

Greetings from the Central Office. We're in the midst of that l-o-n-g stretch, when March seems to have 7+ weeks in it. Enough! Bring on Spring!

Gov. Mitt Romney Pays Visit To Wahconah

On Thursday, March 4, Gov. Mitt Romney visited western Massachusetts for a number of important functions. While here, he stopped at Wahconah to address the Sophomore Class on the importance of the upcoming MCAS tests, and then spent some time during a photo-op with the state champion football team.

Sophomore class president Nolan Smith had the honor of introducing the Governor. After a presentation



of approximately 15 minutes, he took questions from the students. Personally, I thought it was an excellent exchange; the students' questions were tough but fair, and his answers were straightforward and understandable (but perhaps not fully agreed with).

Following this 30-minute meeting with the class, the Governor made his way to the gym, where the full team was assembled.

Pictures - reporters - security - all in all, it was an exciting one-hour visit.

CBRS D To Formally Launch Professional Development Initiative For District Paras

The ParaEducators' Network, mentioned at length in last month's newsletter, will formally be introduced this coming March 17th at the afternoon in-service day. The location of the demonstration will be the Nessacus Computer Lab, beginning at 1:00. It should last for

CBRS D CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Thurs., Mar. 11 – School Committee, Craneville (*Final Budget Adoption*)
Mon., Mar 15 – Policy Review Subcommittee @ Central Office - 7
Wed., Mar. 17 – 1/2 Day Release - Curriculum Mapping Inservice
Thurs. Mar. 25 – School Committee at Craneville
Mon. To Fri., Apr. 19-23 - Spring Break



approximately 90 minutes. Anyone interested in further participation will be given a user account and directions for logging on and starting the process. The service is free for one calendar year to any and all paras in the district.

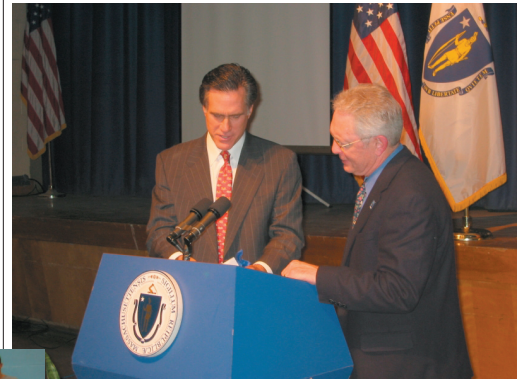
Feel free to contact Debbie or me for further information.

Federal RU-2 Grant Will Soon Tie Districts Together

Kelly Adair, Wahconah's Librarian, has been involved in an exciting initiative launched by the Hampshire Educational Collaborative. Using Federal Rural Utilities grant funding, she is in the process of securing some state of the art video-conferencing equipment. Once installed, the equipment will offer incredible enhancements in our ability to connect with a host of other schools in Western Massachusetts.

According to Kelly, there is great promise in this technology to not only enhance our professional development, but to offer distance learning activities to our students and staff. So far, 17 school systems from Ware to Belchertown to Gateway to Lee (and on, and on, and on) are either up and running or soon will be.

Stay tuned for more information. The equipment will be arriving later this



month (maybe!) and will be available for use later this spring.

Wahconah Administrators Using Handheld PDA's For Data Retrieval

Once again the Central Berkshire Regional School District has become innovative and pioneering in its use of technology. Starting about a month ago the two administrators at Wahconah, Tom Callahan and Marty Phillips, along with the school officer John Marley, have been using a handheld computer (the Compaq IPaq) to look up student data as needed. The handheld is loaded with a portable version of the Administrators Plus program that the school uses to house student information, attendance, grades, schedules, pictures and disciplinary notes. While away from their desks, both inside and outside of the building, the three gentlemen carry the handheld with them. They can access student data within a matter of seconds. This comes in handy in case of an emergency. It also saves time in the event that data is needed quickly and a desktop computer is not available. The Handheld is synchronized each day to reload any changes in student data and to accurately reflect attendance.

All three report using the device frequently to help locate a student by looking up the student's schedule. The student picture helps to remind them of who the student is. The parental phone data and emergency information for each student is considered an asset in the event of an emergency. Staff data is also available in the event that a staff member needs to be located quickly or emergency data is needed.

Note: Massachusetts Licensure Flow Chart On Reverse

**START
HERE**

Massachusetts Educator Licensure

This chart is an overview of requirements that became effective in June of 2003. It is not intended to be comprehensive. For more detailed information, go to the Mass DOE website, www.doe.mass.edu and the MTA website, www.massteacher.org. A more detailed chart is available on the MTA site.

