## JGMS Principal's Newsletter March 2010

Dear JGMS Families,

Happy Spring! It was great to have the warm weather make an appearance a few weeks early. Let's hope it comes back soon and that its not preceded by 11 inches of rain! This time of year is exciting. It is wonderful to see the school bustling with the activity that a change of season brings. Activities started off with $8^{\text {th }}$ graders participating in our annual "Choices and Consequences" program on March 3rd, followed by our last school-wide dance of the year on March 11th. Our spring musical "Fiddler on the Roof" saw 4 fantastic performances from our students, under the tireless direction of Amy Budka and her crew of staff. Spring sports will be starting up over the next few weeks, with our teams taking the field for interscholastic play the week of April 26th!

Of course, our traditional rite of spring continues to be the annual MCAS testing, the first round of which began on Monday, March 22nd and will run through March 29th. The second round of testing is scheduled to begin May 10th and end on May 25th. Students will be tested at every grade level in a variety of subject areas. You will find a copy of this schedule within the body of this newsletter.

I hope that, as the weather gets warmer (and drier) and as the daylight hours get longer, we will all be able to spend some time out-of-doors enjoying the wonders of spring in New England.

Regards,
P. Jayne Viladenis


Accept the Challenge! http://jgmsprincipalscorner.blogspot.com/

## April 2010

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
|  |  |  |  | 1 (3) | 2((4) | 3 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4 | 5(5) | 6(6) | 7(1) | 8(2) | 9(3) <br> Principal's <br> Coffee - <br> 8:30 AM | 10 |
|  |  |  | 1/2 Day |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | Teacher |  |  |  |
| 11 | 12(4) | 13(5) | 14(6) | 15(1) | 16(2) | 17 |
|  |  |  |  |  | 12:30 |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | Annual |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | Student/ |  |
|  |  |  |  |  | Faculty Volleyball |  |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
|  | Vacation! | Vacation! | Vacation! | Vacation! | Vacation! |  |
| 25 | 26(3) | 27(4) | 28(5) | 29(6) | 30(1) |  |
|  |  |  | 1/2 Day |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | Teacher |  |  |  |
|  |  |  | Wkshp. |  |  |  |

## Marijuana: Keeping Perspective/Taking Action

Perspective. In last month’s newsletter I included a piece about the apparent increased marijuana use among Bedford teens, and the impact this has had on the high school. This article is intended as an update. While we have had an increase in the number of incidents in which marijuana has been smelled somewhere in the school, those incidents are the work of a handful of students. According to the report of the NEASC Visiting Team, which will be released in its entirety within the next several weeks:
> "The students of Bedford High School are wonderful ambassadors for the building and exemplify the mission of the school. They are wellspoken, honest, inquisitive, confident in their own abilities and skills, and extremely enthusiastic about their school environment. Students are actively engaged in challenging classroom experiences at all levels because of the hardworking, dedicated teaching staff. The depth of community service projects and the involvement of students in a wide range of interesting clubs, sports, and activities is very impressive...."

Discussing student marijuana use during my meetings with Dual County League and EDCO communities’ principals, I can say that virtually every community is facing similar challenges. Some, with significant quantities of marijuana being found repeatedly on school grounds, are facing challenges much greater than ours. All attribute increased student use in the community, at parties, in homes, in cars and in schools at least in part to this past year's change in the law. Bedford High gives a lengthier suspension for "being under the influence" than most of our neighboring schools. Some schools have used dogs regularly. One principal expressed his frustration at not being able to bring dogs into his school.

## Taking Action

The Dogs. A few weeks ago, as all parents were notified by our Alert Now telephone call system, we brought K9 dogs into Bedford High School. Carefully planned with the help of our police department, and assisted by neighboring police departments, the dogs were intended largely as a deterrent. Having announced a week or so beforehand that this would happen some time in the future, we hoped that that small minority of students who have brought marijuana into the school would think twice. Having put student users on notice, in the future, there will be no need for further announcements.

All students were contained in their classrooms while the dogs swept the hallways and lockers. Our special needs populations were isolated from the event, and no student came into contact with the dogs. In the future, if we consider it necessary, the search will not be confined to lockers. In large measure, our target audience is as much the majority of students who want to be assured that the school is taking the issue seriously as it is the marijuana users.

Additional Student Education. Sergeant Wardwell will appear on BHS Live this week to speak to the whole student body about the legal issues and many misconceptions students have regarding marijuana use.

Staff Training. We did a training last week with our faculty to help them better recognize the signs of drug use and to agree upon a protocol for alerting the administration. Additionally, teachers were encouraged to privately let students know how their behavior impacts learning and disrespects the classroom.

Ongoing Steps. The school has enforced policies and implemented additional measures over the past years to try to keep our students safe relative to drug and alcohol use.
*We have been consistent in the application of the MIAA mandated sanctions for athletes and we created a more stringent policy that holds students responsible for being in the presence of drug and alcohol use.
*Students found under the influence or in possession or in possession with the intent to distribute receive significant disciplinary consequences, up to and including expulsion. Suspensions for an initial offense of being under the influence may be mitigated by the offenders agreement to participate in a *Diversion Program. Students on long term suspensions (e.g., semester or year long) are required to take a drug test and participate in substance related counseling in order to be considered for return.
*We monitor dances as closely as we can. We use a breathylizer to confirm our determination that a student is under the influence, we remove the student from the dance, we require a parent to pick up the student, and follow up with disciplinary consequences.
*Risky behavior, specifically the use of drugs and alcohol, and developing the tools to make wise decisions are central components of our Health classes.
*When we have information or suspicions about particular places where drugs may be exchanged, we monitor those areas often with the help of our SRO.

Ongoing Discussion with Parents. Bringing in the drug-sniffing dogs followed a series of discussions with parents at several Principal's Roundtables about increased marijuana use in the community and its encroachment on learning at Bedford High School. Parents have shared their frustration with the sense of empowerment regarding marijuana use that many students have expressed since Proposition 2 passed last November. Please see February issue of Principal’s Newsletter for further description of past Roundtable discussions on this issue.


## Important notes: on next page

## Updated 2／3／10

## Important notes：

－Grade 6： 2 （60 min．sessions）ELA Reading Comprehension
－Grade 7： 2 （60 min．sessions）ELA Reading Comprehension
2 （45 min．sessions）Composition（Mandated date：3／23）
－Grade 8： 2 （60 min．sessions）ELA Reading Composition
－March 17th－20th JGMS Musical
－March $29^{\text {th }}$ Passover begins at sundown
－April 2nd－Half day，Good Friday

## Periods missed in March

$6^{\text {th }}$ grade misses： 1256 one time each

$8^{\text {th }}$ grade misses： 1234 one time each
updated 2/3/10

## MCAS Schedule

## May 2010

| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 |
| Gr. 8 Math Session 1 Blocks 1 \& 2 | Gr. 8 Math Session 2 Blocks 1 \& 2 | $1 / 2$ day <br> Gr. 8 Makeups | Gr. 7 Math <br> Session 1 <br> Blocks 1\& 2 | Gr. 7 Math Session 2 Blocks 1\& 2 |
| $\begin{array}{r} \text { Day } 1 \\ 123456 \end{array}$ | $\begin{array}{r} \text { Day } 2 \\ 563412 \end{array}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Day } 3 \\ & 123564 \\ & \text { (half day } \\ & \text { schedule) } \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{array}{r} \text { Day } 4 \\ 563412 \end{array}$ | $\begin{array}{r} \text { Day } 5 \\ 123456 \end{array}$ |
| 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 |
| $\begin{aligned} & \text { Gr. } 8 \text { Sci/Tech } \\ & \text { Session } 1 \\ & \text { Blocks } 1 \text { \& 2, } \\ & \frac{\text { attend block 3, }}{} \\ & \frac{\text { Gr. } 8 \text { has } \mathbf{1}^{\text {st }}}{\text { lunch... }} \\ & \text { Gr. } \mathbf{8} \text { Sci/Tech } \\ & \text { Session } 2 \\ & \text { Blocks } 4 \text { \& } 5 \end{aligned}$ | Gr. 8 Makeups | Gr. 7 Makeups | Gr. 6 Math Session 1 Blocks 1 \& 2 | Gr. 6 Math Session 2 Blocks 1 \& 2 |
| $\begin{array}{r} \text { Day } 6 \\ \mathbf{1 2 3 4 5 6} \\ \hline \end{array}$ | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Day } 1 \\ & 123456 \\ & \hline \end{aligned}$ | $\begin{array}{r} \text { Day } 2 \\ 123456 \\ \hline \end{array}$ | Day 3 $123456$ | $\begin{array}{r} \text { Day } 4 \\ 563412 \\ \hline \end{array}$ |
| 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 |
| Gr. 6 Make-ups <br> Day 5 | Gr. 6 Make-ups <br> Day 6 | Pack MCAS/ready to ship | UPS PICKUP!!! |  |

## Important notes: on next page

updated 2/3/10
Important notes
-Grade 6: Math 2 (45 minute sessions)
-Grade 7: Math 2 (50 minute sessions)
-Grade 8: Math 2 (50 minute sessions)
Sci/Tech 2 (60 minute sessions)
-Washington DC Trip: June $1^{\text {st }}-4$ th

Periods missed in May
$6^{\text {th }}$ grade misses: 1256 one time each $7^{\text {th }}$ grade misses: 1256 one time each
$\underline{8^{\text {th }}}$ grade misses: $\mathbf{3 4 5 6} \mathbf{6}$ one time each and 1 \& 2 two times each

## JGMS Library News <br> 

Joan Collins Teacher Librarian

## Reading

Our students are busy reading, reading, and reading.

$8^{\text {th }}$ graders - Ms. Stephen and Ms. Bemis require outside reading for all students. Level 1 students are to read 4-10 books throughout the year and Level 2 students are required to read 4-7 books. Kids complete reader responses and maintain reading logs. Students select books from our library when accompanied by their teacher or on a pass during enrichment.
$6^{\text {th }}$ graders - Under the leadership of SOS teachers Sarah Healy and Melissa Michaud, $6^{\text {th }}$ graders are into week 4 of Battle of the Books. Students are working in teams to read as many as 10 books during a 6 -week period. Their team posters are hanging in the hallway. During week 2 they created raps to earn extra points before the classroom battles. The popular booklist is:

Fever 1793 Laurie Halse Anderson
Things Not Seen Andrew Clements
Dovey Coe Frances O'Roark Dowell
Joey Pigza Swallowed the Key Jack Gantos
Football Genius Tim Green
Stormbreaker Anthony Horowitz
Which Witch? Eva Ibbotson
Hidden Talents David Lubar
Rules Cynthia Lord
Transall Saga Gary Paulsen
$7^{\text {th }}$ graders -Ms. McGraw and Ms.
D'Entremont ushered in our 2010 Global Literature Circles with Web 2.0 tools. Kids selected a book from a choice of eight titles after watching tantalizing trailers created with Animoto. Students will discuss essential questions on Moodle, research information with databases, create on-line posters with Glogster, and Skype with authors or folks from designated countries. Both Ying Chang Compestine and Suzanne Fisher Staples have agreed to Skype with our students. Other books on the list are written by Colleen Craig, Sherry Garland, Rosemary Hayes, Lynn Joseph, Prue Mason, and Laura Resau.

During February, 776 books were checked out of our school library.

## Research

Ms. Mallot's $6^{\text {th }}$ graders began research about Asia to prepare for an assignment where they were to imagine themselves as tour guides. They will decide what
 places to highlight and what narrative to present to the class about their country. Kids will be creating a powerpoint "scrapbook" complete with narration. Students used Word Book On Line, ABCClio World Geography Database, and Culturegrams.

# Guide to Youth and their Parents/Guardians on complying with "An Act Establishing a Sensible State Marihuana Policy," commonly known as "Question 2." 

Approved 5/18/09

## What is Question 2?

On November 4, 2008, the voters passed Ballot Question 2, "An Act Establishing a Sensible State Marihuana Policy", commonly known as Question 2. The new law became effective on January 2, 2009. A full copy of this law can be found at the MA Executive Office of Public Safety and Security website: http:// www.mass.gov/eopss/ under the section entitled: "2008 Statewide Ballot Initiative Question 2: „An Act Establishing a Sensible State Marihuana Policy. ""

## What do I need to know about complying with Question \#2?

A youth who is under the age of 18 and has been found in possession of one ounce or less of marihuana and charged with a civil offense is subject to a $\$ 100$ civil penalty and forfeiture of the contraband. In addition, within one year of the date of the offense listed on the citation, the youth must complete a drug awareness program that includes (1) four hours of classroom instruction or group discussion (classroom instruction requirement), and (2) ten hours of community service (community service requirement). The youth or his/her parent or legal guardian is responsible for demonstrating to the court that the youth has completed both requirements of the drug awareness program by filing certificates of completion of both requirements, with the court, within one year of the date of the offense. If the youth fails to complete both requirements of the drug awareness program within one year of the offense, the court may increase the civil penalty to as much as $\$ 1,000$, for which the youth and his or her parents are jointly responsible. If the certifications required to document completion of both requirements of the drug awareness program are not timely filed, the court is to notify the youth and the parent or guardian of a hearing to show cause why the civil penalty should not be increased to $\$ 1,000$. Lack of ability to pay, and unavailability of a program, are recognized defenses. How do I complete the Classroom Instruction Requirement of the Drug Awareness Program?
Classroom instruction sessions of the drug awareness programs will be scheduled periodically throughout the state based on demand. A youth who receives a citation under this law must register for classroom instruction under the drug awareness program by calling the Institute for Health and Recovery (IHR) at (617) 661-3991, or toll free at (866) 705-2807 and ask to speak with the Question 2 Project Specialist. Youth will be asked to provide a current address and telephone number, and will be contacted by IHR when a classroom instruction placement becomes available.

## What should I do if I move or change my phone number?

It is important for the youth to provide accurate and current contact information. Youth who move and/or change telephone numbers prior to attending classroom instruction must report the change by calling IHR at (617) 661-3991 or (866) 705-2807. Parents/guardians are responsible for keeping the youth "s registration information up to date.

## Approved 5/18/09

## What do I bring with me to the Classroom Instruction Session(s)?

Youth must bring identification to the classroom instruction session(s). Acceptable forms of identification include student IDs, a driver"s license, birth certificate, social security card or baptismal certificate. If the youth does not have one of the acceptable forms of ID described above, s/he may be signed into the training by a parent/guardian.

## How do I obtain the Certificate of Completion for the Classroom Instruction Requirement of the Drug Awareness program?

After the youth has attended and completed the 4-hour classroom instruction, a "Certificate of Completion" for the classroom instruction requirement of the drug awareness program will be provided by IHR. It is the responsibility of the youth, or the parent, or legal guardian for the youth to file this certificate with the court, along with a certificate of completion of the community service requirement, discussed below, within one year of the date of the citation. Both certificates must be filed to demonstrate compliance with the drug awareness program requirements and avoid the penalty for failure to comply with those requirements. If the certificate of completion of the classroom instruction requirement is misplaced a copy may be obtained by calling IHR at (617) 661-3991 or (866) 705-2807.
How do I complete the Community Service Requirement of the Drug Awareness Program?
In addition to the classroom instruction requirement of the drug awareness program, the youth is required to complete the 10 hour community service requirement of that program. Community service opportunities that qualify for completion of this requirement are available statewide only through the "Connect and Serve" program administered by the Massachusetts Service Alliance (MSA).
MSA can be reached at the following website: http://www.volunteersolutions.org/mass-service/volunteer/ or
Phone: (617) 542.2544
Youth are required to visit the website and select a community service opportunity. The youth may choose from any of the community service/volunteer opportunities listed. It is the responsibility of the youth, the parent or legal guardian to contact the community service program or agency and ask if the youth may volunteer. (Note: There may not be a volunteer opportunity listed in your city/town. Some volunteer opportunities listed on the web site may not be appropriate for youth volunteers). The ten hours of community service may be fulfilled by serving multiple hours at multiple locations, as long as all of the hours are served at an agency/organization listed on the "Connect and Serve" website.

## What if I want to engage in community service at a program that is not listed on the Connect and Serve website?

If the youth wants to volunteer at an organization that is not listed on the "Connect and Serve website, the youth may ask that organization to register with "Connect and Serve." The organization must be registered in order to be considered as a qualifying community service site. Organizations can register by logging onto:
http://www.volunteersolutions.org/mass-service/agency/signup.tcl

Any organization interested in additional information on how to register to be a community service site may contact:
The Massachusetts Service Alliance, 100 North Washington Street, Third Floor, Boston, MA 02114, P: 617.542.2544

Note: The organization must be a Governmental Organization or a qualified non profit 501(c) (3) or a city, county, state or federal agency to register and be accepted for posting on the "Connect and Serve" web site.
How do I obtain the Certificate of Completion for the Community Service Requirement of the Drug Awareness Program?
Once the youth has completed 10 hours of community service with a program listed on the Connect and Serve site, the youth/parent/guardian is responsible for obtaining a completed "Community Service Certificate of Completion Form" (see attached) signed by the /organization(s) where the youth engaged in such service. The completed certification form must document the total number of community service hours the youth served. Documentation of completion of a total of 10 hours of community service is needed to meet this requirement. This form is the youth"s Certificate of Completion for the community service requirement. [The Community Service Certificate of Completion form is attached.]

## What do I do with the Certificate of Completion for the Community Service Requirement of the Drug Awareness Program?

The youth or parent/guardian must file with the court the original of the completed Community Service Certificate form(s) signed by the organization(s) as described above. This form must be filed with the court, along with a certificate of completion of the classroom instruction requirement, also discussed above, within one year of the date of the citation. Both certificates must be filed to demonstrate compliance with the drug awareness program requirements and avoid the penalty for failure to comply with those requirements. In addition, the youth or parent/guardian must mail a copy of the completed Community Service Certificate form(s) signed by the organization(s) to:

Executive Office of Health and Human Services<br>Attention: Question \#2 Volunteer Certification<br>One Ashburton Place, 11th floor<br>Boston, Mass. 02108

EOHHS will periodically audit volunteer activity to check for accuracy and/or fraud.
Who do I call if I have questions about the Community Service Requirement?
If you have questions about the community service requirement of the drug awareness program, you may call (617) 573-1600. You will be directed to the Question 2 Coordinator Voicemail Box. Please leave your name and phone number and a staff person will get back to you as soon as possible.

The New Marijuana Law
(also known as "Ballot Question 2")
Effective January 2, 2009
Chapter 94C, Sections 32L, M, and N

## What the law changes:

Possession of one ounce or less of marijuana is now a civil infraction.
It is punishable by a $\$ 100$ fine for those 18 years of age and older.
For those under 18 years old, there is also a requirement that parents must be notified and that the offender must participate in a drug awareness program within one year. Failure to do so can result in the fine being increased to $\$ 1000$ (with the parents equally liable for the fine amount) or delinquency proceedings being brought in the juvenile court (for those under seventeen years old).

The marijuana is seized and forfeited.
The offense is enforced by local police officers by way a citation issued by police and processed in the local district court.

Violations of this new law do not get included on your criminal record.

## What the law does not change:

You can still be charged criminally:

- if you possess more than one once of marijuana;
- with operating a motor vehicle under the influence of marijuana; and
- with manufacturing, distributing or possession with intent to distribute amount of marijuana (which can result in the imposition of mandatory jails sentences upon conviction).

The new law only applies to possession within Massachusetts, but not everywhere in the state. If you are on a federal facility (e.g., a military base), federal law applies and you can be charged criminally regardless of the amount of marijuana you possess. If you possess marijuana in another state, that state's laws apply (which may or may not make possession of less than an ounce a criminal offenses).

## Miscellaneous information:

Schools can continue to discipline students for possession of marijuana on school grounds.
The federal government can continue to consider a violation of the civil marijuana law when determining federal benefits, e.g., federal student loan aid.

Cities and towns may enact by laws which add an additional penalty (up to $\$ 300$ per violation) for the public consumption of marijuana.

Marijuana is still a controlled substance under Massachusetts law and therefore unlawful to possess. Most importantly, its harmful effects are not changed by this new law.

## For more information:

Visit the Commonwealth of Massachusetts’ Executive Office of Public Safety and Security website. Find the link entitled "Law Enforcement \& Criminal Justice", click on "Law Enforcement", and go to the two sections on related to "Question 2."


OPEN THE LINK TO VIEW THE FLYER OF BEDFORD FARM ICE CREAM PLEASE.


BF Fundraiser Flyer 2010 Master 2.pdf

Chorus Mrs. Aiken invited a special visitor for the $6^{\text {th }}$ grade chorus class this month. Composer and choral conductor Jamie Hillman came to introduce his composition "The Pasture", which will be performed in the June concert. He hopes to return to help polish it up in May.

All chorus students in Grades 6 through 12 will present a vertical concert on Thursday, April $15^{\text {th }}$ at 7 pm in the BHS auditorium. All are invited!

Junior District The Eastern District Music Festival was held at Sudbury High School earlier this month. Eighteen JGMS music students and BHS ninth graders were chosen by audition back in January to participate. Bedford had students in The Treble Choir, the Mixed Chorus and the concert band. Mrs. Budka was the manager for the Mixed Chorus, helping out as needed for the two-day festival. We are all looking forward to seeing the DVD when it comes out. The high level of musicianship and dedication to hard work was evident in all the concerts. Bravo and Brava to: Andy K. and Tyler C. for Band, and Lauren W., Becky K., Catherine D., Natalie V., Dakota FT-M., Joe N., Linda B. Kevin C., and Brad H. for Chorus.

Spring Musical As of this posting, our annual spring musical "Fiddler on the Roof, Jr." is a happy memory. Despite some unusual challenges, 130 JGMS students pulled together to present amazing performances, under the direction of JGMS staff members Amy Budka, Lisa Rainen and Barbara Ferri, assisted by music director Cathy Martin and choreographer Jennifer Scott. This year’s project brought a whole new meaning to the old adage "the show must go on," since production week found many students helping their parents bail out flooded basements, and our beloved Ms. Martin became ill during the show on our closing night. Kudos to all who jumped into the pit to help Mrs. Budka finish the show, including Anne and Jesse D-M from Bedford High School, Ken Budka (BHS '03) and parent/pianist Karen Kinch.

Parents of cast members are reminded to return any borrowed costume pieces to Mrs. Budka so she can clean and store them, or return them to their rightful owners. Requests for help to break down and store sets from the play will go out via the "Lotsa Helping Hands" network.

Orchestra Mr. Maffa’s orchestra students in grade 4 through 12 will present their annual Vertical concert on Wednesday, April $7^{\text {th }}$, at 7 pm in the BHS auditorium. All are invited!

Concert Band Mr. Felker's band students in grades 5 through 12 will present a "Vertical" concert on Thursday, April $8^{\text {th }}$, at 7 pm in the BHS auditorium. All are invited!

Guitar Ensemble Mr. Grunwald's guitar ensemble is looking forward to their debut as our newest JGMS ensemble at the Band Vertical concert on Thursday, April 8 ${ }^{\text {th }}$. The Guitar ensemble rehearses after school on Fridays.

Jazz Band The JGMS Jazz Band will resume rehearsals starting the first week of April. A new schedule will be posted and announced, based on student availability around Spring sports. Jazz Band will perform in the June Band and Orchestra concert on Wednesday, June 9th at 7 pm in the JGMS auditorium. See Mrs. Budka for further info.


## MathCounts News

MathCounts has had a big few months! In January, we held the school competition. The school winner was Kevin Cowles. Kevin, along with Alex Chen, James Peraire-Bueno, and Chris En, represented JGMS as our school team at the MathCounts chapter competition in February. Kristen Kuo, Pei-Yun Chu, Thomas Lee, and Maya Biswas also competed at the MathCounts chapter competition as individuals. At the chapter competition, Alex Chen and James Peraire-Bueno placed in the top 10, with Kristen Kuo coming in $11^{\text {th }}$ ! Our team was placed fourth, just barely missing a chance to compete at the state level.

The top ten students from the AMC 8 took the AMC 10 competition also in February. Alex Chen was the top JGMS student taking the AMC 10. James Peraire-Bueno was the top $8^{\text {th }}$ grader. No $6^{\text {th }}$ graders qualified to take the AMC 10 this year.

On March 22, MathCounts celebrated Pi Day observed - delayed one week due to the dress rehearsal of the middle school musical. We ate pie, cornbread, and a lovely round dish of vegetables. The food was complemented by milk and V8 Splash, ensuring at least some healthy eating and drinking happened. We began exploring the Pi Day Challenge at www.pidaychallenge.com.

MathCounts students are looking forward to April, when we will be competing in our favorite team competition, the Collaborative Problem Solving Competition.

## School Scrabble News

School Scrabble currently has two full teams of students. We are considering hosting a local tournament at the school.
Anyone who is interested in joining School Scrabble should stop by Ms. Banks's room after school on a Wednesday and see what it's all about - we'd love to have you join!

## Advanced Math Pull-Out Classes

The $6^{\text {th }}$ grade advanced math pull-out class is finishing off their unit on fractions. Students are working at becoming very fast with fractions while also learning to deal with negative numbers and fractions. $7^{\text {th }}$ graders are finishing off their unit on surface area and volume, and have experimented with skew prisms and pyramids and finding surface area of unusual shapes. $8^{\text {th }}$ grade students are beginning their unit on exponential equations. Students are also exploring the rules of exponents.

## Gifted and Talented E-mail List

The e-mail list remains quite small. We'd like to use the list to provide resource and information to parents! If you would like to be on an e-mail list for updates on opportunities and resources for students with particular gifts, talents, and/or passions, just send an e-mail to lisa_rainen@bedford.k12.ma.us.



## D.C. Trip Important Information

This is an important message to all parents of 8th graders participating on the Washington D.C. trip that there will be a mandatory meeting on Wednesday, April 14th at 6:30 in the auditorium with Mr. Casey, the trip coordinator to discuss this year's trip and answer any questions that you may have. We ask that at least one parent/guardian from each family attend.

## Grade 8 - Green and Grey

The school year continues to move at a rapid pace and it is hard to believe that April is almost upon us. Although we look forward to the advent of spring and recognize it signifies the beginning of many exciting events; such as the school play, the start of the spring sport season, and thoughts of the anxiously awaited trip to Washington, D. C., we ask that you remind your son or daughter that the school year ends on June 21, 2010. With over ten weeks remaining in the school year, we expect active and engaged learners who, as eighth graders, show their ability to balance extra-curricula activities with their academic demands. Your assistance in reinforcing this expectation is appreciated.

## General News:

- In late March and early April, then again in early May, students will be administered the MCAS exams in English/Language Arts followed by Math and Science. It is vital that students come to school well rested and ready to go!
- A Mandatory meeting with Mr. Casey for all parents of Washington D.C. trip participants will be held on Wednesday, April 14th at 6:30 in the auditorium.


## Academic Highlights

## Inside Story Headline

Math: Algebra students have completed a comprehensive unit on systems of equations and how these concepts are relevant in the real world. Pre-algebra students completed a ratio, proportion, and percent unit as well as an exploration of scale and proportion in reading maps. All classes will soon
investigate angular relationships as they begin to visualize and analyze how angles made by parallel lines relate to one another.

Social Studies: Students on both the Green and Gray teams have recently completed a major unit on Latin America where we studied the great Aztec, Maya and Inca civilizations. Currently students are studying the Middle East with a special focus on the three monotheistic religions of Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Emphasis will also be placed on the great Muslim Empire that developed in this region from 650-1700 A.D.

English: Classes have continued in their ongoing study of shorter works of literature as they: read, compared, and evaluated distinct features and prose elements of two famous speeches; "Gettysburg Address" and "I Have a Dream". Next, a more in depth study of the power of words and how, when used effectively, can clarify our understanding, provide a richness and appreciation for things not seen, and move us in both positive and negative ways. We examined notable and memorable speeches of the past. Some classes have prepared and presented speeches while others are beginning the process.

Our focus then switched to a survivalist theme as we read, "Top Man," and To Build a Fire, and Hunger Games. Yet, our core and essential questions continue as we debated, how does an individual persevere despite the odds? What makes the common man a true hero or how does one decide who is the top man? Further, we have reviewed formal reading and writing skills in preparation for the state assessment in late March.

Science: Science classes on both Teams have had a very busy and eventful late winter. Green classes worked on units focusing on geologic time and fossils. Currently they are beginning study of plate tectonics.

The Grey Team worked extensively on the shaping of our planet by the forces of weathering and erosion units. Currently they are beginning a unit detailing the Earth's fresh water and the water cycle.

We hope you all enjoyed the nice break from the cold. It was nice while it lasted and has given us a taste of spring. Students are encouraged to continue to focus on their academic studies while hopefully enjoying the nicer weather. Third quarter grades close on Tuesday, April 6, and will be posted on Aspen on Tuesday, April 13 , at $2: 30$. Please be sure to check how your child is doing in each class.

The MCAS testing for Grade 7 began on Tuesday, March 23, with the English-Language Arts Long Composition, and on Monday, March 29, they will take the English Language Arts Reading Comprehension tests. We will have a break from the testing until May. It is extremely important that your child is in school and on time, especially on testing days. Please also make sure your child is well rested and has a substantial breakfast on test days. This is an important start to every day, but especially when they are spending much of their morning taking a test.

Here is what has been happening in the Seventh Grade classes:

## English

Students have been working hard writing five-paragraph essays in preparation for the MCAS long composition. Students will be taking the ELA reading comprehension assessments next Monday so they are also writing shorter open response essays, as well as practicing their reading comprehension skills. In addition, students have been working on their global literature circles on Moodle and have begun reading their new novel, The Giver by Lois Lowry.

## Social Studies

Students completed their study of ancient Egypt after the February vacation and began an introductory unit focusing on ancient China, which will help prepare them for their study of China in $8^{\text {th }}$ grade. Students began with a focus on the geography of ancient China and how it impacted where the earliest cultures settled. They learned about the religious beliefs, government systems, philosophies, and the beginning of a common written language during their study of the Shang and Zhou dynasties. They will continue their study of ancient China with a focus on the Qin and Han dynasties. Students will begin their study of ancient Greece in April.

## Science

Students finished their cell biology unit by learning about mitosis and the cell cycle. Presently students are learning about heredity including how traits are passed down from parents to offspring. They will begin a detailed study of genes and DNA including the promise of genetic engineering in the future.

## Math

Students in Level 1 classes turned in many amazing Wheel of Theodorus projects this month. What creativity they've shown! They are currently working on a measurement, area, and volume unit that will conclude with a project due in April. The next unit will be on probability. Students in Level 2 just completed the unit on geometric figures and are now learning about measurement, area, and volume. Students are encouraged to visit www.classzone.com for extra practice (e-workbooks) and games (animations).

With the approach of another school vacation in less than a month, we would like to remind parents that if you take your child out of school for an extended vacation, please encourage your child to notify his/her teachers several days prior to the absence. The days leading up to a vacation are often when projects and units are being completed and there is often quizzing or testing that occurs during that week. These are difficult days for students to miss school.

As the weather gets warmer, we also request that you help your child to follow the dress code in the student handbook. It's also important to note that even when it is sunny outside, the classrooms can be cool.

## 

## English

Sixth graders on the red team are in the midst of reading The Magician＇s Nephew by C．S．Lewis．In reading this novel，we will be looking at how authors communicate their ideas about the world at large and life in general．We are also continuing our work in grammar as we advance through adverbs and begin to better understand the linguistic components that comprise the English language．

On the blue team，the students are hard at work on our poetry unit．We are grappling with the idea of style and symbol as we create Ndebele－style symbol drawings（portraying each student＇s choice of a character trait from his／her work in the＂Change－Maker＂unit），and we are trying our hand at some well－known forms of poetry such as the concrete poem，the diamante，the haiku，and the found poem．As we continue on in this unit，we will investigate the＂second－layer＂of meaning that is often found in poems and experiment with adding ＂second－layers＂to our own poems．

## Science

In 6th Grade Science，the kids have been busy learning the basics of the Periodic Table．They are now able to navigate the table，using their knowledge to draw models of atoms and predict Bonding patterns．We are looking forward to moving into discussing states of matter and tying our Chemistry knowledge together as the third term draws to a close．For the fourth term we will be shifting our attention to an introduction to physics， and are excited to have some outdoor labs where we will begin to explore how motion works．

## Social Studies

In sixth grade social studies we have moved from the continent of Africa into the continent of Asia．Students have begun studying the different regions of Asia．Focus has been on Southwest Asia and The Stans．Ask your student about the Sharbat Gula，known as the＂Afghan girl＂，whose haunting eyes turned the attention of the world towards Afghanistan after she appeared on the cover of National Geographic in 1985．Emphasis is being placed on cooperative group skills including jigsaw，literature circles and use of Moodle with group work．

## Math

Students in Math have recently concluded a unit on operations with decimals and will be moving into a unit on operations with fractions．These two units will then spiral into working with percents to make calculations such as tax and tip．Students will also be asked to apply their knowledge to real life situations like ordering food from local restaurants and calculating their bill．At the conclusion of the unit on percents we will begin working on two dimensional geometry including the identification of polygons and the calculation of area and perimeter．

## Grade 6 French

Happy Spring to all! In the $6^{\text {th }}$ grade French classes are currently finishing up lesson 4 in unit 2. They can talk about the weather, tell time, express dates, order from a limited number of menu items in a café and pay for them! Next they'll be off to the verb "être". They will learn to express where they and others are located. They will also learn how to ask and answer a limited number of "yes/no" questions.

## Grade 7 French

Happy Spring to all! In the $7^{\text {th }}$ grade French we just finished the French geography project. In addition to working on maps, learning about the geographical aspects of France, and playing a Jeopardy review game, each student made a travel brochure selling his/her city. These will be posted on a large map for all to see outside of B-116. This week we're having a fashion show using the clothing vocabulary in lesson 17.

## Grade 8 French

Happy Spring to all! The $8^{\text {th }}$ grade French classes recently completed the Paris project. In addition to learning about many points of interest and where they're located, we played a Jeopardy review game before the test. Each student also made a PowerPoint slide on their point of interest and presented it in class. There is a large map of Paris located outside of B-116 with pictures of various points of interest located on the map. Très jolie! Currently we are working on direct object pronouns in both French and English - and getting better at both! Next we're off to indirect object pronouns followed by the second-year book!


## Grade 8 Spanish

Spanish 8 students are studying Unit 5- Chapter 1 in their Spanish textbook. The lesson takes place in the cultural context of Barcelona, Spain. Students are learning to describe their daily routine, talk about grooming, tell others to do something or not to do something and discuss daily household chores. The grammar of this new chapter consists of describing actions that involve oneself with reflexive verbs and giving affirmative and negative familiar commands. The cultural reading takes place at the Pablo Picasso Museum in Barcelona.At the end of this lesson students will be create and present an advertisement for an imaginary pharmacy. This advertisement will illustrate mastery of affirmative and negative commands and the new vocabulary of the chapter.

## Grade 7 Spanish

In seventh grade Spanish we are studying sports, making comparisons, and saying what people play, what they know, and what they know how to do. This is set in the context of San Juan, Puerto Rico and can be found in unit 3 , chapter 2 . We have been using technology for various projects and activities, including listening and speaking, as well as creating word clouds with vocabulary on wordle.net.

## Grade 6 Spanish

In sixth grade Spanish we are finishing up Unidad 1, Etapa 3. Students are learning how to describe people and who they are in the family. Students are now able to tell how old they are and what the date is. Possessive adjectives are introduced in the chapter as well. Students can describe what is theirs, as well as what belongs to another. The cultural context for this chapter is Los Angeles. The history of Los Angeles and La quinceanera are introduced as cultural readings as well.

## ~Spring 2010 ~ Bedford Recreation Department $\mathcal{A} d u l t$ and Family Programs

## SPECIAL EVENTS

- Cape Ann Whale Watch Tickets: onfy $\$ 25$ (reg. $\$ 40$ ) Use anytime!
- Star Gazing Party: April 23 and May 21. Bring the family! Free
- Kayaking trips and instruction
- Geo-caching
- Red Sox Tickets for 6/16 (Arizona), 8/4 (Cleveland), 8/18 (£거)
- Pan Mass Chaflenge Kids Ríde: Sat. June 19

EXERCISE, FITNESS AND DANCE
$\mathcal{N I} \mathcal{A} \sim$ Pílates $\sim \mathcal{B o d y P u m p}$ and Body Jam $\sim$ Yoga $\sim$ Tap Dancing Yogalates ~ Zumba and Zumba Toning ~ Yoga ~ Womens Bootcamp Power Vinyasa Yoga ~ Taekwondo Self Defense and Stretch Biking and Walking $\mathcal{A} d$ ventures $\sim \mathcal{N}$ Vordic Pole Walking

## ARTS AND MUSIC

$\mathcal{P h o t o g r a p h y ~} \sim$ Watercolor $\sim \mathcal{P}$ astel $\mathcal{D r a w i n g ~} \sim \mathcal{H a r m o n i ́ c a}$
PERSONAL INTEREST
CPR/ $\mathcal{A L D}$ Certifications ~Speed Spanish ~EFiminate Food Cravings $\mathcal{N}$ ot Your Parent's Real Estate Market, Buying \& Selling in $21^{\text {st }}$ Century Maximize Your College Financial Aid with College Funding $\mathcal{A} d v i s o r s$ Financial Worshops with Edward Jones Investments Empowerment workshops; Motivation to Exercise

## SPORT and INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

Golf ~ Tennis ~ Badminton ~ Volleyball Basketball ~ Soccer

Full program information available at: www. bedfordrecreation.org Register by mail, on-fine, fax or in person.
Bedford Recreation Dept., 12 Mudge Way, Town Center $\mathcal{H o u r s} \mathcal{M}-\mathcal{F}$ 9:0o-4:0o, Phone 781-275-1392
$\mathcal{P}$ lease contact us if you are interested in teaching a class or workshop with us. We are afways looking for new ideas and offerings.

