



# JGMS Principal's Newsletter Bedford, Ma 01730

## Principal's Letter

Dear JGMS Families,

The first month and a half of school has already passed us, and it has been a fantastic start! The kids are wonderful!!! It appears that we have begun to reap the benefits of our "Accept the Challenge effort," as we are in receipt of specific school data that shows us that we are, in fact, making progress in that ever-so intangible social aspect of the middle years. JGMS students took the Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center (MARC) survey on bullying and cyberbullying in the month of September. Data from this survey tells us that approximately 60 percent of our students have neither been bullied or cyberbullied recently and that 80 percent feel that bullying at school is either "very rare" or "happens sometimes but not often." To support this data, the results from the 2010 Youth Risk Behavior Survey that was administered to students in March 2010, as well as data tables regarding trends in behaviors as reported by students in the 1999, 2001, 2003, 2005, 2008 and 2010 surveys, show that the percentage of students who report being bullied at or going to/from school has/ declined (30%, 21%, 23%, 23%, to 15% in 2010). This data provides valuable information to both the school and the larger Bedford community on the risky behaviors of many of our youth. Survey results have impacted curriculum choices, services provided and parent and community education. While I am not so naïve as to think that we have solved the problem of bullying and cyberbullying that plagues the middle school years, I am certain that the work that we are doing in advisories and followed-up by general interactions between student and adult, our kids are positively responding to our simple message of "treat people the way you want to be treated." I appreciate the efforts you have made to support us in this endeavor. I hope you get a chance to check in regularly on my blog, which focuses on positive youth development through our "Accept the Challenge" initiative.

< <http://jgmsprincipalscorner.blogspot.com/>

On another front, believe it or not it is time to sign up for November/December parent/teacher conferences soon. Letters with the username and password that you will need in order to access the system will be mailed home on Monday, November 1st. Sign-up will begin at 6 PM on Monday, November 9th and will remain open until Monday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. Please remember that the November conference date is Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup> and will run from 4 PM to 7 PM. The December 3<sup>rd</sup> conferences will run from 12 to 2:30 PM.

Our next JGMS Newsletter will combine November and December. Please look for it on our website during the week of December 16<sup>th</sup>.

Sincerely,

Jayne Viladenis





# November 2010

## John Glenn Middle School

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1(2)	2(3)	3(4)	4(5) School Council 2:30	5(6) Dance 6:30-9 PM	6
7	8(1)	9(2)	10(3)	11 Veterans' Day No School	12(4)	13
14	15(5)	16(6)	17(1) JGMS Parent Confs. 4-8 PM	18(2)	19(3)	20
21	22(4)	23(5)	24(6) Day of Re- spect 1/2 Day	25 Thanksgiv- ing	26 No School	27
28	29(1)	30(2)				

# December 2010

John Glenn Middle School

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1(3)  JGMS Parent Confs. 12:30-2:30	2(4)	3(5)	4
5	6(6)	7(1)	8(2)	9(3)	10(4)	11
12	13(5)	14(6)	15(1)  Faculty Wkshp. 1/2 Day	16(2)  School Council 2:30	17(3)	18
19	20(4)	21(5)	22(6)	23(1)	24  No School  Vacation	25
26	27  Vacation	28  Vacation	29  Vacation	30  Vacation	Jan. 1, 2011  Vacation	

# JGMS Library News

October 2010



Joan Collins  
Teacher Librarian

## Reading!



Wonderful book discussions continued throughout the fall. Enthusiastic 6<sup>th</sup> graders gathered for pizza at the library to discuss *Lunch Money* by Andrew Clements. *Lunch Money* shows how enemies became

friends and business partners through great determination and persistence. Kids got to talk about making money and what would be appropriate to sell at school.

Thank you to all parents who encourage reading. Students gain so much from the dialogue about books. Our summer reading list is posted on the school website and it is always a source for title suggestions. The familiar slogan, **Kids Who Read Succeed**, is so true. Judging from the number of avid readers, this should be a great school year.

## Library Activity

Candy Banks' 8<sup>th</sup> grade art classes utilized the library lab to do research for a planned mural project. Students needed 12 images on provocative topics such as global warming, poverty, war, etc. They selected photos from books, magazines, and "google" images.

Ms. Gibbons escorted her class to the library so they might borrow books and learn where materials were located.

Ms. Fricke's 6<sup>th</sup> grade classes learned to navigate the physical space of the library as part of library orientation.

Ms. Mallot and Ms. Bakarian began research with the 6<sup>th</sup> graders. Students will be using books and databases to gain knowledge about Central and South America. Students began by visiting the library lab to learn how to navigate World Book OnLine and Culturegrams. Both databases allow students to email articles to their First Class accounts. Students will also be using many books that offer geographical information.

Students can use World Book at home:

User Name	Password
jgms	bedfordma

Ms. d'Entremont's and Ms. Cole's 7<sup>th</sup> graders worked in the library lab creating their own tall tales.

Ms. Russell's health classes researched yoga facts.

## What's Hot!

Kids remain enamored with *The Hunger Games*. We still have a long list of reserves for *Mockingjay*, the final book in the trilogy. Dystopia is a popular genre.

The Shadow Children series by Margaret Peterson Haddix is excellent.

David Klass has a trilogy beginning with *Firestorm* that looks at our environmental issues.

*Last Book in the Universe* by Rodman Philbrick also looks at how the powerful try to control society.

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**FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE**



Massachusetts schools have taken heights and weights of students each year since the 1950's. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health has made amendments to improve the annual height and weight screening protocols to include the calculation of a Body Mass Index (BMI) and percentile for grades 1,4,7, and 10, beginning in the fall of 2010.

Each child's height and weight will be used to calculate their BMI. The results will be kept confidential in each student's school health record and will be mailed directly or directly communicated in writing to the parents or guardians; not sent home with the student.

BMI is a "weight for height for age" index that can be a useful tool in early identification of possible health risk factors among children and youth. Please feel free to contact the school nurse with any questions you may have about the BMI screening. Additional information about children's wellness and fitness is available upon request or you may access the state's resources at [www.mass.gov/massinmotion/](http://www.mass.gov/massinmotion/).

All seventh grade students will have heights and weights taken to calculate their BMI in march. If you would like to request your child not have their BMI screening done, please request it in writing to the school nurse, Carol Eaton, RN.

Vision and Hearing Screening will begin next week for all students. Please e sure your child has glasses with them if needed to pass the test. Parents will be notified if a medical referral is needed. Please call with any questions or concerns.

Carol Eaton RN 781-275-3165



## Gifted and Talented and Differentiation Instruction Program

### Gifted and Talented E-mail List

All parents and students are invited to sign-up to receive e-mails from Lisa Fontaine-Rainen regarding opportunities particularly appropriate for gifted students, both in and out of school. Lisa will send out information on opportunities in the area, school events, and anything else that might be of interest including puzzles and articles. Please send an e-mail to [lisa\\_fontaine-rainen@bedford.k12.ma.us](mailto:lisa_fontaine-rainen@bedford.k12.ma.us) to get on the list! It has been growing this year, and some interesting things have already been sent!

### Advanced Mathematics

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade advanced mathematics class is working with misleading data and statistics – any who happen to see a published graph or any other example of statistics that you feel is misleading, please send it to Ms. Fontaine-Rainen!

The 7<sup>th</sup> grade advanced mathematics class is working on solving equations and graphing in the coordinate plane. We are also doing the graph a cartoon project, with an added shift!

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade advanced mathematics class is beginning its third unit, on solving inequalities. We will also begin analyzing our mathematics to help us fix our errors.

Students qualify for the advanced mathematics class by scoring well on a pre-test given in the regular classroom. The classes are designed for students who understand a great deal of the regular curriculum and thus require something different in order to ensure they have the opportunity to learn.

### MathCounts

The JGMS math competition program, MathCounts, meets after school on Mondays from 2:30 to 3:30 in room B210. Students are still welcome to join – just show up! Also, as fall sports come to an end, please consider joining for the winter! Our first major competition is coming up in November – the AMC 8. This is a national test that is known for being challenging enough to identify the very top math students, while still being multiple choice! During MathCounts, we prepare for different competitions, do puzzles, and play around with math. Everyone is welcome! Any student who cannot attend some meetings due to conflicts with sports or other activities should contact Lisa Fontaine-Rainen to be put on the e-mail list and to get information on how to stay competitive and join when they are able.

### WordSmiths

WordSmiths is the new take on School Scrabble, and is providing after school enrichment for students who love to read and write. As of two weeks ago, WordSmiths is an official session run through Youth and Family Services, and has a great group of students enrolled. If you'd like to try it out, feel free to come try one class and then sign up for next time – we meet in A117 on Wednesday afternoons, and mornings of Wednesday half days. We do word puzzles, play word games, and generally play with words and language. fill up fast, so it's worth keeping tabs on the website! This is a really fantastic opportunity, so mark your calendars now to ensure you don't miss it! Please let Ms. Fontaine-Rainen know if cost or transportation is an issue. SPLASH is highly recommended!

## Out of School Resources

**MIT SPLASH** <http://esp.mit.edu/learn/Splash/index.html>

SPLASH is an incredible opportunity for students who love to learn or who have particular passions or talents. It runs every year on the MIT campus on the weekend before Thanksgiving – this year on November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>. Students in grades 7-12 can sign up for a very low cost to take up to 16 hours of courses over two days on almost any topic imaginable. Courses range from yoga and knitting to decisive battles in history and the mathematics of knots. Registration begins in early November and some classes fill up fast, so it's worth keeping tabs on the website! This is a really fantastic opportunity, so mark your calendars now to ensure you don't miss it! Please let Ms. Fontaine-Rainen know if cost or transportation is an issue. SPLASH is highly recommended!

**CTY Talent Search** [www.cty.jhu.edu](http://www.cty.jhu.edu)

Students who have scored at the advanced level on any of their most recent MCAS are invited to participate in the Center for Talented Youth Talent Search. Students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade will take either the SAT or the ACT tests, typically given to college bound juniors and seniors. Students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade will take the SCAT (School and College Ability Test). Participation in the CTY Talent Search can lead to recognition, qualification for additional CTY programming, and, at the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade level, scholarships to local colleges to be used to take courses before high school graduation. This year, students can participate throughout the school year, rather than needing to make only one registration deadline. Check out the CTY website for more information on deadlines for specific testing dates. If you would like information to be sent home with your child, please e-mail Lisa Fontaine-Rainen at [lisa\\_fontaine-rainen@bedford.k12.ma.us](mailto:lisa_fontaine-rainen@bedford.k12.ma.us). You can also get more information on the CTY website listed above.

If you would like to see articles related to academically advanced learners or hear about more opportunities, join the e-mail list!



## Music Department

The schedule for all of our musical concerts and plays this year can be found on the school website. Click on the “Grade Levels and Departments” tab on the JGMS website, and scroll down to “Music”. There you will also find information about the POMS music lesson program, and a link to the “Lotsa Helping Hands” site, which is used to communicate with cast and crew members and to organize parent volunteers for the annual Spring musical.

Several after-school musical opportunities are offered at JGMS. See Mrs. Budka or Mr. Grunwald for more information.

**Guitar Ensemble** with Mr. Grunwald - meets Mondays after school on the stage.

**Junior District Chorus Coaching** with Mrs. Budka - meets Mondays after school in the Music room.

**Jazz Band** with Mrs. Budka - meets Thursdays after school on the stage.



**Spring Break Program 7th and 8th grade**

We are excited to once again offer an alternative spring break program for students in grades seven and eight this April. This year, we have selected a program that is a five-day, four-night program run by *World Strides*, a prominent education company that specializes in planning and executing educational programs. The trip that we are participating in is located in Florida and offers lodging and meals for the students and chaperones, as well as curriculum during the day that is aligned to state standards and our current curriculum. This program allows the participants the opportunity to engage in many hands on activities and unique experiences to foster their understanding of the environment and its many facets. The trip includes exploration in national parks with activities centered on ocean ecology, learning to snorkel, anatomy of dolphins as well as swimming with dolphins, care of injured animals in a animal hospital, and in-depth look at many different habitats in the area. This trip also includes the opportunity for students to hike and explore these national parks, as well as snorkeling in the ocean, and kayaking through different habitats.

The trip will take place during April break from Saturday, April 16<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday, April 20<sup>th</sup>. Chaperone leaders include Mr. McGrath and Ms. Coletta, as well as the program leaders and staff that would meet us on location and accompany us throughout our entire experience. We will maintain a Bedford faculty ratio to students of 10:1, and will add more chaperones as necessary depending on enrollment. The cost per student is \$1,921, which is the responsibility of the individual student and their family. We will be discussing fundraising options at the parent information meeting.

The parent information meeting is on October 28th at 6:30pm in Ms. Coletta's room (A207). If you have any questions or can not make the information meeting, please contact Mr. McGrath or Ms. Coletta.



## Grade 6

The Blue team had a great field trip to Great Meadows on October 8<sup>th</sup>. The kids did a great job collecting observations and making inferences about the National Wildlife Refuge, and wrote some interesting descriptive paragraphs. The teachers enjoyed getting to know the students a bit better during the walk there and back on the beautiful fall morning, and look forward to repeating the trip in the spring to see all the changes and work on our comparing and contrasting!

The Red team field trip was a smashing success. We enjoyed observing the beautiful colors of fall and the wildlife that inhabits Great Brook Farm. We saw butterflies, fish, frogs, snails, birds, and many other creatures. Topping off the end of the trip with ice cream was a great way to say an official goodbye to summer and welcome in fall.

### **Curriculum Update:**

The 6th grade teams are currently focusing on the interdisciplinary data analysis concept of graphing in math, science and social studies classes. In math, students are specifically focusing on the Cartesian coordinate plane, bar graphs, line plots and circle graphs. Students in social studies just finished examining and creating climate graphs with an emphasis placed on scale. They are now starting a term one project, based on the five themes in South America and Europe. In science class we are continuing our exposure to variables and working on charting them in tables and in line graphs. We will be using our growing knowledge of variables and graphing to complete a formal lab report by the term end. We feel that this broad spectrum of data activities allows students to see how certain concepts are universal across the grade six curriculums.

In English, the blue team has completed our Descriptive Writing unit with wonderfully bright, rich, echoing, flavorful, and tactile results. Thank you to all students for your efforts on this project! We have now begun our Magician's Nephew unit and will soon be starting character studies. The red team students are beginning their first formal writing assignment. We will be using the observations we made at Great Brook Farm to describe a scene from nature writing from a perspective other than our own. If you would like to assist your son or daughter with the editing process, please ask him/her to show you the editing symbols we use. This is a great way for you to identify the errors, review these correction marks, and allow your child to independently make corrections.

A few housekeeping reminders from the Red team as we near the end of the first term...

**We will no longer be stamping agenda books each day. The habit, for recording homework has hopefully been formed, and the responsibility for recording it correctly and consistently now belongs to each student.**

After term one, we will no longer accept late homework for credit. These assignments should be completed regardless, as they are part of the learning process. However, credit will not be given for late homework. Exceptions are made for family emergencies, illnesses, etc. according to the handbook. Please contact the teacher who assigned the homework if there is some sort of reason why homework could not be completed on time.

**Attention all 6th grade parents!**

On November 10th the JGMS Guidance staff will be holding their annual 6th Grade Parent Coffee. Feel free to come in and meet the Guidance staff and network with other "new" middle school parents! Learn what to expect as a middle school parent and how best to navigate your

way through these fun filled and challenging years. We will meet from 7:45 am to 8:45 am in the Principal's Conference Room. RSVP if possible: 781-275-3201

All 6th grade parents will receive a postcard in the mail about this morning event.

Renee Anderson  
Joanna Daley  
Diana Siegenthaler  
Jessica Smith



Grade 7

We are having a great 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter in the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade! Interims were posted on Aspen, so if you have not checked them, please do. The quarter ends on November 5. Parent conferences will be held on Wednesday, November 17, and Wednesday, December 1. Information about signing up for conferences will be sent out from the main office.

Here is what has been happening in your child’s classes:

Social Studies

Students completed their unit on Archaeology and began learning about Early People. Students had the opportunity to hold and investigate the characteristics of some replicas of skulls and tools of the early human species. This helped to make the characteristics of these people much more real to the students. There has been a focus on early tool-making, how people adapted to the Ice Age, and how language and culture developed. Students have a quiz on the first part of this unit this week and will begin learning about how people settled down and began to farm.

Science

Students have been studying ecology, with a focus on learning about different ecosystems and the food webs that exist there. Students have learned that when an ecosystem becomes out of balance, it can lead to endangered species and sometimes extinction of species. Students are constructing mini ecosystems at home using plastic 2-liter soda bottles. These will be presented to the class and observed for changes occurring over several weeks or months.

Math

Students in the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Math classes recently completed a unit on decimals, and are now learning about fractions. Having a solid foundation with their basic multiplication facts will be extremely helpful for students in this next unit. Students in Pre-Algebra classes have finished the chapter on integers. They will be working on a project graphing coordinates that will be due on November 5<sup>th</sup>. The next chapter will focus on solving equations and inequalities.

English

Students are busy in English continuing the unit on folklore. Students will finish writing their own fables, and then learn more about tall tales and legends, including “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow” just in time for Halloween. The grammar focus is on nouns and sentence structure review. Book project presentations have been very impressive. Students are also teaching each other with group presentations about Aesop’s Fables. Student will begin their in-class novels soon.

We look forward to meeting you at parent conferences. Enjoy the fall weather!



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**Grade 8****Events:**

-Shawsheen Valley Regional Technical High School will present their program of studies on Wednesday, October 27th during a scheduled eighth grade assembly.

If your child might be interested in exploring Shawsheen Valley Technical High School you and your child are also encouraged to attend their Community Open House on Sunday, November 7, 2010 from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm. It is an opportunity to visit the building, hear about their programs and try out some of the treats from the bakery! Guidance Counselors will be available with admissions information and materials

- The first term ends on November 5th. Report card grades will be posted on Aspen and mailed home on or around November 12th.

-Parent/Teacher conference time – Wednesday , November 17th in the evening (4-7 pm)

- Our kick-off meeting for the 8th grade class trip to Washington D.C. will take place sometime in early November in all social studies classes. Parents will be receiving detailed information from Mr. Casey at this time on this annual end of the year trip which will be held Tuesday May 31-Friday June 3rd.

**ACADEMIC HIGHLIGHTS****Math:**

Students have finished or will be finishing their study of equations. The next unit focuses on inequalities. Students will learn to write and graph inequalities, use properties to generate equivalent inequalities, and solve inequalities involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Discussions about real world applications and enrichment activities will also be incorporated into this unit.

**English:**

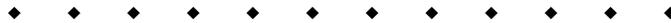
As a writing warm-up activity, our students were asked to describe a place or thing they treasure. They also constructed a bio-poem, a poem that cleverly displays one's interests and dreams by combing text with graphics. Our focus, thus far, on the writing process required that they examine and question, "Why are routines and procedures important to writing?" and "What are the qualities of good writing?" We will require that our students, over the course of this year, reflect upon this question as they brainstorm, develop, revise and then edit their work. Our literature unit during term one is a selection of short stories including the ever popular, "The Most Dangerous Game." Through our readings and follow-up discussions, we hope our students develop a deeper understanding of literature as they attempt to answer, "What are the qualities of a good story?" Please note: Our classes have all been assigned an independent novel study that is due October 29<sup>th</sup>.

**Science:**

Students in science class have recently completed their first major unit on Mapping the Earth. Students examined various types of maps and have completed a simulation of an EarthKam mission in which they selected sites on Earth for the International Space Station to take pictures for them. The "real" mission will happen in either the winter or spring. Students are well into their second unit of study that focuses on a review of matter and atomic structure before beginning our study of minerals and rocks.

**Social Studies:**

Since the beginning of the school year, students in World History I have been working on answering the question, How do value systems affect political, social, and economic relationships? Students have been examining the topics of Feudalism and the role the Christian Church played in Europe after the collapse of the Roman Empire in the Early Middle Ages in Europe. In the upcoming weeks we will be examining the Renaissance and Reformation periods in world history as well as discussing the impact these movements had on the development of the "modern" world.



## Foreign Language

### French: Grade 6

In 6<sup>th</sup> grade French we are studying the use of adjectives and greetings, both formal and informal. We have been singing various songs including the “Non, Non Blues”, “Frère Jacques” (rock n. roll style), and dancing to “Sur le Pont d’Avignon”. We have been doing some pair work with short dialogues as well. We have studied about various francophone countries.

### French: Grade 7

In 7<sup>th</sup> grade French we have finished reviewing interrogative words and verbs that end in ER. We have been practicing writing and conversation applying the verb Faire and various expressions. We have looked at Sénégal and discussed different francophone countries. We have been singing “Les Champs Elysées” and looked at photos of Paris online. Our new lesson introduces adjectives with their various forms and personal belongings embedded in the context of student’s daily life. We have looked at what French students like to do during their free time.

### French: Grade 8

Bonjour tout le monde! The eighth graders are adjusting to being in the newer, more advanced 2<sup>nd</sup> year textbook. Initially we are moving at a somewhat slower pace to be sure that the kids have an opportunity to lay a good foundation. It’s wonderful to see the progress that they have made since 6<sup>th</sup> grade. We’ve just started lesson 3 where the students are learning how to say that they are tired, afraid, right, wrong, cold, hot, hungry, and thirsty. They are adding to their list of “avoir” and “faire” idioms. They are also learning how to ask questions in a more conversational form, i.e. inversion.

The cultural component focuses on Armelle’s new “copain” and his relationship to her best friend, Corinne.



## Spanish: Grade 6

Sixth grade Spanish students will soon study the verb *gustar* and many new infinitives. They will be asking and answering questions about what they like and what they like to do. They are beginning to create original sentences with *ser* and *ser de* and subject pronouns. Our first lesson takes place in the cultural context of Miami, Florida.

Recently all Spanish 6 students received their new Spanish workbook called *Más Práctica*. In the last section of this workbook students can find a resource section with complete vocabulary lists and grammar points for each chapter. This is most helpful to students completing homework activities in the workbook.

## Spanish: Grade 7

The students are learning to talk about schedules, ask and tell time, ask questions, say where they are going, and request food. These topics are found in unit 2, chapter 2 of the textbook. The cultural setting is Mexico City. In the next chapter they will discuss plans, sequence events, and talk about places and people they know, still based in Mexico City.

## Spanish: Grade 8

Grade eight students have been learning to ask for and give directions with regular affirmative tú commands. They have learned new vocabulary associated with identifying places, giving directions and using different modes of transportation. They have been using the prepositions of place to describe the location of many stores and other places in the city. This is all taking place in the cultural context of Oaxaca, Mexico.

. . . . .