

# Hartford News

A Newsletter of the Hartford University School for Urban Explorations  
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## Pasta Dinner & Open House

September 2009

Hartford's annual Pasta Dinner/ Open House will be held on Thursday, September 17<sup>th</sup> from 5:15 to 8:00 pm. Dinner will be served from 5:15 until 6:00 in the cafeteria, and teachers will be available in their classrooms from 6:00 until 8:00. This is not meant to be a formal conference time, but a good chance to get to see the classrooms and meet your children's teachers. Donations of \$2.00 per person or \$6.00 per family will be accepted at the door or can be sent in advance. **Please bring a dessert to share.** Last year, nearly 400 people attended the Pasta Dinner, so make plans to arrive early. This is a great opportunity to meet other Hartford families, students, and staff members. Volunteers are needed to set up and clean up. If you can help, call Paula Storniolo at 482-9492. You can also just show up and offer your help.

### Calendar

9/17	Pasta Dinner 5:15-8:00 pm
10/2	No School
10/8	Governance Council Meeting 4:30-6:00 pm
10/8	PSO Meeting 6:00-7:30 pm
10/12	Mr. Z's Fundraiser Begins
10/13 & 14	Conferences Book Fair
10/16	No School
10/26	Mr. Z Sale Ends
10/27	Pumpkin Night 6:00-7:30 pm
10/29	No School
10/30	No School
11/12	PSO Meeting 6:00-7:30 pm

## Back-To-School Picnic was a Success

Once again, the All Family Picnic to begin the school year was a great success. The weather cooperated and attendance was great! Over 300 students, families, and staff enjoyed a cookout, beautiful weather, and great conversation at Kern Park. We went through over 10 dozen hot dogs and 10 dozen hamburgers. It was a great way to reconnect with old friends and meet new ones before the school year began. A big thanks goes out to Mr. Werner for coordinating the event and purchasing all the food. Thanks, too, go out to Dan & Becky Burzynski, Dave & Margaret Cory, Beth & Rob Biskobing, and Howard Hoffman for their help coordinating the set-up, the grilling, the serving of the food, and clean-up. Thanks to everyone else who helped as well. Thanks to everyone who attended and all who brought dishes to pass — it could not have been a success without you!

## Harvest Fair at State Fair Park

Mark your calendar for the Harvest Fair at Wisconsin State Fair Park Sept. 25-27. Make your own scarecrow, ride the kiddie train, visit the petting zoo, decorate T-shirts and cookies, pick out a pumpkin, visit the midway and inflatable rides, or head to the Farmer's Market. The fair is a great family activity. Admission is free, parking is \$5, and there

is a charge for some of the events such as the rides. The fair runs from 5 to 11 pm on Sept. 25th, 10 am to 11 pm on Sept. 26th, and 10 am to 6 pm on Sept. 27th. For more information, call 266-700 or visit [www.wistatefair.com](http://www.wistatefair.com).



## Lost and Found

The Lost and Found at Hartford (outside the auditorium) is rather empty. Let's keep it that way! Please label backpacks, jackets, lunch bags, and clothing with students' names. Whenever you happen to be in the building, take a look at the Lost and Found and try to locate any of your family's belongings.

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## Friends of Hartford Plans Annual Fundraiser Saturday, November 21st

The Friends of Hartford is a group of parents, staff, and friends of Hartford who are committed to raising money to support Hartford's excellence. This year, Margaret and Dave Cory will chair the event. The Friends of Hartford will hold their annual fundraiser on Saturday, November 21st to support the many great things happening at Hartford. We hope to raise \$15,000 again this year! Once again, the funds raised from the verbal and silent auction this year will directly sup-

port the programs for the Arts at Hartford. Last year's auction raised enough money to support artists-in-residence in each classroom. The auction this year is sure to include restaurant gift certificates, tickets for theatre and sporting events, and creative masterpieces. Mark your calendars for Saturday, November 21st at 6:30 pm. Be sure to invite family and friends. The event will be held at a new venue this year, RedLine (1422 N. 4th Street). Flyers will be sent home soon with more infor-

mation. Tickets for the event will be available in the office in late September. Tickets are \$25 per person (\$50 per couple).

For more information, to make a donation for the auction, or to help solicit donations for the event, contact Margaret Cory at 964-7690 or [mcory@wi.rr.com](mailto:mcory@wi.rr.com). Volunteers are needed to help make the event a success. We really need your help. Meetings are held every other week in the school library.

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Articles for this newsletter may be submitted by any Hartford student, parent, or staff member. The deadline for the next newsletter is October 9<sup>th</sup>. Are there events or community activities that you would like to hear more about or share with others? Leave your articles for submission in the PSO mailbox in the office. Please write "Newsletter" on your submission so that it is routed properly. You may also e-mail submissions to [danburz@att.net](mailto:danburz@att.net). Call Dan Burzynski at 263-0685 with any questions about submissions or the newsletter.



Hartford will earn credits at Office Depot equal to 5% of your qualifying school supply purchases (notebooks, paper, pencils) that the school can use to buy supplies. Our school ID number is 70109701. If you don't have the number when you shop, you can always ask the clerk to look it up.

## District Improvement Plan

MPS has been identified as a District Identified for Improvement (DIFI) - Level 4 under the No Child Left Behind law. Because the district has not made adequate yearly progress in reading and math on the WKCE exams for the past 5 years, it has been required to put in place an improvement plan. There is a plan for the district, as well as a plan for each school. The district improvement plan is consistent with the district strategic plan. To see the plans for the district or for Hartford, go to <http://mpsportal.milwaukee.k12.wi.us>. You can also request a copy of the school improvement plan at the school.

Picture Day has been scheduled for Tuesday, September 29th. Once again, Lifetouch is taking the school pictures and handling the orders. Students will receive a flyer with information about the order packages. Please watch for information to come home. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Coleman at the school.

## What is the Point of This Newsletter?

This parent newsletter will be sent home each month, usually the Wednesday after the PSO meeting. The purpose of the newsletter is to inform you about activities at Hartford, events in the community for families and elementary students (especially free ones), and items of general interest (safety, physical & mental health, and building strong families). The primary purpose is certainly to share with parents all of the great things happening at Hartford. The newsletter also tries to summarize dates and events in one place. There are so many amazing things happening at

this school, and it is okay to be proud of our school! Even the most involved parent knows little of what is happening beyond his or her child's classroom. Since most future Hartford students will be referred by current students, there is a great value to share with all parents what is happening in the school. Plus, parents of even the youngest students are starting to look for what opportunities await in future grades.

If you know of something happening at Hartford that belongs in the newsletter, feel free to write an article. If you aren't reading about it in

the newsletter, it is probably just an oversight. The newsletter is put together by Hartford parent, Dan Burzynski, and it is easy to miss things when only one person is compiling the information. Even if you provide the basic information (who, what, when, where, why, how), Dan can formulate an article for you. Articles can be submitted by any Hartford student, parent, family member, or staff. Submit articles to Dan Burzynski by e-mail ([danburz@att.net](mailto:danburz@att.net)), phone (263-0685) or by leaving a note in the PSO mailbox in the office. Call Dan Burzynski with any questions.

## Hartford Schedule

Hartford uses a 6 day schedule. Rather than having gym, art, or music once a week, students have special classes every 6 days. This allows more instruction time in the classroom. The challenge, of course, is keeping track of the schedule. Days are lettered A-F in order, skipping non-school

days. If Thursday is an A day, Friday is a B day and Monday is a C day. Talk to your child or contact the classroom teacher if you need more information about when your child has gym, art, or music scheduled. A sign with the letter for any given day is posted between the library and principal's office.

## Spelling Bee

Hartford will once again hold a Spelling Bee in December. The Second Annual Scripps Spelling Bee is planned for Thursday, December 17th at 9:00 am. Participation is optional, open to any student in grades 3 through 8. Practices will begin after school in October. At

the first practice, students will receive study packets and rules for the Bee. Look for more information soon. If you have any questions or would like to volunteer, contact Maria Dixon (Hartford parent) at [mdjdixon@yahoo.com](mailto:mdjdixon@yahoo.com).

## Changing Bus Routes

If you need to make a long-term change in bus stop due to a move or other change, contact the school office. The process of changing buses or bus stops can take up to two weeks. Please be sure that the child and child's teacher are clear about plans during the

transition! Tell your child and the teacher what the plan will be.

If plans for transporting a student will be different for one or two days, be sure to communicate any changes in writing to the child's teacher.

## Fall Festival

Celebrate the arrival of Autumn with the Fall Festival at the Urban Ecology Center (1500 E. Park Place)! The festival will be held at Riverside Park on Saturday, September 26 from noon until 4:00 pm. All Hartford students have had the chance to visit the Urban Ecology Center, so let them show you around! There will be music, hikes, science experiments, crafts, food, and use of the rock climbing wall. Best of all, the activities are free! For more information, call the Urban Ecology Center at 964-8505.

## Museum Overnights

Sleep among the adobe houses of the Pueblos, snooze next to a sea lion, or catch some zzz's among the other exhibits at the Milwaukee Public Museum (800 W. Wells St). The museum offers overnights for scout groups and families with children ages 6 to 12 on Oct. 23, Nov. 13, Feb. 26, Apr. 16, or May 7. Overnights begin at 7 pm on Friday evening and last until 8 am on Saturday morning. The cost is \$45 per person and includes a planetarium show, educational activities, a light evening snack, a continental breakfast, and museum admission for Saturday. For more information, visit [www.mpm.edu](http://www.mpm.edu) or call 278-2714.

## PSO Meetings

Oct. 8

Nov. 12

Jan. 7

Feb. 11

Mar. 4

Apr. 15

May 13

## Be a Part of the Hartford PSO

All parents and family members of Hartford students are invited to attend PSO meetings. The Parent-Staff Organization meets once a month in the school library at 6:00 pm on a Thursday evening. Anyone can attend. There is no expectation to attend every meeting — come when you can. The meetings offer a great opportunity to make your voice heard in the Hartford community. Express your concerns, hear about what is happening at Hartford, meet other parents and Hartford staff members, vote on how to use PSO money, and

help support the activities of the PSO. The agenda of each meeting usually consists of reviewing recent PSO activities, planning future activities, deciding how to spend PSO money, and having a teacher or staff member lead a discussion about a specific topic. Dr. Ellwood or her representative also provides a principal's report each meeting. The next meeting will be on Thursday, October 8<sup>th</sup>. Child care is provided by Middle School students. Snacks will be provided. We certainly hope to see you then!

## Mr. Z's Fundraiser is Coming

The Fall Fundraiser for Hartford's PSO begins on **Monday, October 12th**. All students should come home that day with a sales brochure featuring pizzas, gifts, magazines, candy, and frozen goods. This fundraiser is very important because it is the primary way that the PSO gets money. Last year we raised over \$8,300 (a \$2,000 increase over the previous year). The money raised helps pay for classroom activities, field trips, family nights, staff appreciation activities, and the end of the year picnic. The sale ends on **Monday, October 26th**. All orders should be returned by that date! We understand that the state of the economy has made it harder to sell products. Can you commit to sell at least one item? All students who sell at least one item will be entered in a drawing to win fun prizes! The pick-up date for all items is **Thursday, November 19th** from 4:00 to 6:00. All items must be picked up that day or they will be returned to Mr.

Z's for a refund. If you have any questions, please call the Parent Coordinator for the Sale. You can reach Dan Burzynski at 263-0685 or dan-burz@att.net with questions.



**Volunteer Needed:** Dan Burzynski is chairing this fundraiser for the 4th and last time. Seriously. Will you organize the sale next year? The coordinator needs to be organized and have some time at the start and end of the sale (which you determine) to organize orders. If you think you might be willing to organize the sale next year, it would be helpful to assist with the sale this year. At the very least, consider calling Dan to find out what is involved.

## Parking and Traffic

Parking can certainly be a challenge around Hartford. Please follow a few simple rules to insure that buses, students, parents, and staff can get in and out as easily as possible.

- Do not double park or park in no-parking zones. Park in designated parking spaces. If you are in a no-parking zone, you are probably in someone else's way. Also, you may be ticketed.
- Do not park on Maryland Avenue or Hartford Avenue. These streets need to be clear so that buses may use them. Children can be dropped off on Maryland Avenue, but not picked up there. If you need to get out of your car (that is, you are picking up your child), park in the school lot.
- When parking in the lot for pick-up, follow the posted parking directions. Park in an available spot furthest from the door to insure that the process of entering and leaving the lot is smooth for everyone.
- Follow the directional arrows in the parking lot. Traffic will move more smoothly if everyone is going counter-clockwise.
- Please enter the building through the main doors facing Maryland Avenue.
- Be courteous to others so that they are able to get out. Allow others to back out. Understand that most parking lot traffic jams are brief. Your patience is appreciated.
- Let pedestrians have the right-of-way in the crosswalks around the school. It is the law.
- Respect Hartford's neighbors. Keep car stereos turned down when you come to school. If your windows are vibrating, it is probably too loud!

## Parent-Teacher Conferences

Mark your calendars now for student conferences in October. Parent-Teacher conferences will be scheduled on Tuesday, Oct. 13 from 4:00 to 7:00 and on Wednesday, Oct. 14 from 3:00 to 6:15 pm. Don't miss this important opportunity to find out about your child's progress in school. If you are unable to attend at the designated times, contact your child's teacher to see if he/she may be available to meet with you at another time.

While conferences are being held, you will also have an opportunity to purchase books at the Fall Book Fair. Help your children keep improving their reading skills. Dozens of books will be available for purchase. All purchases will help support Hartford as well. Be sure to stop by and check out the selection!

## Picking up Your Child

Children who will be picked up by parents at the end of the day go to the Walker Room/Parent Pick-Up Area in the auditorium. Please do not meet your children in their classroom. Also, do not ask your children to meet you at the door or on the street, no matter what their age. For the children's safety, this is not allowed. Children go to the Pick-Up Area at 2:15 pm and **must be picked up by 2:30 pm**. It is important that you pick your child up on time. Families needing after-school care beyond 2:30 are encouraged to contact the school about the after-school program through the UWM Children's Center. When picking up your child, you must sign them out when they leave.

Please park in the parking lot when picking a child up. Do not park in the bus zone on Maryland or Hartford Avenues.

## Student Attendance & Absences

Children learn best when they attend school consistently. The foundation of a good education is consistent attendance. Children who attend school regularly are also less likely to become involved with alcohol, drugs, or youth violence. **Make sure your child comes to school each day!**

If your child will be absent, it is important to call the school office at 906-4700 before the school day starts. You may leave a message at that number at any time of day to explain your child's absence. Valid reasons for absences include the child's illness, medical appointments, funerals, required legal appearances, suspension, religious holidays, and family emergencies where the student is needed to ensure family well-being. Absences for other reasons may be considered trancies. Parents should be sure to call or send a note to explain any absences so that an absence is considered excused. Parents have the right to excuse a child from school for up to 10 days each school year. Parents and students should contact the classroom teacher to be sure that all missed work may be completed.

**Tip: Call your doctor or dentist now to schedule regular medical appointments. Schedule them for days off from school before your doctor's schedule fills up.**

A child may be considered truant when he/she is absent for all or part of the school day without the parent or guardian contacting the school with a proper excuse. The school has the authority to reject excuses that do not appear to be substantiated or legitimate. A child may also be considered truant if he or she attends school irregularly. A child is considered habitually truant if he or she misses a total of five full or partial days of school without a valid excuse. Students who are habitually truant may be referred to the District Attorney's office for prosecution.

## Hartford Climate and Discipline

Hartford continues to try to improve its learning climate. To that end, the climate committee is incorporating Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS). While the principles of Love and Logic will continue to be evident at the school, PBIS will soften the approach and introduce more positive support. You may have heard about Hartford Hurrahs. A Hartford Hurrah is a card that staff can give to students to recognize their demonstration of responsibility, respectfulness, and safety. Each staff person gets at least 20 cards a week that can be given to students (though they cannot give them to their own students during the first 2 months of the program). The goal of the Hurrahs is to recognize and reward proper behavior in the public areas of the building. Teachers will still use their own classroom management strategies in the classroom. The Hurrahs received by students will be gathered each week and there will be drawings in each classroom for extra privileges (computer time, being line leader, etc...). There are also occasional school-wide drawings. While the goal is that proper behavior will become internalized in time, there is a recognition that these simple rewards may provide some encouragement. The purpose is to recognize good behavior, and not always focus solely on the children who are misbehaving. While the Hartford Hurrahs will begin by focusing on behavior in the hallways, the focus will gradually expand to include other public areas. In addition to the Hurrahs, each classroom also sets aside time each day for a Daily Boost. In whatever manner the classroom teacher chooses, students will be given time to complement each other. For more information about the PBIS implementation, contact anyone on the Climate Committee: Ms. Kelsch, Mr. Dunning, Ms. Korom, Mr. Bonds, Ms. Baldearas, Ms. Cline, Ms. Kush, Ms. Carrington, or Maureen Stone (parent).

## Sports At Hartford

Fall athletics have already begun! Sports like flag football, soccer, and volleyball have already started. If the sport is available at your child's grade level, he or she should have received a note home about practices and games. If you have questions, contact the teacher for more information about sports available at that grade level. Signing up for an athletic team requires a commit-

ment from athletes and their families. Students are expected to attend both practices and games. Student athletes should remember that they represent themselves, their families, and their school community whenever they step on the court or field. If your child is interested in athletics, please make sure that you have paid the Athletic fee (\$20 per year).

## Hot Lunch

Students may bring bag lunches to school or may choose to enjoy hot lunch. The hot lunch menu is sent home regularly or may be found on the MPS website. Hot lunch may either be purchased each day, or you may choose to prepay money into your child's meal account to be used for the purchase of meals. If you have any questions about your child's meal account, call the school.

	Breakfast	Lunch
Full Price	\$ 0.75	\$ 1.65
Reduced Price	\$ 0.30	\$ 0.40
Additional Milk	\$ 0.35	\$ 0.35

## Application for Free and Reduced Meals

During the summer, every Hartford family should have received a 2009-2010 Family Application for Meal Benefits. This application determines who may be eligible for free or reduced-cost meals at school. **This form should be completed by all families, even if you know that you will be ineligible.** Failure to submit a completed form may affect Hartford's ability to offer universal breakfast to students. Only one completed application per household is required.

If you need another form to complete, contact the school office as soon as possible. The form can also be completed online at the MPS website.

The form determines eligibility for the current school year only, and will need to be completed every year. If you are not eligible now, you may reapply for



benefits at any time during the school year if your situation changes. If you have a decrease in income, increase in family size, or become unemployed, contact the Division of School Nutrition Services at 475-8897 so that you may apply for benefits.

If you receive notification that you are not eligible but you disagree with the decision, you may request a hearing with the Division of School Nutrition Services by calling 475-8897.



## Boxtops for Education

Hartford participates in General Mills' Box Tops for Education program. Simply cut the box top coupon from Big G cereals, fruit snacks, Trix yogurt, Ziploc bags, Old El Paso products, Cottonelle tissue, Betty Crocker products, Huggies diapers, Kleenex boxes, and other General Mills products. Send them to school with your child. There is a collection box by the office. Each box top is worth 10¢ and bonus box tops can be worth even more. Thanks for helping! This is an easy way that you can help Hartford raise money. For a complete list of participating products, go to [www.boxtops4education.com](http://www.boxtops4education.com).

You can support Hartford by grocery shopping! Register your Advantage card at any Pick N' Save store and a percentage of every purchase will support your school. Hartford's Advantage number is 354100. Last year, Hartford received over \$100 from the Advantage program.



## Coke Rewards

Specially marked Coca-Cola bottle caps and cases have a special code as part of the Coke Rewards Program. While you can use the codes to purchase merchandise, you can also donate your Coke Rewards Points to Hartford. Maria Dixon is in the process of setting up Hartford to be able to benefit from your Coke Points. Please save up your points so that Hartford can use them to purchase education and athletic equipment. More information will be coming in the future, once Maria completes the set-up. For more information, go to [www.MyCokeRewards.com](http://www.MyCokeRewards.com).

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## Welcome to Hartford!

Hartford welcomes some wonderful new staff people this year. Feel free to introduce yourself, get to know them better, and help them feel welcome.

- Tanzanique Carrington is the new Assistant Principal. Like Ms. Jones-Goodwin last year, she is participating in the New Leaders for New Schools Program which finds talented teachers and puts them on the fast-track to become principals. She has worked in MPS since 1997, primarily as a math teacher at the Middle School level. Her husband is also an Assistant Principal in the New Leaders for New Schools program.
- Connor Broderick is the new 3rd grade teacher in Room 29 with Ms. K. Mr. Broderick worked in the UWM Children's Center for 7 years as was a long-term sub in 3rd grade last year. He also student-taught in Room 6.
- Nathan Sneeg is the new teacher in the Inclusion class in Room 16. Mr. Sneeg will be collaborating with Ms. Sullivan. This is his 5th year in MPS.
- Karaline Wilts graduated from UWM last December and will be teaching K5 in Room 14. She is currently a Masters student, hoping to someday finish her PhD and teach at the college level.