



This is the story of a beautiful little school in our state, Massachusetts. It is nestled in a green mountain valley with the beautiful Deerfield River running along far behind it. From the playground you can see beautiful mountains and hills.



Just a few weeks ago the children of the Hawlemont Elementary School in Charlemont were getting ready to go back to school for another year when tropical storm Irene came spinning up the coast.

As the story unfolds we need to travel back in time to understand the story a bit better. Before coming to teach at Houghton Miss Wilke was the music teacher at Hawlemont for three years. Just like Houghton, the school is full of great teachers and wonderful children who are always ready to learn and play. She still has many friends at Hawlemont and likes to check in with them as often as she can!



On the Sunday the storm hit Miss Wilke began to hear from friends that things were not well in Charlemont. By the afternoon the river had made it up all the way to the school even though it was supposed to be two soccer fields away! What an awful feeling to know a place that you love is being filled with water and you can't do a thing about it!



Tropical Storm Irene dumped over ten inches of rain in the Western part of our state which quickly filled up the Deerfield River and caused all sorts of problems. There should not have been a river in the school soccer field.



As the river went back down the damage to the soccer field was very clear. Nets were washed away and mud is covering the beautiful field where the children play! What will they do at recess with no place to play?



The playground is covered in so much yucky mud and the structure is damaged. Miss Wilke has been told that the children will not be able to go outside and play until the spring. They will have to use the small black top tennis courts in front of the school until it is properly cleaned. What a mess!



The basketball court and black top area is covered with over six inches of yucky mud! How would you feel if this happened to our beautiful playground?

**What can we
do to
help?????**

