**Editor**

Maureen Cohen  
797-2024

**SecondaryScoop@yahoo.com**

**Massapequa Jr/Sr High School  
PTSA Executive Board**

- President - Maureen Geier 799-3483
- Executive VP - Lucille Vitale 798-8718
- VP of Membership - Carol Ann O'Donnell 799-6161
- Treasurer - Dianne Sheffield 795-9127
- Recording Sec. - Debra Muller 795-3940
- Corresponding Sec. - Terry Yard-Healy 797-3427

**Building VP's**

- BMS - Sheryl Cowan 795-7148
- MHS Ames - Maureen Cohen 797-2024
- MHS - Kimberly Enderley 798-2877

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**Jr/Sr PTSA® Proposed 2008-2009 Slate of Officers**

- President - Sheryl Cowan
  - Executive Vice President - Debbie Austin
  - VP of Membership - Valerie Sullivan
  - Treasurer - Dianne Sheffield
  - Recording Secretary - Mary Alibrandi
  - Corresponding Secretary - Terry Yard-Healy
  - Berner VP - Lydia Magaddino
  - Ames VP - Maureen Cohen
  - MHS VP - Gloria Parlatore
- Additional Nominations will be taken from the floor at our May 19, 2008 General Meeting. Please remember to bring your PTSA membership card to vote.



*everychild.one voice.*

**Massapequa Council of PTAs® 2008-2009 Slate of Officers**

- President - Anne Kasschau
- 1st Vice President - Grace Hussey
- 2nd Vice President - Maureen Cohen
- Treasurer - Stephanie Bisignano
- Recording Secretary - Geri Woll
- Corresponding Secretary - Allison Prystupa



## Dr. James Grossane, Principal Massapequa High School Main Campus

How quickly the year has flown by! I want to compliment all the efforts of our PTSA to create such a wonderful Prom Fashion Show. The students looked stunning in their outfits and it was obvious they were very proud to be associated with this annual fund raising event. We also had a fun filled "Mr. Massapequa" competition sponsored by the Senior Class. We have such talented young men! Congratulations to student Mr. Massapequa Fred Bastien and teacher recipient Mr. O'Reilly on their reigns!

I hope you had an opportunity to see the music department's production of *Beauty and the Beast*. I thought I was in a Broadway theater! I extend hearty congratulations to our students on outstanding performances. In addition to congratulating them and Mrs. Dempsey and Mrs. Greene for this outstanding production, you should also know that all the sets were designed and created by our students at MHS. Congratulations to these students in Mr. DeSantis' classes and to the entire Art Department teachers and students for all their hard work in creating this magical world.

There are many exciting events coming up at the Main Campus of the High School. Concerts, plays, exhibits, the Junior Banquet, Senior Prom and of course, graduation ceremonies. Please be sure to check the school calendar so that you are aware of these important dates and times. Thanks again to the PTSA volunteers that assisted us at our Annual Mandatory Prom Meetings. Over 560 families have already participated and the first round of Prom tickets has been sold. The families of seniors attending the meetings were very appreciative of the information they received regarding this evening. **If your child has changed their mind and wishes to attend the prom, please be sure they contact senior class advisor Mrs. Zappula. If needed, we will have one more presentation to enable these students to purchase tickets in June.**

Thank you again for all your support. Be sure to remind your students to study hard for their AP exams, finals and Regents examinations. Enjoy the warm weather!

## Dr. Barbara Williams, Principal MHS Ames Campus

The 2007-2008 school year is rapidly coming to a close and it is almost time to bid our freshmen a fond farewell as they continue their journey through high school at the Main Campus. The Class of 2011 will soon be preparing for final examinations. Parents should receive a schedule for finals with the April Ames newsletter. It will also be available on the website. The culminating activity for this ninth grade class will be a dinner dance/cruise around Manhattan on June 6.

An informational meeting for the parents of the incoming Class of 2012 was held on Tuesday, April 1<sup>st</sup>. Presentations given by department supervisors that evening are available on the district website in the Ames correspondence section. Please note: The Ames Grade 9 Orientation, originally scheduled for Friday, June 27, will take place in late August. Parents of incoming ninth grade students will receive information regarding that program over the summer.

It has been a wonderful school year, and we wish our departing students much good fortune throughout their school careers and their lives.

Have a happy, healthy, restful summer!

## Mr. Stephen Scarallo, Principal Berner Middle School

Raising children used to be easier (at least that's what my parents say), but with the arrival of "online communities", often called social networking sites, parents must work even harder to know their children's relationships and connections with others. Recently, my 13-year-old son came to me and was quite upset. Someone had posted some offensive remarks about him on a social network.

What could I do and what can other parents do to stay informed about their children's online connections? Here are several suggestions for keeping your young adolescent safe and socially connected.

First, have an honest and frank conversation with your child about online social networks—the good and the bad. Whether you like it or not, these communities seem to be a part of everyone's life, so it is important to accept that and move forward. Your child will be safer if he knows he can come to you with any concerns about his online presence and communications he receives.

Second, with your child, go to the privacy setting on his social network page and make sure that he allows only his friends to see his page—on the "profile viewable by" section, click "my friends only." This is very important! If one of his "friends" posts inappropriate comments, then you may have to insist that the account be closed.

Finally, make sure that your child's primary social connections are real and face-to-face. Also, it is a good idea to have your family computer in a public space in your home. We have a large TV room with a family computer connected to the Internet. This is the only place in our home to go online. Just as you might limit telephone time, limit the amount of time your child spends online. As with any other family rules, have regular discussions about what is working and what is not, changes that need to happen, privileges that come with age and responsible behavior, and the importance of honesty and caring.

I am pleased that my son felt comfortable enough to show me what was posted—together we took a couple of steps that will, hopefully, help him avoid the pitfalls that can occur while online.

As always, thank you for your support of our programs. Don't miss the BMS Art Exhibit – June 5 at 7:30 PM

## Substance Abuse Awareness

At the April PTSA meeting, YES Community Counseling Center presented a program on Underage Drinking and Drugging. One of the websites recommended for parents is: [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com). The following is some information that can be of use to parents of teenagers.

### The Senior Years

Tis the season for high school seniors to celebrate: from spring break to prom to graduation parties. It's also an opportune time for parents to talk to their teens about the drinking, drug use, and risky behavior that sometimes occur at these celebratory events.

Even if you've already talked to your teen about these issues, now is a good time to reinforce your expectations. Be clear that even though they're graduating and may soon be on their own, drinking and drug use remain unacceptable. Explain and enforce real consequences for breaking these rules. There are also often safe alternatives for senior-year celebrations. Get involved in planning or chaperoning alcohol-free parties and encourage your teen to spend their time off from school volunteering or engaged in productive community activities.

### Alcohol Awareness

Any time is a good time for you to talk to your teen about the dangers of drinking. In addition to starting an open conversation, one of the most powerful things you can do for your teen is to set a good example when it comes to your own drinking.

**How do you know when your teen has formed a dangerous habit? Parenting expert Alison Birnbaum suggests these warning signs:**

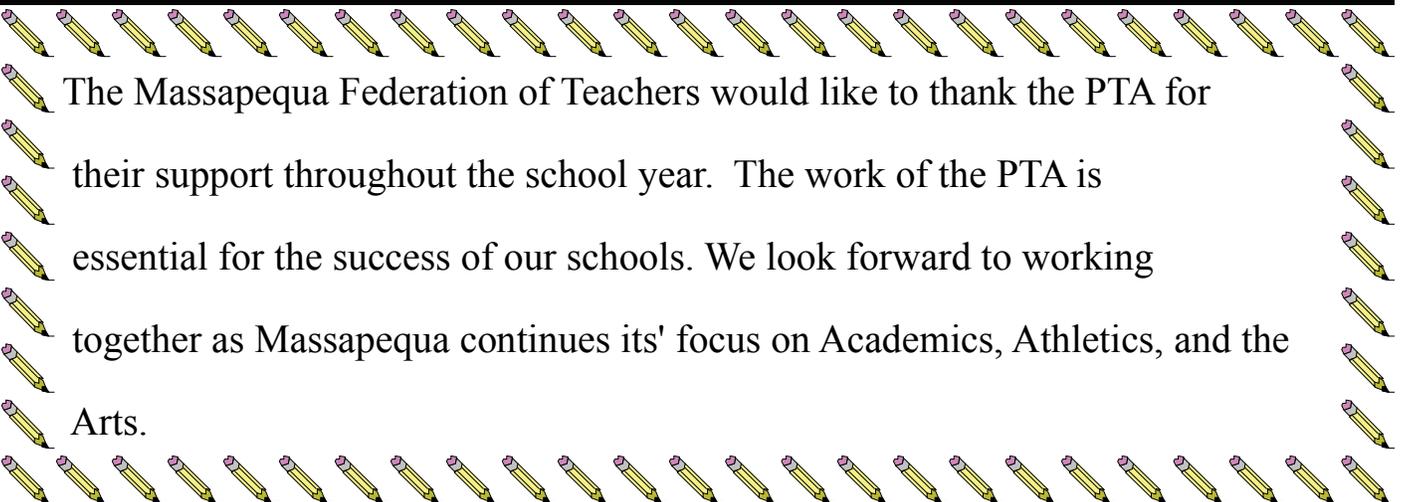
1. Your child's relationships have suffered because he/she is no longer seen as being able to keep his/her word.
2. Your child's school work has suffered.
3. Your child has been treated or limited by a community institution: the school, the police, or the hospital.
4. Your child's habit continues even though it makes her/his life worse.

### Rulemaking tips for parents of teens

1. Set clear rules and discuss in advance the consequences of breaking them. Don't make empty threats.
2. The rules must be consistently enforced.
3. Punishments should involve mild, not severe, negative consequences.
4. Set a curfew and enforce it.
5. Have teens check in at regular times when they're away from home or school.
6. Call parents whose home is to be used for a party. Don't be afraid to stop in to say hello (and make sure that adult supervision is in place).
7. Make it easy to leave a party where drugs are being used. Discuss in advance how to signal you or another designated adult who will come to pick up your teen when he/she feels uncomfortable. Later, be prepared to talk about what happened.
8. Listen to your instincts. Don't be afraid to intervene if your gut reaction tells you that something is wrong.

Taken from: <http://www.theantidrug.com>

## From the MFT...



The Massapequa Federation of Teachers would like to thank the PTA for their support throughout the school year. The work of the PTA is essential for the success of our schools. We look forward to working together as Massapequa continues its' focus on Academics, Athletics, and the Arts.

# A Message from Mr. Charles Sulc, Acting Superintendent of Schools

Dear Members of Junior/Senior PTSA,

In the Fall 2007 school newsletter, I wrote to tell you how honored and excited I was to serve as your Acting Superintendent of Schools. Everyone has been so welcoming and supportive and I can't thank you enough for your patience and cooperation as we've worked together to provide opportunities for our students to excel in academics, extracurriculars, and athletics. Together we are making a difference for Massapequa's students.

As we move closer to the 2008-2009 budget vote, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the community members who have attended the district's series of public budget workshops held over the past several weeks. Your feedback is very important to our district. As always, the district's main goal when preparing the school budget is to strike the appropriate balance between maintaining the programs that are essential to student success, while proposing a budget that is affordable to the community.

As you are probably aware, our school district anticipated a very difficult budget year. Former Governor Spitzer's proposed budget called for an increase in state aid for Massapequa of approximately \$100,000. However, as a result of your support and the collaborative efforts of Senator Fuschillo and Assemblyman Saladino, the District realized more than \$2,100,000. in additional state aid. Thank you!

The proposed 2008-09 budget maintains all of the District's programs and includes an additional School Wide Enrichment teacher. It also allows for three contingency teachers to address enrollment growth and scheduling issues at the secondary level. Special Education programs are expanding and an additional 3 - 4 teachers are projected to be needed for our co-teaching and collaborative instructional models at the secondary level. Elective opportunities are increasing at both the Ames Campus and the MHS main campus while we continue to support a large number of college level and Advanced Placement courses. Our proposed budget also includes funding for three additional athletic teams at Berner Middle school and designates Cheerleading as a varsity sport.

On behalf of the Massapequa Board of Education, we appreciate your continued support for our students. We hope to see you at the budget hearing on May 8th and we encourage you to vote on Tuesday, May 20, 2008.

Sincerely,

Charles V. Sulc

Acting Superintendent of Schools

## 7th Grade Directory

Parenting & Family Life  
7<sup>th</sup> Grade Directory

Do you have a child entering 7<sup>th</sup> grade in September? If so look for information in your child's backpack regarding the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Directory. This is a phone and address directory for all 7<sup>th</sup> grade students who choose to be in it. You must complete the form with your information and return it to your elementary PTA mailbox in order to receive a copy of the directory. For further information,  
Contact Debbie Austin, 7997-9652

## Ames SDM

The Shared Decision Making committee at Ames, consisting of Dr. Williams, teachers and parents, has been working on several initiatives this year. An Olympic-themed mural will be painted in the building soon. Also, we are excited to announce that students will have access to the courtyard during lunch periods now that the area has been spruced up.

## IMing and Social Networking

Are you battling your child over too much time spent on instant messenger (IM)? Are you warring about a social networking site, such as MySpace?

For today's youth, IMing and texting are the equivalent of yesteryear's yapping on the telephone.

The need to communicate is eternal, only the means of communicating have evolved.

Ten- to 15-year-olds live in a peer-obsessed world. The social drama of the here and now defines middle-schoolers. IM and the Internet have maximized how many gossip scoops can transpire at once, in tandem with homework, listening to music, and yes, evading anxious parents.

Starting around age 12, kids crave privacy and seek to create a private life. Sometimes that means having secrets with friends and keeping those secrets from parents. Internet communications allow kids to make intimate confessions, particularly because kids will say things online that they'd never express in person. Also, because parents can't overhear the conversations, IMing affords privacy.

The secret-keeping and rapport that empower young socializers in cyberspace often terrify parents. Why? Because adults did not grow up with cyber technologies embedded in their lives. Today's tweens have always had the Internet in their lives.

Many parents fear that predators are everywhere in the anonymous and potentially dishonest cyberspace terrain, but in fact, the percentage of kids being sexually solicited online is declining. A 1999/2000 survey conducted by the University of New Hampshire's Crimes Against Children Research Center found that 19 percent of Internet users between the ages of 10 and 17 had received an unwanted request to engage in sexual conversation or activity. In 2005, only 13 percent reported receiving such a request. The report on the 2005 survey attributes some of this reduction to more cautious online behavior by youth, fewer of whom are interacting online with people they don't know.

### Setting rules to address "stranger danger"

To be sure, any percentage of innocent tweens being exposed to predators is too high. But the answer is not in going backward and banning all online social networking. Heed the standard advice first: Keep the computer in a public area. Ask your child to take you to his or her favorite sites so you can upgrade your computer skills and acquire inside information.

Here are a few more strategies that parents and tweens can live with:

- **Honor the boundaries between public and private information.** Caution your child to refrain from writing anything in an IM or blog, or posting any photos, that he or she wouldn't want a mother, a teacher, or everyone at school to see. Teach your child to never post an address, school name, sports event, or team name, and to never e-mail pictures to strangers.
- **Build trust.** During the tween years, children will likely be faced with invitations from peers to smoke that first marijuana joint, drink a beer, or be part of a stupid prank. Young adolescents desperately need a decision-making consultant. Your being a trustworthy parent raises the odds that your child will turn to you in moments of confusion or danger.
- **Combine academics with socializing.** If you want to reduce electronic socializing, create face-to-face substitutes. Plan homework get-togethers, complete with pizza.



*Margaret Sagarese and Charlene C. Giannetti are the authors of several books about middle-schoolers, including *Boy Crazy! Keeping Your Daughter's Feet on the Ground When Her Head Is in the Clouds* (Broadway Books, 2006). They are consultants to schools, parent groups, nonprofits, and businesses, and can be reached at [msagarese@aol.com](mailto:msagarese@aol.com) or [www.rollercoasteryears.com](http://www.rollercoasteryears.com).*

The Reflections theme for the 2008-2009 school year will be  
**"WOW"**



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# Join PTSA Executive Board for 2008/2009

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
Child's Name(s) - Grade(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the committees in which you are interested. Next to the committee name please indicate whether you would like to **Chair** the committee or be an active **Member** of the committee:

- AIDS/Health \_\_\_\_\_
- Arts-in-Education \_\_\_\_\_
- Budget \_\_\_\_\_
- By-Laws \_\_\_\_\_
- Curriculum \_\_\_\_\_
- Environment \_\_\_\_\_
- Parenting & Family Life \_\_\_\_\_
- Gifted \_\_\_\_\_
- Health, Wellness & Safety \_\_\_\_\_
- Hospitality \_\_\_\_\_
- Legislation \_\_\_\_\_
- Membership \_\_\_\_\_
- Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_
- Prom Fashion Show \_\_\_\_\_
- Publicity \_\_\_\_\_
- Reflections \_\_\_\_\_
- SDM Committee \_\_\_\_\_
- SEPTA Liaison \_\_\_\_\_
- School Board Rep \_\_\_\_\_
- Ways and Means \_\_\_\_\_
- Website \_\_\_\_\_

Chairmen are part of the Executive Board; which meets once a month. We have three General Meetings per year and run several programs throughout the year.

All Executive Board members are encouraged to attend as many meetings as possible.

In addition to the standing committees, we are currently forming a committee of helping hands. If you are interested in helping, please check the box.  Helping Hands

Please return this form to any of the secondary building General Offices or mail to:

**Terry Yard-Healy, 110 Adam Road, Massapequa, NY 11758**

If you have any questions, please call Sheryl Cowan, VP of BMS @ 795-7148 or email Sherylcowanpta@aol.com.

## COMMITTEE DESCRIPTIONS

- AIDS/Health (C)** recommend & implement activities regarding Aids & Health, coordinate with the district AIDS committee.
- Arts-in-Ed (C)** coordinate with directors to integrate the Arts into the curriculum.
- Budget (school district's) (C)** attend district budget workshops & present information on proposed budget to the Executive board.
- By-Laws/Procedures** - update and renew by-laws & procedures.
- Curriculum (C)** bring unit's concerns to Council chair & report back. Keep unit informed on current issues the committee is addressing.
- Environment (C)** to promote awareness of environmental issues.
- Gifted (C)** work with Administration to ensure gifted students are served by the school district, increase parent involvement by providing information regarding the programs available.
- Health, Wellness & Safety (C)** help develop & support educational programs involving abuse for both parents & children and apprise the schools & executive board of any safety concerns in or around the buildings.
- Hospitality** - provide refreshments at PTSA Executive meetings and functions.
- Legislation (C)** generate an awareness of the importance of legislation to PTA concerns, present new PTA resolutions to the executive board.
- Membership** - Assist the Vice President with Jr/Sr PTSA membership.
- Newsletter** - publish the PTSA newsletter three-four times a year.
- Parenting & Family Life (C)** recommend & present programs concerning family life education on the unit level.
- Prom Fashion Show** - Spring fundraiser, students model prom fashions. All proceeds are awarded to graduating seniors.
- Publicity** - publicize the activities of PTSA
- Reflections (C)** facilitate the National PTA Reflections program in all secondary buildings.
- School Board Rep.** - represent PTSA at School Board meetings, speak on behalf when requested & report back to the Executive Board.
- SEPTA Liaison** - liaison between the Executive Board & SEPTA.
- Ways and Means** - coordinate annual gift wrap sale. Funds raised support PTSA activities.
- Website/Webmaster** - maintain the unit's website.

\*Committees with (C) are Council Committees

Massapequa Junior/Senior PTSA  
Massapequa High School  
Merrick Road  
Massapequa, New York 11758

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### MAY

**May 13** - Voter Registration Day @ each voting location 4-8PM  
**May 13** - SEPTA Gen. mtg. 7:45PM @ McK Sr. Ctr.  
**May 15** - Last day for voter registration  
**May 19** - Jr/Sr PTSA Exec/Gen Meeting 7:30PM Ames Cafetorium  
**May 20** - **Budget Vote 6AM-9PM**  
**May 22** - BOE mtg. 8PM  
**May 23 & 26** - School closed - Memorial Day  
**May 29** - Transition to College for Senior Parents 7:30PM MHS Little Theatre

### JUNE

**June 2** - PTA Council Installation 8PM  
**June 3** - Senior Academic Awards 7:30PM @ MHS  
**June 5** - BOE meeting 8PM  
**June 7** - SAT/SAT Subject  
**June 10** - SEPTA Reorganization/ Executive Meeting 7:45PM @ McK Sr. Ctr.  
**June 12** - MHS Last Day of Classes  
**June 12** - BMS Grade 8 Awards Night  
**June 13-26** - MHS Finals & Regents testing days

### JUNE cont'd

**June 14** - ACT  
**June 16** - PTA Council Reorganization/Orientation mtg. 7PM McK Sr. Ctr.  
**June 16** - Senior Recognition & Athletic Awards Banquet 7PM  
**June 16** - BMS Grade 7 Awards Night  
**June 17** - BMS "A Whole New World"  
**June 19** - BOE meeting 8PM  
**June 23** - Jr/Sr PTSA Executive Bd. Mtg. 7:30PM @ MHS  
**June 26** - Last day of school  
**June 29** - Senior Graduation