



JGMS Principal's Newsletter

September 2009

Principal's Letter

Dear Parent/Guardian,

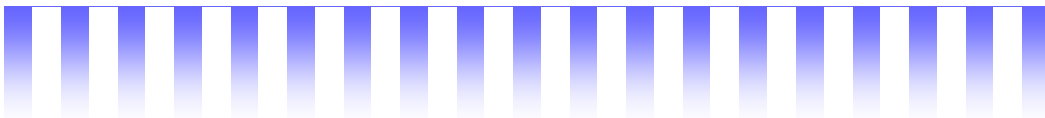
Welcome to a new school year! It's great to have the kids back in school! They have come back energized and positive. We have had a great start!

It was great to seem such a huge turnout for Open House night. We had about 250 parents attend our Accept the Challenge kick-off event, "Doin' the Right Thing" and over 400 moving about the building visiting classrooms, as they followed their children's schedules.

I would like to invite you all to please sign up to receive both the JGMS daily announcements and eNewsletters. You will get the most up-to-date information that way. To sign up all you have to do is go to our school website (<http://www.bedford.k12.ma.us/jgms/>) and click on the link below the picture. Also, while you are on the website, please spend some time clicking around, as there is much information available for parents and students.

I appreciate your involvement in your children's education and would like to invite you to the first "Coffee with the Administration" to be held on Friday, October 30th from 8:30 to 9:30 in the library. Hope to see you there!

Sincerely,
P. Jayne Viladenis



October 2009

John Glenn Middle School Calendar

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|-----|-----------------|-----|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|-----|
| | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 1/2 Day Teacher Workshop | 8 School Council 2:30-3:30 | 9 | 10 |
| 11 | 12 No School | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 1/2 Day Teacher Workshop | 29 | 30 Principal's Coffee 8:30-9:30 Library | 31 |

JGMS Library News

September 22, 2009



Joan Collins
Teacher Librarian

What Kids are Reading

Series books remain popular with students:

Percy Jackson

Rick Riordan

Percy, expelled from six schools for being unable to control his temper, learns the truth from his mother that his father is the Greek god Poseidon, and is sent to Camp Half Blood where a satyr befriends him.

Charlie Bone

Jenny Nimmo

Charlie Bone's life with his widowed mother and two grandmothers undergoes a dramatic change when he discovers that he can hear people in photographs talking.

Clique

Lisi Harrison

Wealthy Massie is determined to exclude middle class Claire, the daughter of her father's old friend, from her seventh-grade clique at a very exclusive private school in Westchester, New York, but after Massie steals her only friend, Claire strikes back.

Twilight

Stephanie Meyer

Seventeen-year-old Bella leaves Phoenix to live with her father in Forks, Washington, where she meets an exquisitely handsome boy at school for whom she feels an overwhelming attraction and who she comes to realize is not wholly human.

Artemis Fowl

Erin Colfer

Twelve-year-old evil genius Artemis Fowl tries to restore his family fortune by capturing a fairy and demanding a ransom in gold, but the fairies fight back with magic, technology, and a particularly nasty troll.

Warriors

Erin Hunter

Rusty, a bored house kitten is apprenticed by the ThunderClan and must struggle to fit in when the enemy ShadowClan threatens the group of feral cats.

Cherub

Robert Muchamore

James becomes a part of the highly secretive organization, CHERUB, a group of teens whose mission is to spy on terrorists and international drug dealers, hack into computers, and download crucial information for the government

Library Activity

SOS teachers Sarah Healey and Melissa Michaud accompanied their classes to orientation. Students checked out books. Many will be recording information into their reading logs.

Research at Home

If you bookmark www.mln.lib.ma.us, students will have access to the Minuteman Library Network and available databases. You'll need your library card number. Simply request a pin number on-line to establish an account. Doing this will allow you to request and renew books from your home computer as well as access to the statewide databases.

Library Volunteers

If you're interested in volunteering at the JGMS library, please contact Beth Goodrich at Elizabeth_Goodrich@millipore.com



Foreign Language , French

Grade 6 French

Welcome to the JGMS French program! In spite of a rainy June and July, I hope that you and your families found time to relax and unwind. In the 6th grade, we are continuing to streamline the curriculum so as to concentrate on new material while ensuring greater mastery of concepts introduced at the elementary level. While we are patiently waiting the arrival of our textbooks, French students are currently working on greetings, numbers, and the alphabet.

Grade 7 French

Welcome back to school! In spite of a rainy June and July, I hope that you and your families found time to enjoy a more relaxed schedule. We are moving right along in our wonderful new textbook and materials. We just completed a review of unit 3, which provides a firm foundation for our next topics. The students will learn to share information about themselves, their friends, and their possessions.

Grade 8 French

Welcome back to school! I hope that in spite of the rainy months of June and July that your families found time to rejuvenate and enjoy a more relaxing schedule. French students are currently learning about second conjugations verbs and comparisons, (i.e. Mme Eriksen est plus grande que Shaquille O'Neal! Please ask your child if you don't understand French.). This current unit focuses on clothing – describing it and buying it, style, and being able to describe what you are wearing as well as what someone else is wearing. We're off and running.

Foreign Language, Spanish

Grade 6 Spanish

Students have been introduced to their new Spanish textbook. They have worked on Etapa Preliminar and Unidad 1- Etapa 1. (Preliminary Chapter and Unit 1- Chapter 1). After a scavenger hunt in the book they have become familiar with the organization of each unit and chapter. They have practiced pronunciation of vowels and the Spanish alphabet. They have made a bookmark of useful classroom expressions. They are learning the new vocabulary of this lesson and practicing familiar and formal greetings. This is taking place in the cultural context of Miami, Florida.

Grade 7 Spanish

In grade 7 Spanish we have begun the next chapter, unit 2 chapter 2, in which the students learn to talk about the places in school and schedules. We talk about where people are, where they are going, and times. The geographical context continues to be in Mexico City.

Grade 8 Spanish

Students are reviewing Unit 3- Chapter 3 in their textbook. They are reviewing weather and special expressions with the verb *tener*, the present progressive tense and the use of direct object pronouns. They are describing the weather, discussing clothing and accessories, saying what is happening at the moment, stating an opinion and describing how they feel. All of these activities are in the cultural context of the Puerto Rico.

Physical Education Department

Any families that can donate tennis rackets/balls and other PE equipment please contact one of the PE teachers. We could really use your donations!! In addition to Tennis equipment we are in search of ping pong tables, cricket equipment, yoga balls and softball/baseball gloves. Thanks for your help. The PE dept. We can be contacted by calling 781-275-3201 X3219 or email Ken Norling, Roseanne Ham, Libbey Beinert or Candace Russel.



Tennis Rackets/ Balls



Ping Pong Table



Cricket Equipment



Yoga Balls



Softball Gloves/ Baseball Gloves

Thanks, Libbey

Libbey Beinert Hunnewell
John Glenn Middle School-Fall athletic director
Bedford High School Girls Lacrosse
Webpage: http://mail.bedford.k12.ma.us/~libbey_beinert
Work Phone: 781-275-3201 X3219



Grade 8

The school year is off to a fantastic start for the eighth grade class as the Class of 2014 arrived motivated with enthusiasm and positive attitudes. The one hundred and eighty seven members of the eighth grade class have set the right tone for the whole building and we are looking forward to a productive and fun year.

As you may already know, eighth grade has two distinct, yet parallel teams of teachers and students: Green and Grey. This concept of two parallel teams, we believe, allows students to make stronger academic and social connections within a smaller grouping while the staff has the opportunity to develop a more cohesive and collaborative instructional approach across teams.


Thank you as well to all of the parents who attended our Open House on September 17th. We had a great turnout and appreciate your involvement.

Staff Members for the respective teams:

Joe Casey (Social Studies, Team Leader)
Vanessa Underwood (Math)
Barbara Ferri (Science)
Pat Stephen (English)
Rachel Fawson (Reading)
Erin Money (Counselor)
Beth Rozek (Special Education)
Matt Merritt (Special Education)
Diana Sirgenthaler (Counselor)

Charlie Puopolo (Science, Team Leader)
Sara Berinato (Math)
Marilyn Bemis (English)
James Nagle (Social Studies)
Rachel Fawson (Reading)
Erin Money (Counselor)
Fern Thompson (Special Education)
Maryellen Cantillon (Special Education)
Tammy Westenfeld (Special Education)

Robin Eriksen (French), Terri Mills (Spanish) and Wendy Tanahashi- Werks (Spanish)
Have combined members of each Team in their classes.





Grade 7

Welcome to the 7th grade! We are off to a great start. It is obvious that the 7th graders are adjusting quite well to the second year of middle school. Students can look forward to a year filled with exciting challenges and unique learning opportunities.

We wanted to take this opportunity to introduce the 7th grade teachers on both teams.

Navy Team

Nicole d'Entremont—English
Karen Burstein—Math
Heidi Scaltreto—Science
Matthew McGonagle—Social Studies
Fern Thompson—Special Ed.
Matthew Merritt—Special Ed.
Michelle Della Valle—Special Ed.

Purple Team

Lynda McGraw—English
Elizabeth Cowles—Math
Bradd Smithson—Science
Allison Hammer—Social Studies
Beth Rozek—Special Ed.
David Malio—Special Ed.
Tammy Westenfeld—Special Ed. Reading
Cheryl Pespisa—Special Ed. English

The following teachers work with students on both the Navy and Purple Teams:

Ms. Klein, Ms. Barnett, and Ms. Eriksen teach foreign language.

Ms. Talkowski, Ms. Fawson, and Ms. Breaux teach reading.

Ms. Siegenthaler is the Guidance Counselor.

The Team Leaders for the Navy Team are Nicole d'Entremont and Fern Thompson.

The Team Leader for the Purple Team is Allison Hammer.

If you need to schedule a team meeting or have a concern to convey to the entire team, please email the Team Leader for your team.


Here is a brief update on what has been going on in classes:

In science, students have been learning about life scientists and the six features all living things have in common.

In English, students are learning about sentence structures and folklore. Their first book project assignment will begin this week.

In social studies, students are learning about archaeology including timelines, different types of sources, and evaluating sources to find out about history.

In math this year, the 7th grade has a new book series by McDougal-Littell. Level 1 classes use Math Course 3 and Level 2 classes use Math Course 2, and the books should remain at home. There are supplemental materials supporting each chapter at: www.classzone.com and usernames and passwords will be issued for access to the online textbook. In Level 1 classes, students are learning about variables, equations, and integers. In Level 2 classes, students are learning about patterns and Algebraic thinking.





Grade 6

6th Grade Student of the Month

Each sixth grade team will hold a “town meeting” once per month. At this meeting, we will discuss team business, address any issues that may arrive, and announce our student of the month. Student of the month is earned by being a positive member of our school community, both as citizens and students of JGMS. Each student of the month will receive a certificate, ribbon, and gift card to a local eatery.

Field Trip

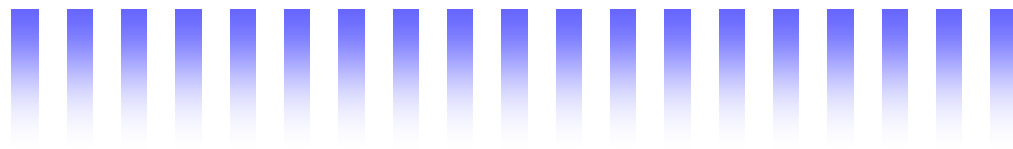
As part of a science unit on observation, a social studies unit on maps, and an English unit on descriptive writing, the sixth grade will be taking a field trip on Friday October 9th. The Red Team will be traveling to Great Brook Farm. The Blue Team will be traveling to Great Meadows. More details will follow.

What a Great Start!

We are so pleased with our sixth grade students this year. They have transitioned to middle school quite well and most are becoming pros at finding their way around the building and opening their lockers. We are thrilled to be getting to know our students and look forward to all that they will accomplish this year.

A Note from Your English Teachers

The 2nd Annual Massachusetts Poetry Festival will be held the week-end of October 15th. Although most of the workshops are geared toward high school students, the Boston Children’s Museum will hold activities for kids and families on Sunday Oct. 18th. To find out more, go to www.masspoetry.org.



Gifted and Talented and Differentiation

Gifted and Talented E-mail List

All parents and students are invited to sign-up to receive e-mails from Lisa 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. Please send an e-mail to lisa_rainen@bedford.k12.ma.us to get on the list!

Gifted and Talented Programming through Differentiation

Students with particular gifts and talents have many opportunities to learn and excel at JGMS. Many of these opportunities are provided in the regular classroom, through differentiation. Teachers provide students with challenging options in the context of the regular curriculum, based on student needs and interests. The Gifted and Talented and Differentiated Instruction Teacher, Lisa Rainen, provides support to teachers on differentiation.

Advanced Mathematics

Mathematics can be particularly challenging to differentiate. We acknowledge that some students need a qualitatively different mathematics curriculum on a daily basis. These needs change throughout the year, based largely on readiness. One way we work to meet these needs is to pre-test students in mathematics for every unit, and provide alternate curriculum to some students who show the need for more advanced work. The advanced math pull-out classes work on units that parallel the regular curriculum, taking it deeper and to a more challenging level. For the first unit of 6th grade, the students are remaining in the regular classroom to get used to the routines and organization of middle school. The first 7th grade unit focuses on the concepts of patterns and includes writing patterns algebraically, using integers in patterns, and solving equations that represent patterns. The 8th grade class extends the regular algebra text by expanding the set concepts in the text, hoping to understand why Set Theory can be thought to be the foundation of all mathematics.

MathCounts

The JGMS math competition program, MathCounts, meets after school on Mondays from 2:30 to 3:30 in room B218. Students participating in MathCounts will compete in many competitions, including the American Mathematics Competition for grade 8 and below (AMC 8), the Collaborative Problem Solving Competition, Math Olympiad, and MathCounts. Each of these competitions will engage students' mathematical talents in different ways, including individual speed competitions, extended problem solving, team competitions, and head-to-head problem solving. All students are invited to train and compete. Any student who cannot attend some meetings due to conflicts with sports or other activities should contact Lisa Rainen for information on how to stay competitive and join when they are able.

School Scrabble

School Scrabble is an excellent way for students with verbal talent to stretch their vocabulary and strategic thinking. School Scrabble meets after school on Wednesdays in A117. The program is run under the umbrella of Youth and Family Services After School Program, with additional meetings before and between sessions, and field trips for competitions. Students are welcome to come try out School Scrabble until the After School Program schedule starts and decide if they would like to sign up.

Out of School Resources

MIT SPLASH

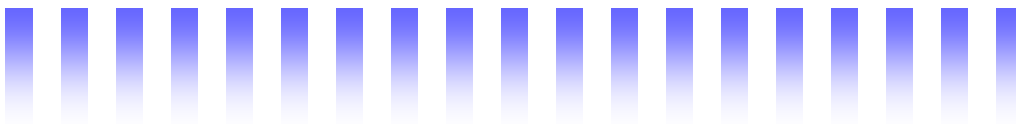
<http://esp.mit.edu/learn/Splash/index.html>

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 21st and 22nd. 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. Rainen know if cost or transportation is an issue.

CTY Talent Search

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 7th and 8th grade will take either the SAT or the ACT tests, typically given to college bound juniors and seniors. Students in 6th 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 7th and 8th grade level, scholarships to local colleges to be used to take courses before high school graduation. The deadline for applications is November 20th. If you would like information to be sent home with your child, please e-mail Lisa Rainen at lisa_rainen@bedford.k12.ma.us. You can also get more information on the CTY website listed above.



Ask BYFS

Question: What should an adult do as witness to an incident of bullying, aggressive, or assaultive behavior between middle school kids?

As our children grow older, they let us know in various ways they need us less and less. They want us to drop them off away from peers' watchful eyes; they think they can do most anything on their own without us; they want to stay out later and later. Being sensitive to their blossoming sense of independence can be a challenge while monitoring their physical and emotional safety.

When our kids were 2 years old and had trouble sharing toys with friends they were playing with or fighting about one thing or another, it was easy for us to be reminded of their young age and the need for us to 'civilize' their behavior. Teachable moments happened regularly, and we capitalized on them. In middle school, the teachable moments may occur further from our line of sight or outside of our homes but they still happen and we must be ready.

We will more likely see middle school youth in groups, maybe in our neighborhood or at the library or Town Common, in a local restaurant or store, walking along the Great Road or at Bedford Day. On occasion we may see inappropriate behavior and be uncertain how to respond, especially if we do not know any of the kids or have relationships with their parents. We may feel it is not our responsibility to intervene or be afraid that a parent might retaliate verbally or legally. But as adults we have a duty to ensure the physical and emotional safety of all our youth so we have to do something. Liability concerns should not govern our actions as long as we are acting in the interest of youth safety.

What we tell our kids to do in situations where they are witness to bullying, aggressive, or assaultive behavior can apply to us as adults as well. Better than doing nothing is at least getting help. That could mean engaging another nearby adult for assistance or even calling the school or police. Sometimes having adults just notice the behavior with a raised eyebrow or folded arms is enough to end it.

Of course an adult verbal intervention in a situation like this increases the likelihood of learning on the part of the youth and models bystander intervention that youth can then use in future situations where they might be uncomfortable or not know what to do. Depending on the type of behavior and our own respective comfort levels, our responses can distract and escalate in intensity:

- I lost my keys - could you help me find them?
- Hey, that doesn't look like fun for everyone. Maybe you can re-think that game?
- I want to play too - I'll be on his/her (victim) side.
- That language/behavior is inappropriate - you need to stop or I will call the school or the police.

One good place to start is to ask our kids what kind of adult intervention might be helpful if a situation arose where a friend or class mate was being bullied. What would they do? What would they have us do, especially if we did not know any of the kids? Certainly ensuring safety is our primary goal, and our middle school kids still need our help, even if they don't think they do...

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