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School and community working together ***Principally Speaking***

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In these challenging fiscal times school districts have been forced to look to alternative funding sources for curriculum materials once included in the annual school budget. Our very active Hanson PTO has been more than generous this year providing curriculum materials, enrichment programs, and classroom equipment, usually purchased through the school's budget. The Hanson PTO purchased Scott Foresman Science materials for all first and second grade classrooms. Each classroom has a beautifully illustrated, oversized edition that has magnificent illustrations and photographs as well as appropriate text that is used to teach important science content and has hands-on activities necessary for young children to engage in to understand more fully the concepts of Life Science, Physical Science, Earth Science, Space and Technology.

The Hanson PTO also purchased Science Leveled Readers Kits for each classroom. These non-fiction texts allow children to access information about the concepts they are learning about at a reading level that is appropriate for them. This allows teachers to teach the same science content at different levels. The books are intended to generate student curiosity and create eager science learners. The Below-level, On-level, and Advanced selections enhance the science content in every chapter of Scott Foresman Science program. Reading in the content area is an important and necessary skill that is often overlooked in elementary schools. The children and teachers are very excited about using these high quality materials! You can go on-line at WWW.ScottForesman.com and see samples of the materials your child is using to investigate the world around us.

Many other items have been purchased through the Hanson PTO this year, including portable classroom easels that enable teachers to more efficiently use their classroom space. Called the Writing Center, the easels are ideal for all group lessons; whether whole class or small group. It can be moved where teachers need it quickly and effortlessly. The storage bins in the bottom are great. Teachers can keep everything they need in one place and be very organized. It has a large, erasable white board on one side and a magnetic board on the other side, large hooks for flip chart paper, four large tubs on the bottom and also has locking wheels. Other requests have also been graciously honored and teachers and students are very appreciative of the support the PTO continues to provide for us. We truly appreciate the community of Hanson for participating in and supporting the very creative fundraising events that the PTO sponsors.

Another valuable support this year has been the Whitman-Hanson Education Foundation. Through their grant process, the Soliloquy Reading Assistant software was purchased. This is a software program designed to assist students in improving their reading fluency. Reading fluency

is the ability to read quickly and easily enough to focus active attention on meaning. Reading fluency is measured by the rate at which students can read aloud accurately and with proper expression. Developing fluency is a key component of reading for comprehension. Research reveals that one of the best ways to improve reading fluency is to have students read aloud to a teacher, family member, or friend.

If you haven't been to the Maquan Library recently, then you are in for a wonderful treat. Local muralist, Sheila Cook has donated countless hours and her incredible talent, making the library a beautiful and fanciful place for your children. Mrs. Cook and her toddler, Brady have been our "artists in residence" for many weeks now. Brady can be found painting with a large paint brush and imaginary paints along side his mother, or playing quietly with his dinosaurs, or reading on the floor while his mom expertly brings color and imagination to the walls of the library. A scene right out of a fairy tale fills one wall. The Big Green Monster and a scene from Fenway Park seem to break right out of another wall. The Magic Tree House, sits atop a leafy tree, while popular characters such as, Curious George, Harry Potter, Junie B. Jones, and even Captain Underpants come to life on yet another wall. For the final mural, Mrs. Cook turned to the children to find out what they would like to see. The entire school voted and an underwater mural will fill the remaining wall. It has been an exciting learning opportunity for the students having Mrs. Cook's artwork take shape around them during their library classes.

This year, the Community Service Learning Grant's activities are focused on students exploring the concept of friendship and understanding what qualities make them a good friend to others. As part of the WHRSD Community Service Learning Grant, classrooms were visited by Community Readers, who read books to the students about friendship. Mr. Tom Evans, Lt. Thompson, Lt. Yakavonis, Ms. Susan Brides, Dr. John McEwan, Mrs. Ruth Whitner, and Mrs. Ellen Harrington, Mrs. Valerie Clapp, Mr. Peter Veneto, Mrs. Fran Hoeg, Miss Renee Noonan, Mrs. Eleanor Coghlan, and Mrs. Betty Moses were among the guest readers who visited classrooms during the week of March 19th. The children and staff appreciated the time these busy people took to come and read to them. It is important for children to hear the adults around them model good reading. It is equally important to hear grown-ups just having fun reading!

Together we can make a difference. It is said that the more love, support and caring adult contacts a child has, the more likely he or she will grow up healthy. Thank you to the Hanson Community for being such a strong support to the children at Maquan.