



# the Ansonian

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Ansonia Public Schools

March 2010

## An Open Letter to Parents and Citizens of Ansonia

I am writing to bring you up to date on the changes we have made since we restructured our school district in September 2009, making two K-6 schools (Prendergast and Mead) and a Gr. 7-8 school that is also the new home of our Pre-K program (Ansonia Middle), and bringing the alternative education program back into Ansonia High, which remains Gr. 9-12.

As reported during the Community Forums held at three of our schools in February 2010, we are working to transform our schools in order to meet the objective of universal success for all students. We are addressing this through a systemic approach focusing on two major initiatives:

*\* Improved and more Professional Development for everyone including our teachers, our administrators and the Board of Education*

*\* Updated, standards-based curriculum is being written and implemented, which will engage and challenge all students.*

The deep national recession which began in the Fall of 2007 has presented new fiscal challenges for our school system. Local revenue has been negatively impacted by declining home values, unemployment, foreclosures and a weak economy. Many parents and citizens are deeply worried about the future, and we at the school system share those concerns. The State of Connecticut continues to examine our school district and we are dealing with these challenges while staying focused on educating our city's most precious resource – our children.

Due to the declining economic climate, the Board of Education budget for the present fiscal year (2009-2010) remained the same as the previous year (2008-2009). As we prepare our budget requirements for the next school year (2010-2011), many of you may have read or heard that the Board of Education has requested a 4.9% increase in funding for our 2010-2011 Fiscal Year,

and the city is in the process of reviewing our request over the coming weeks.

Of this amount, 4.2% is due to anticipated cost increases associated with maintaining our district's current level of services such as out-of-district tuition, facility maintenance, transportation, benefits and salaries. I want to note that our teachers, who represent the largest number of employees, will not receive any increase in salary in the coming year as a result of a recently settled contract. The remainder of our 4.9% budget increase request helps us address our influx of students, the Secondary School Reform initiative from the State Department of Education, and meeting key elements of our three-year District Improvement Plan.

As our students in Grades 3-8 and Grade 10 take their state mandated tests during March, I want you all to know that we have worked very hard to prepare them for these high stakes tests. We have also received very positive feedback from the State of Connecticut regarding our ongoing efforts to reform our school district, as well as from some of our parents who had very real concerns a year ago when we were planning to restructure the schools. Nearly 100 of our youngest children, ages 3-5, who are in our Pre-K program, were relocated from Prendergast and the Redwing Pond House to Ansonia Middle School this year (photo above). Many of our parents



*Parents of Pre-K children tour the new playground in August 2009 during an Open House/Orientation.*

are now telling us, "The restructuring of the Pre-K program under one roof was the best decision ever."

We hope that many of you whose children are in Kindergarten-Grade 12 and the citizens of Ansonia may soon be able to agree that the changes we have and continue to embark upon were and will be the right decisions because they helped our students. We all need to work together in order to raise academic and behavioral expectations for the children and support the work we have begun.

I look forward to hearing from you at any time. My e-mail address is: [cmerrlone@ansoniamiddle.org](mailto:cmerrlone@ansoniamiddle.org); telephone number, (203) 736-5095 x11; and mailing address, 42 Grove Street, Ansonia CT 06401.

Superintendent of Schools

### ***Important Dates to Note: April-June 2010***

**Thursday, April 1, 2010\***: The Ansonia Middle School Human Relations Club Culture Day. 8:30-11:15 a.m., 115 Howard Avenue.

**Wednesday, April 7, 2010\***: The 3rd Annual Community Prejudice Reduction Conference, 5:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m., Ansonia High School, 20 Pulaski Highway.

**Tuesday, June 22, 2010**: Tentative last day of the 2009-2010 school year.

*\* Both of these events are free and open to the public. For more information, go to [www.ansoniamiddle.org/HRC.htm](http://www.ansoniamiddle.org/HRC.htm).*

# ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## 2010-2011 SCHOOL CALENDAR

**AUGUST/SEPT.**

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
29	<30>	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	[9]	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	[23]	24	25
26	27	28	29	30		

**OCTOBER**

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	[7]	8	9
10	[11]	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	[21]	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

**NOVEMBER**

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	<2>	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	[11]	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	(23)	(24)	[25]	[26]	27
28	29	30				

**DECEMBER**

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
			1	[2]	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	[16]	17	18
19	20	21	22	(23)	[24]	[25]
26	[27]	28	29	30	31	

**JANUARY**

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
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**FEBRUARY**

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	[10]	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	[21]	22	23	24	[25]	26
27	28					

**MARCH**

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	[10]	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	<31>		

**APRIL**

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	[7]	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	[18]	19	20	21	[22]	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

**MAY**

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	[5]	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	[19]	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	[30]	31				

**JUNE****DATES TO NOTE**

**Aug. 30** - Teachers Professional Day (PD)  
**Aug. 31** - First Day of School  
**Sept. 6** - Labor Day Holiday  
**Sept. 9** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**Sept. 23** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**Oct. 7** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**Oct. 11** - Columbus Day (observed)  
**Oct. 21** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**Nov. 2** - Teachers Professional Day - no school  
**Nov. 11** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**Nov. 23-24** - Early Dismissal Days  
**Nov. 25-26** - Thanksgiving Recess  
**Dec. 2** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**Dec. 16** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**Dec. 23** - Early dismissal for all  
**Dec. 24-31** - Holiday Recess  
**Jan. 6** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**Jan. 17** - Martin Luther King Day  
**Jan. 19-21** - Mid-term exams at AHS  
**Jan. 20** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**Jan. 28** - Teachers Professional Day - no school  
**Feb. 10** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**Feb. 21-25** - Winter Recess - no school  
**March 10** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**March 31** - Teachers Professional Day - no school  
**April 7** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**April 18-22** - Spring Recess - no school  
**May 5** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**May 19** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**May 30** - Memorial Day Holiday  
**June 2** - Early Dismissal Day for PD  
**June 8-10** - Tentative final exams for AHS  
**June 14** - Tentative Last Day of School  
 (Early Dismissal Day all schools)