



JGMS Principal's Newsletter

Bedford, MA 01730

Principal's Letter

Dear JGMS Families,

Happy Spring! It is nice to have longer sun lit days with increasingly warmer temperatures (watch it will snow as soon as this goes up on the website)!

This time of year is exciting. It is wonderful to see the school bustling with the activity that a change of season always brings. Activities started off with our students' awesome performance in "You're A Good Man Charlie Brown." Special thanks go to Ms. Budka and her staff for the tremendous amount of work involved with putting on a performance with such a large number of students involved.

As you know, our students are right in the middle of MCAS, with another testing window to follow beginning in May. Students will be tested at every grade level in a variety of subject areas. You will find the May MCAS schedule later in this newsletter.

Spring sports will be starting up in a few weeks, with our teams taking the field for interscholastic play the week of April 26th! Please make sure all necessary health information is provided to Ken Norling, our spring JGMS Athletic Coordinator.

I hope that as the weather gets warmer we will all be able to spend some time out-of-doors enjoying the wonders of spring in New England.

Regards,

P. Jayne Viladenis







April 2011

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1(5)	2
3	4(6)	5(1)	6(2) Half-Day	7(3)	8(4)	9
10	11(5)	12(6)	13(1) Half-Day	14(2)	15(3)	16
17	18 Holiday	19 Vacation	20 Vacation	21 Vacation	22 Vacation	23
24	25(4)	26(5)	27(6) Half-Day	28(1)	29(2)	30

MCAS Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9	10 Gr. 8 Math Session 1 Blocks 1 & 2 1 2 3 4 5 6	11 Gr. 8 Math Make-ups Session 1 Half –Day	12 Gr. 8 Math Session 2 Blocks 1 & 2 5 6 3 4 1 2	13 Gr. 8 Science/Tech Session 1 Blocks 1& 2 3 5 6 4 1 2
16 Gr. 8 Science/Tech Session 2 Blocks 1 & 2 1 2 3 4 5 6	17 Gr. 7 Math Session 1 Blocks 1 & 2 Gr.8 Math Make-ups Session 2 2 3 5 4 1 6	18 Gr. 7 Math Session 2 Blocks 1 & 2 6 5 3 4 1 2	19 Gr. 6 Math Session 1 Blocks 1 & 2 Gr. 8 Sci/Tech Make –ups 1 2 3 4 5 6	20 Gr. 6 Math Session 2 Blocks 1 & 2 5 6 3 4 1 2
23 Grade 7 Make-ups	24 Grade 6 Make-ups	25 All Grade Final Make-ups	26 Complete PCPA by 3:00 Schedule UPS pick-up	27 UPS Pick-Up
30 	31 D.C. Trip 	1 ----->	2 ----->	3 -----]

Grade 6

Battle of the Books:

The Final Battle for the Battle of the Books is on its way. Each learning group battled amongst themselves to determine who had the strongest memory for the novels they read. Then, the top groups will compete against each other for the distinction of being the winner for the entire sixth grade. Last year's winning group was comprised of red team students. Will they be able to hold on to that title? We'll find out on April 6th!

An Exciting Opportunity to Meet an Author:

Tim Green is a former professional football player and current author of novels for young adults. He is the author of **Football Genius**, one of the popular books on our *Battle of the Books* list. The big news is that he will be visiting our school on April 14th at 10:15. Tim is in the area promoting his new book **Best of the Best** which is the third book in his baseball series. The kids are very excited about meeting him.

Academic Updates:

Math:

In math we are preparing for the Spring MCAS test focusing on Open Response questions. We are continuing our work with the four major operations with fractions and mixed numbers.

Science:

In science red team students are wrapping up our study of atoms and the periodic table by making an interactive Red Team periodic table. Each student is creating a kid-friendly website about an element to contribute. We hope to make the sites available online for other middle school students to learn from and use. Ask your child about the element they have been studying--it's impressive how much they know about chemistry!

English:

The blue team students recently finished their research projects on a "changemaker". Not only have they learned valuable research skills, but they have also hopefully realized that anyone can become an agent of change regardless of his/her background. They are now beginning their poetry unit. The red team will be finishing their poetry unit in the next week or two. We have enjoyed fun with limericks, haikus, diamantes, cinquains, and more. We have quite a few talented poets emerging on our team! We have also enjoyed reading poems and recognizing the themes they communicate about the world around us. We will be starting our research unit in the next few weeks.

Here are some exemplary poems by red team students:

"Back to the City"

*The door of the long-distance bus closes,
The engine growls and the light licks the street,
Then it's gone.*

*I walk by the gutters under the nail head stars
As the key finds the door.*

*In my room I fumble for the light,
I take a chair and try to believe
the hours will retrieve that myth called morning.*

-EB

"Tree and Me"

There once was a pretty tree
I found he was named after me
I looked for an ax
And used it to the max
And now there is no more we.

-HK

Detroit

**Silence is the people sleeping
in their beds
Silence is the robbers
that sneak into your house
Silence is the cries the people try to hide**

**Loud is the cock of a gun
"BOOM"
The terrified people hiding
away
Loud is the ambulance
driving down the road**

**Eternal is the memories
of the pain
the sobs for the loss
And knowing I live in the
most dangerous city**

-DK

"The Hunt"

Stag in the thicket
Wolf padding through the forest
The Hunting begins.

-JG

The Silence of a Secret

The silence of a secret is
The note getting passed back and forth
Your mouth when you know you can't tell
The happiness that quickly and silently fades away.

The screaming thought of telling
The sound of your heart racing
People pestering you to tell.

The feeling of breaking someone's trust.
Can you hear it?
Can you feel it?
Never again will you hear the sound of a secret.

-BB

Grade 7

Now that we can see the grass beginning to show from under the mounds of snow, it is beginning to feel like Spring. Last week, students took the ELA Long Composition test for MCAS, and this coming week, they will take the ELA Reading Comprehension tests on Tuesday (3/29) and Friday (4/1). It is especially helpful for students to get a good night sleep and eat breakfast on testing days, since they spend much of the morning in testing rooms. The math portion of the MCAS will be held in May.

Here is what has been happening in classes:

Math:

Students in Pre-Algebra classes turned in many amazing Wheel of Theodorus projects last 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 7th Grade Math will need to turn in their Cartoon Enlargement projects at the end of the month. They recently completed the unit on Percents and are now learning about geometric figures. Students are encouraged to visit www.classzone.com for extra practice (e-workbooks) and games (animations).

English:

Students have spent a significant amount of time practicing and improving writing skills and preparing for the MCAS long composition and open response questions. Students are continuing to use 21st Century skills using Moodle for their third quarter book project discussing multi-cultural literature. Students are also looking forward to beginning the novel, *The Giver* by Lois Lowry.

Science:

How unique are you? Students are finding the answer to that question in Science class. As part of the unit on Reproduction and Heredity, students took an inventory of some of their easily observable genetic traits. Students then collected data from the whole class and presented that information in the form of a bar graph. Students have been learning that genes determine traits and how those traits are passed down from parent to offspring. In April, they will start to unravel the mysteries of DNA, the genetic material that determines traits.

Social Studies:

Students have completed their study of ancient Egypt. There were amazing presentations of the research the students completed in the form of PowerPoints, Glogsters, and Posters. There were even some Animotos to add to the presentations. Clearly the students all worked hard to research their topics and put good effort into writing their research essays and presentations. Students have begun their study of ancient Greece with a focus on the Minoans and Mycenaeans, geography, Greek culture, and different forms of government.

Interims have been posted, so please check the transcript section of your child's Aspen report, under the *My Info* section. There are comments from teachers to view there as well. Please contact your child's teacher if you have any questions about a specific class.

Grade 8

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 23, 2011. 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!

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALBERT C!

Two weeks ago, JGMS was notified by the National Geographic Society that 8th grader Albert C, this year's JGMS Geography Bee Winner, had placed in the top 100 in the state on a written exam taken by all school winners across the country. Albert's score qualifies him to participate in the State Geography Bee finals to be held Friday, April 1 at Clark University in Worcester. Albert will be competing for a chance to represent the State of Massachusetts in the National Geography Bee Finals in Washington D.C. in May. Congratulations and best of luck Albert!

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 Thursday, 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.

Notes from the Gifted and Talented and Differentiated Instruction Program

MathCounts News

Congratulations to our MathCounts Team! They made it to the state level of competition, and placed 10th in the state! Our team members were Alex Chen, Kristen Kuo, Andrea Ning, and Chris En. They should all be very proud!

The state level of competition followed the chapter competition in February. At the chapter competition, our team placed 2nd, with two of the four team members scoring in the top 5 students in the chapter. Alex Chen placed 2nd and Kristen Kuo placed 4th. Technically, the two had the same score, but Alex got more problems correct on the Sprint round of competition, thus placing him higher.

For the first time ever, a student at JGMS scored well enough on the American Math Competition, 10th grade and below (AMC 10) to qualify for the American Invitational Mathematics Examination (AIME). Alex Chen, along with four high school students, took in the three hour long competition. Only the top students on the AMC 10 and 12 are invited to compete. Additionally, the average score on the AIME is 2 out of 15. We are very proud that Alex was invited to compete at such a high level!

MathCounts is now gearing up for the Collaborative Problem Solving Contest, a week long, 15 question math puzzle competition in which we typically score very well. This is by far our favorite competition of the year, and the students are getting excited! As this is a collaborative competition, we submit one set of answers for the entire school, so we could definitely use as many interested brains as possible. Students should thus feel free to come join MathCounts any Monday at 2:30 in B210!

WordSmiths News

WordSmiths is going to start working on the blog full swing! We will be sharing word puzzles and other interesting ideas.

To view the WordSmiths blog, go to <http://wordsmithedbyjgms.wordpress.com/>. Stay tuned for updates coming over the next few weeks!

Advanced Math Pull-Out Classes

The 6th grade advanced math class has just finished fraction operations and is beginning to play around with interesting ideas in fractions. We'll be looking at how ancient civilizations represented fractions only using unit fractions, and create some mathematical puzzles with fractions. 7th graders are finishing a unit on three dimensional geometry and are tackling a project with unusual solids and scales. 8th grade students are deep in the realm of quadratics and will be deriving the quadratic formula next week!

Out of School Resources - Beyond IQ

<http://www.giftedconferenceplanners.com>

Beyond IQ is a conference for gifted professionals, parents, and students. If you're looking for a place your child can find connections, learn something new, and have opportunities to understand themselves better, Beyond IQ is a great single-weekend opportunity. This year, it will be held at Boston University, on April 29th, 30th, and May 1st.

JGMS Library News

March 2011

Joan Collins
Teacher Librarian

Battle of the Books



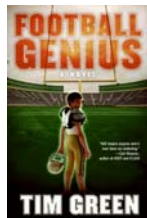
Many photos of our 6th graders decorate the halls showing them having fun and reading during February and March. They created raps and dressed up as characters from the novels. Some students actually read all 10 books from the list.

Classroom battles were held on March 21st, and ten teams will be at battle stations in the library on April 6th for the pizza party prize.

We are anticipating a visit from Tim Green, author of *Football Genius*. He will be at the middle school on April 14th and will be signing



copies of his books. Students can order them through school. Ms Wright and Ms Salvucci will have the order forms.



Read Across America

The 6th graders with Ms. Wright and Ms. Salvucci celebrated Dr. Seuss's birthday early this month. We shared some poems and read from Dr. Seuss.

Students donated 223 books for economically needy students from Chelsea. The Berkowitz Elementary School houses grades one through four where the majority of pupils are below the poverty level. They will be thrilled to receive these books, as they are currently involved in a literacy challenge.

Global Literature Circles with Web 2.0

Ms. McGraw and Ms. D'Entremont ushered in our 2011 Global Literature Circles with Web 2.0 tools to the 7th graders. 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. This year so far Ying Chang Compestine, Laura Resau, Sherry Garland, and Rosemary Hayes have agreed to *Skype* with our students. Other books on the list are written by Colleen Craig, Lynn Joseph, Prue Mason, and Suzanne Fisher Staples.

8th Grade Reading

Both Ms. Bemis and Ms. Stephen's students selected books for their third quarter reports. Many kids selected titles from the *Suggested Reading for Incoming Freshman*. Quite popular are *Animal Farm*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *Son of the Mob*.

8th Grade Essays and Speeches

Ms. Stephen and Ms. Bemis directed students to use Infotrac databases, particularly *Gale Opposing Viewpoints in Contest*

http://ic.galegroup.com/ic/ovic/?userGroupName=mmlin_m_jhnglenn

Students can gain access to this database at home with the password - bedfordma

Battle of the Books

Battle of the Books is drawing to a close with the final Book Battle scheduled to take place on Wednesday, April 6. The winning team will earn a pizza party for their learning group. We are all eagerly anticipating this last big Battle of the Books event! Teams are encouraged to wear their respective red or blue colors on the day of the final battle in support of their teams. In coordination with the Battle of the Books and the "Read Across America" initiative, we held a book drive in an effort to raise and donate books to a public elementary school in Chelsea. We had a great response and were able to raise 223 books. Thank you to all who donated books to this great cause! In other news, S.O.S. classes have been assigned their book project for 3rd term in conjunction with the Battle of the Books. Please check with your son/daughter for project specifics. Also, we are pleased to announce that author Tim Green will be coming to speak to our 6th grade students on April 14th. We are looking forward to a great presentation and hope to even get his autograph!



French

Grade 6:

Happy Spring to all! In the 6th 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:

Happy Spring to all! In the 7th grade French we are studying French geography. In addition to working on maps, learning about the geographical aspects of France, and playing a Jeopardy review game, each student will make a PowerPoint slide selling his/her city. They will be presenting these to the class in the coming week. Vacation is just around the corner.

Grade 8:

Happy Spring to all! The eighth grade classes are finishing up Unit 2 and are about to have a test. They have learned how to talk about their weekend activities, how to describe what they see in the city or the country. They have also worked hard on being able to accurately express things done in the past. After the unit 2 test, we'll be off to a unit on Paris and each student will have a small project based on a point of interest found in Paris.

Spanish

Grade 6:

Students in Spanish 6 are learning to talk about classes and classroom objects, say how often they do something and discuss obligations. They have just finished learning about possessive adjectives in Spanish and the various ways possession is expressed in the Spanish language. They are going to learn to express frequency with adverbs and obligation with *hay que* and *tener que*. They will be conversing with classmates using all the forms of the present tense of –ar verbs. The new unit takes place in Mexico City, Mexico.

Grade 7:

In grade 7 Spanish the students are beginning a new lesson in the unit on Puerto Rico. They are learning to state preferences, make comparisons, talk about sports, and say what they know or know how to do.

Grade 8:

At the present time students are learning to say what people are doing, persuade others, describe a house and negotiate responsibilities. They are learning to use direct object and reflexive pronouns with the present progressive tense, to use the verb *deber* and to form adverbs that end in *–mente*. Students will experience hot and cold *tapas*, snacks and appetizers served in many regions of Spain. The current chapter takes place in the cultural context of Barcelona. Eighth grade classes were recently introduced to a visitor from Madrid, Spain who is currently practice teaching at Lane School. They were able to ask various questions in the target language about the daily life and culture in Spain. This was a most enjoyable experience for the students.