



# JGMS Principal's Newsletter

## May/ June 2010

### Principal's Letter

Dear Parent,

This school year has certainly gone by quickly. As always, the end of the school year is a happy time for all, as we look forward to the warm, sunny and relaxing days of summer. It's a great time to refresh!

While we have been working on the transition of 5<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> we realize that some of you may still have questions. Having worked closely with both the Lane and BHS administrations again this year, I can assure you that the transition will be seamless. Our main goal is to make sure that 6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> graders feel welcome, safe, and happy about their new schools and their new classmates.

Once again, this summer we will continue to have "Walk-around Wednesdays" in July, when either Asst. Principal Peter Chapman or I will be available to greet you and your son or daughter, and you will also have the opportunity to take part in a "self-guided" tour of JGMS. In early August, incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders will receive postcards indicating when they can come in to pick out their school-year lockers. They will also take part in a "JGMS Scavenger Hunt" on Wednesday, August 25<sup>th</sup> from 2:30 to 3:30 PM. It's an opportunity to learn their way around the school and possibly win some "back-to-school" prizes. The school may seem large at first, but the kids acclimate themselves very quickly. The middle school years also pass quickly...ask the parent of any 8<sup>th</sup> grader! Enjoy them!

I encourage all parents to review our 2010-2011 School Improvement Plan that is posted on the JGMS website. On the website you will also find interesting information about the school, including but not limited to the updated Student Handbook, the updated curriculum guide and the bell schedule. Also, please review the information on the website regarding JGMS VolNet! We are looking for parent/community volunteers who wish to volunteer their services as guest speakers or presenters in various subject areas that can be related to our curriculum.

A traditional rite of passage for students as they move to a new grade level is their assignment to a new team for the upcoming academic year. Students will receive this information on Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup>, when current 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade students will spend some time with their new teaching teams. A specific schedule for each student will be mailed home mid-summer. Incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders' learning group assignments will be identified on each child's schedule.

It is important to note that if you do not wish your child's name to be printed on a learning group list, you should contact the school prior to July 16<sup>th</sup>. Also, please know that, with regard to teaming, teachers work very hard to make sure that all placements are based on academically sound reasons, therefore, if you have any questions or concerns about your child's placement for next year, please do not ask your child's current teacher to make any changes. Once a child is placed on a team, the only person who can make any change is the Principal. Any requests for placement change must be made in writing and will be given consideration based upon the educational merit this change may have for your child. We ask that should you wish to request any teaming changes that you do so in writing before the end of the school day on, June 18th. The JGMS leadership team, which is comprised of team leaders, curriculum coordinators and the administration, will review all requests, and letters will be mailed home with an explanation of the determination at the close of the school year.

As always, I would like to thank each of you who volunteered or who have helped the school in any way this year! Schools rely upon their communities to support them, and, without the various support efforts of each and every one of you, we would not have been able to continue to offer our students the myriad of opportunities that we have this year. There are two particular parent groups I would like to thank publicly. The MSPA has, as always, provided us with continuous support and generosity, and our Accept the Challenge Task Force has been tremendous in its support of our anti-bullying efforts. I would also like to publicly thank Ms. Anderson and Ms. Ham for providing our Chain Reaction Committee of students with the guidance to take on a major role in working to create a safe, bully-free environment at JGMS. As I have often said, our children continue to be academically, socially and emotionally richer because of the efforts of so many of you. Thank you all so very much.

Sincerely,

P. Jayne Viladenis  
Principal

## Moving On Ceremony Correction:

The MOC tickets mistakenly indicate that the MOC will be in the BHS auditorium. Please know that the ceremony will be held in the BHS gym.





# June 2010

## John Glenn Middle School Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1(4)	2(5) 1/2 Day Teacher Wkshp.	3(6)	4(1)	5
6	7(2)	8(3)	9(4)	10(5)	11(6)	12
13	14(1)	15(2)	16(3)	17(4) Moving On Ceremony 6 PM @ BHS Gym	18(5)	19
20	21(6) Last Day of School! 10:20 dismissal	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

## Grade 6

### Math:

The sixth grade math students took the MCAS test at the end of May. The students did a great job preparing for the test and seemed confident on the testing days. We have finished our unit on two dimensional geometry and measurement. The focus for the remaining days of school will be a cumulative review of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum. Some time will also be spent of a preview of some 7<sup>th</sup> grade material, including integers and pre-algebra.

### Science:

Huge congratulations to Ms. Murray, who had a baby girl named Maggie! We have enjoyed having Ms. Carroll for the last two months of school, and thank her for jumping into the science curriculum. In class, both teams have been working on Physics, and did a great job calculating the speed of objects and describing their motion. The remainder of the year will focus on Newton's Three Laws, and the students will be building balloon-power cars to help demonstrate and describe these laws.

### Social Studies

The red and blue team social studies classes are ending the year with an inter-team project. Students will be working in cooperative groups. Each group is made up of students from both teams, which will be assigned a country in East Asia, Southeast Asia or the Pacific Island Region. They will become the experts on that country. They will research and demonstrate their knowledge of the country through several products and share their knowledge with the rest of the class.

This week the classes have been working together to examine several countries around the world in terms of diet, possessions, daily lives and culture. Through Powerpoint slideshows of families featured in the books *Hungry Planet* and *Material Worlds*, students have been analyzing and comparing their lives in the United States to those of people in Bhutan, Japan, Kuwait and Mali. Ask your student to share this experience with you. We think you will be surprised at their insights!

### English:

The Red Team English students are busy researching people who have made a difference in our world. We are continuing to look at how one seemingly ordinary person can become extraordinary. Who will be the next extraordinary person to change our world? It could be your son or daughter. Ask him or her what he/she is learning through this project. Many are excited to learn about the challenges and accomplishments that each person has faced.

The Blue Team is wrapping up the year with a unit on persuasive speaking. For this final assessment, each student will become a "Salesperson of the Future" and perform a live infomercial for the class. Each student will envision a product for use in a fictional future city and pitch his/her product as it might appear on a TV spot in the year 3010.

**Red Team News**

Thanks to all for a wonderful field trip to the Mapparium and to Chinatown for Dim Sum and a walking tour. Our students represented Bedford well. We were thrilled to see so many kids try new foods and find some new favorites. Thank you to the parents for your support of this field trip.

Congratulations to the Red Team Student of the Month for April: Chris B. Chris is a hard worker who displays a great sense of humor at the most appropriate times. He pushes himself to succeed and is helpful to others when they ask. We are pleased with Chris' progress this year and are excited that he was selected, by student nomination, as our student of the month.

**Blue Team News**

We are looking forward to our remaining field trips. On June 2<sup>nd</sup> we will be returning to Great Meadows to compare and contrast the environment from the beginning of the year. On June 10<sup>th</sup> we will be traveling to the Mapparium to take in the political world as it was in 1935 and then we will be heading to Fenway Park for a tour. We know the students will represent us well and be on Great Behavior during our trips!

In other 6<sup>th</sup> grade news...

Both teams will be having a field day on June 18<sup>th</sup>. Please provide your son/daughter with sunscreen and sneakers that day. Even if it is a light drizzle, we will still be out on the field having fun. Please take the weather into account when you see your child's chosen outfit for the day.

We had a great year this year with your student. We would like to wish everyone a happy, health, and safe summer. Enjoy some summer reading, camp, and/or spending time with friends and family. We are looking forward to a new class of sixth graders and visits from our former students in the upcoming school year.

Good Luck in 7<sup>th</sup> Grade!

♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦ ♦

## Grade 7

What a fantastic year the 7<sup>th</sup> Graders have had! All of the teachers have truly enjoyed teaching your kids this year and we appreciate all of the efforts they have put into learning. We also thank you for all of the support you give your kids every day in helping them to be such great students and citizens of JGMS. We will end the year with a fun field trip to Kimball's Farm in Westford on Friday, June 18. Permission slips will be sent home soon with details.

**Here is how the school year is ending in each of the content classes:**

### **Science:**

Students concluded their unit about evolution. In addition to understanding how and why organisms change over time, they learned how new species are formed. They even discovered that the modern-day whale once had an ancestor that walked on land. Students are currently studying the importance of the classification of organisms. In addition, they are using binomial nomenclature to name organisms properly. Students created a pamphlet, using Microsoft Publisher, on the three domains used in classification and four kingdoms of Eukarya. To end the year in life science, students will have an overview of the 11 major organ systems of the human body.

### **Math:**

In Level 1 classes, students turned in some amazing box projects earlier in May. The teachers were very impressed at the effort put into this project. Seventh graders in both levels of math just finished the unit on probability. The unit culminated with a fun "Deal or No Deal" game. Currently, both levels have begun the unit on Algebra. This unit will help prepare your child for next year's Pre-Algebra or Algebra course. Students will conclude this unit with a test during the week of June 14th. The Wheel of Theodorus project will be due on June 7th for students in Level 2 classes.

### **Social Studies:**

Students completed their study of ancient Greece with a focus on the Hellenistic Age and Alexander the Great. They also participated in interesting debates between the city-states of Athens and Sparta. They have begun their study of ancient Rome learning about the development of from a city to an empire. They have been studying the different levels of Roman society, the government, and how the Roman Republic changed into an empire under Julius Caesar. They will conduct research and write an essay about the accomplishments of Rome and how ancient Rome influenced Western culture. We will conclude the unit with the fall of the Roman Empire.

### **English:**

During the month of May, students read *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. They have been writing essays focusing on the differences between our world and the world in the novel, as well as explaining the themes that were evident in the novel. Students are beginning to expand on their knowledge of ancient Greece in our final unit of Greek Mythology. Students will read the novel *Quicksilver* by Stephanie Spinner. This novel presents an overview of Greek mythology in a well-written, fun and fast-paced manner. In addition, students will complete a book project of a favorite book during June. Students have shown amazing growth in writing skills and interpretive reading this year.

As the year comes to an end, students are wondering about what team they will be placed on in 8<sup>th</sup> grade. This information will be given to students on June 9 in school. Students will have the opportunity to meet the teachers they will have next year in our annual Transition Day.



## Grade 8

We would like to take this opportunity to honor the 184 members of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class and offer our warmest wishes for a well-deserved summer vacation and a smooth transition to the high school. Finally, we thank you for your ongoing support and kind gestures throughout this academic year.

### Academic Recognition Night – Highlights

During this annual recognition assembly, we pause and pay tribute to individual academic accomplishments whether it be for an impressive academic record over three successive years or by achieving a perfect attendance record. We also acknowledge individual performance within the various academic and unified arts disciplines. On May 20, 2010, ninety-seven members of the eighth grade class, by invitation, participated in this event and received awards in one or more of the qualifying categories. Special thanks goes to Mrs. Stephen and Ms. Bemis for organizing the evening.

### Washington D.C. trip – Highlights

As this newsletter goes to print, 171 members of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class are visiting Washington D.C. in what should be an experience of a lifetime. A special thank you to our chaperones, Mr. Casey, Mr. Nagle, Mr. Glynn, Mr. McGrath, Officer Wardwell, Mrs. Mangini, Ms. Hammer, Mrs. Stephen, Mrs. Berinato, Ms. Fawson, Ms. Dimascio, and Mrs. Marchesini, our parent nurse for making this trip possible.

### Memorial Day Essay Contest

Congratulations to the 38 8<sup>th</sup> graders who participated in the annual Memorial Day Essay Contest sponsored by the Bedford Patriotic Holiday Committee and VFW Post 1628. Over 50 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students wrote about “What Memorial Day Means To Me.” Our turnout was the largest in the five-year history of the contest. All of the students who participated should be congratulated on a job well done!

### Eight Grade Events:

June 17 <sup>th</sup>	Moving-On Ceremony @ BHS 6-7 pm Dinner/Dance @ JGMS 7-10 pm
June 18th	Grade 8 trip to Canobie Lake
June 21st	School-wide Talent Show
Last Day of School	



## Foreign Language



### Grade 6 French

The sixth grade French students have worked very hard this year and can be proud of their accomplishments. We completed most of unit III. We finished up by starting lesson 8. Over the summer, on a rainy day, please encourage your child to visit [www.classzone.com](http://www.classzone.com). This website supports our textbook and is a great way to reinforce their skills. The kids can use it to review what we have worked on this year.

BONNES VACANCES!

### Grade 7 French

The seventy grade French students have worked very hard this year and can be proud of their accomplishments. We completed up through Unit VI, lesson 20. Over the summer, on a rainy day, please encourage your child to visit [www.classzone.com](http://www.classzone.com). This website supports our textbook and is a great way to reinforce their skills. The kids can use it to review what we have worked on this year.

BONNES VACANCES!

### Grade 8 French

This 8<sup>th</sup> grade class and I have worked very hard together for three years and I'm very proud of their accomplishments. They should be, too! They have been a joy to work with and I have no doubt that they will do very well at the high school. Please come back and visit. I'll miss you!

BONNES VACANCES!

. . . . .

# Spanish



In 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Spanish we are finishing up Unidad 2 Etapa 1. We are in the cultural context of Mexico City and have explored some historical and political facts regarding Mexico. We are learning to conjugate AR verbs in the context of school and school supplies. We are also constructing sentences with frequency adverbs. We have fun when we go to the lab and play verb games on Quia.com to review our grammar functions.

In grade 7 Spanish we are finishing our unit based in Puerto Rico with a chapter on weather, the seasons, and the rainforest. It includes saying how people are feeling with *tener* idioms, and learning how direct object pronouns work in Spanish. Lastly we will learn how to say what is happening right now with the present progressive. You can see some of the students' recent work on Moodle. Ask your child to log in and show you.

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade Spanish we have completed Unidad 5 Etapa 2 and are currently working in both Unidad 5 Etapa 3 and Unidad 6 Etapa 1 focusing primarily on the Preterite past tense. We have completed our multimedia Glogsters on pharmacy advertisements and they are wonderful! Our cultural context is still Spain and we continue to study various traditional foods such as Tapas. We have been practicing tongue twisters that apply many of the preterite verbs and will soon look at some Spanish pop songs from the group *Mecano* for sing along.

. . . . .

# JGMS Library News

March 25, 2010



Joan Collins  
Teacher Librarian

## Global Literature Circles with Web 2.0

In this model, classic literature circles are transformed with Web 2.0 tools. 7<sup>th</sup> grade students of Ms. McGraw and Ms. D'Entremont answered essential questions about the novels in *moodle*. They accepted the challenge to create online posters with *Glogster*.

Students were able to *skype* with many of the authors:

Suzanne Fisher Staples from her home in Pennsylvania discussed *Shabanu*. She had been a Middle East reporter and used her knowledge to write this book. She sent a photo of the girl who inspired the main character, as well as a picture of a dancing camel. All the girls who read the book, introduced themselves to Suzanne and were captivated with her story. One of the students told me how "cool" it was to meet and talk with a well-known author.

Ying Chang Compestine, the author of *Revolution in Not a Dinner Party*, *skyped* with the students from her home near the San Francisco area. She was a young girl during the Cultural Revolution in the '70's and was able to give first hand information to our eager listeners. The author still has family members who live in modern day China, and was able to inform our students about modern life there.

Laura Resau who wrote, *What the Moon Saw* *skyped* from her home in Colorado.

Laura told the students about her experiences in Mexico and how she learned to speak Spanish, and what drove her to write her novel.

Ann Bouwer, an art teacher from the International School of Boston, spoke to the students via *skype*. She had grown up in South Africa and gave her first hand account of apartheid. Students who read *Afrika* were able to ask incisive questions about the authenticity of Colleen Craig's book.

Prue Mason, the author of *Camel Rider*, stayed up until 1 AM in the morning to meet our students. She lives in Australia but wanted to participate in our cross-cultural exchange. Mason's novel is set in the Middle East.

One of Bedford's parents, Thanh Nguyen, graciously joined the readers of *The Shadow of the Dragon* to discuss the Vietnamese immigrant experience. Mrs. Nguyen was Vietnamese refugee from the war. Her daughter, Jackie, is an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at our school.

## *Glogster*

As part of this project, the students created on-line posters about their books with *Glogster*. Glogs allow you to add photographs, images, graphic, and sound files. Students can share their glogs with members of their class.

### Battle of the Books

The 2010 Battle of the Books enjoyed another successful year. The final battle between 6-5's Beastly Bookinators (Blue Team) and 6-8's Radical Readers took place at the library on April 16<sup>th</sup>. All the sixth graders watched the competition via CCTV in their classrooms. Learning Group 6-8 won the pizza party thanks to the efforts of their top scoring team of Bridget Towle, Alyssia Smith, Otto Altman, Alijah Dotman, and Daniel Mock.

### April was Poetry Month

Many teachers celebrated Poetry Month. Cheryl Pepisa selected books from both our American and British collection. I read some of my favorites to her class.

Candy Banks had her art class illustrate some of their favorite selections.

### Greek Mythology

All 7<sup>th</sup> graders began their unit on Greek Mythology by checking out *Quicksilver* by Stephanie Spinner. Readers got a kaleidoscope view of Mount Olympus through the eyes of a young adult Hermes.

### Biography Research

Denise Breakall's 6th grade red students diligently research historical figures using print and non-print materials. Students worked on note taking and organizing information.

### Get Caught Reading

A large yellow poster hangs in the hallway outside the library with photos of kids "caught reading" in various spots in school. We always encourage reading here at JGMS.

### Summer Reading

You'll find a recommended summer reading list for 2010 on the JGMS website. Students who wish to participate in book discussion at Fall Conversation Café, should be sure to read the following:

Incoming 6<sup>th</sup> graders –

***Lunch Money*** by Andrew Clements

**Twelve-year-old Greg, who has always been good at moneymaking projects, is surprised to find himself teaming up with his lifelong rival, Maura, to create a series of comic books to sell at school**

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders

***Found*** by Margaret Peterson Haddix

**When thirteen-year-olds Jonah and Chip, who are both adopted, learn they were discovered on a plane that appeared out of nowhere, full of babies with no adults on board, they realize that they have uncovered a mystery involving time travel and two opposing forces, each trying to repair the fabric of time.**

## Notes from the Gifted and Talented and Differentiated Instruction Program



### MathCounts News

Congratulations to all MathCounts students at JGMS and all students who joined us in solving problems for the Collaborative Problem Solving Contest! We scored 8<sup>th</sup> this year, and were again the top middle school in the country. The field of competition including nearly 100 schools! Of particular note, there was a solution that was incorrect, and we were the only school to catch the error!

We are very proud of how well we did, and that we are consistently scoring so well!

MathCounts has only one meeting left this year, on June 14<sup>th</sup>. We will be celebrating our achievements and playing games, so all MathCounts members are encouraged to come and bring something to share.

### School Scrabble News

Calling all Scrabblers – parents, students, community members, any who are interested! We would like to invite you to come try your skills against our School Scrabble students. We will hold a Scrabble Competition after school on June 16<sup>th</sup>, with prizes for the top Scrabblers! If you're interested, contact Ms. Fontaine-Rainen, the School Scrabble coach, by e-mail at [lisa\\_rainen@bedford.k12.ma.us](mailto:lisa_rainen@bedford.k12.ma.us).

### Advanced Math Pull-Out Classes

The 6<sup>th</sup> grade advanced math class has been working on geometry. They will be finishing off their unit and moving on to probability soon. 7<sup>th</sup> graders are working on lines and graphs of lines, with an algebra focus. They are beginning to investigate how linear equations are set up and how they relate to graphs. 8<sup>th</sup> grade students have been working on quadratics. They have learned how to derive the quadratic formula and the vertex formula and have used those to solve problems involving projectiles.

. . . . .

# ART



The Middle School visual arts department is busy wrapping up major projects in grades 6,7, and 8. Ms. Banks and Mr. Harrington are finishing ceramics projects with all 8th graders, including firing finished pieces, glazing, and firing again. Students will be able to bring projects home before the end of the school year. Also, many amazing painting projects were finished just before the ceramics projects, and will be displayed in the main hallway, and brought home in the next few weeks.

Many of our 8th graders will be moving on to more advanced arts classes at BHS. We are excited for them to begin new work in ceramics, Art 1, and other visual arts opportunities. We send them along ready and able!! We have a great crop of creative students that will certainly thrive in the BHS art rooms!

7th graders in Ms. Banks room just finished a plaster relief project working with paris-craft, paint, and insect as the main theme. Many interesting and beautiful results. Again, many beautiful works of art and talented students this year. We are very proud of our 7th graders!

6th graders are also wrapping up portrait reliefs with modeling paste and paint, and are moving into garden relief designs using oil pastel and black paint in a resist mode.

Look for students to be bringing home much of their art work now and in the next few weeks! Some 6th graders are wrapping up art electives such as ceramics and creative technology. These electives allow 6th graders the opportunity to have more art and/or creative tech this year due to having regular art classes only once in a 6-day cycle. Some amazing art work coming out of all of these electives this year! This has been such a great year in the visual art rooms! Also, many thanks to all parents and BHS students who assisted in the set-up and take-down of the K-12 Art show this year. Another great art show in Bedford!

. . . . .

## MUSIC

**Greetings from the Music Department! Don't forget to check the Performing Arts calendar for all of our up-coming concerts! We look forward to seeing you there.**

## FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE

### Updates to Annual Height and Weight Screening

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.

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 your 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/).

Medication orders need to be renewed each year. I will be sending paper work home for students taking meds in school and for students in need of epipens in school. Please have them filled out over the summer.

Physicals are required for sports participation including try-outs, and are valid for 13 months.

As always, please feel free to call with questions and have a safe and wonderful summer

Carol Eaton, RN 781-275-3165

