

*"When a friend is in trouble, don't annoy him by asking if there is anything you can do.
Think up something appropriate and do it..."*

Edgar Watson Howe

Grey Matters

Volume 1

December 1 – 4 , 2003 Number 14

I hope everyone had a great Thanksgiving break. My father came out from Chicago and we had a wonderful time. My job during this holiday is baking the pies and cooking the turkey. My dad is the gravy expert. I have watched him prepare the gravy year after year and I still learn new twists when he makes it. We all rested and relaxed and are energized for the stretch until the winter break.

Last Wednesday morning, the Student Council organized and ran our Thanksgiving Assembly. This incredible production included performances by our combined 7th and 8th grade Band, combined 7th and 8th Chorus, our own amazing Faculty Chorus, speeches by Student Council Treasurer Pat Sloan and Student Council President David Cronin and myself, and the RJ Grey Speech Contest Winner, 8th grader Stefan Gentile.

To be honest, I was completely blown away by this event. It reminded me why I love working in this junior high. The RJG student body embodies what is best about this age group. They didn't just "behave" during their peers speeches, they truly listened and appreciated the thoughts and feelings shared. They have the maturity to understand the need to respect each other. At the same time, they haven't lost the magic and youthful exuberance which allows them to get caught up in the excitement and fun of the event. The teachers were just as impressive. The professionals who make RJG one of the most challenging educational institutions around were the same ones bouncing around with stuffed animals and paper airplanes singing about losing their homework, and cheering their teams on. As I said on Wednesday, I am thankful to be part of this RJG Community.

As you know, RJG is working with the New England League of Middle Schools (NELMS) to perform a self-assessment. The goal of this process is to help us reflect on our identity and to look at what we do well and how we can be even better. **Parents, now is your chance to participate.** Below you will find a questionnaire coversheet and the link to the electronic version of the questionnaire itself. Please take a few minutes, read the coversheet, and then click on the link to the questionnaire to fill it out. You will also be able to find a link to the questionnaire on the RJG website. Additionally, we will send a paper copy of the questionnaire with our students this afternoon for those parents who do not have internet access. Your participation in this process is greatly appreciated.

New England League of Middle Schools

SCHOOL ASSESSMENT

“It’s *all* about learning!” **R.J. Grey Junior High School**
16 Charter Road
Acton, Massachusetts

PARENT SURVEY

Dear Parents:

R.J. Grey Junior High School is participating in a NELMS School Assessment. An important part of this process is the school’s self-study where faculty, students, and parents are asked to provide information about the school. The NELMS Assessment is based on the research of best practices for young adolescent learners found in *Turning Points 2000* and *This We Believe and Now We Must Act*. The indicators included in this questionnaire cover these topics:

- ✓ Rigorous standards based curriculum
- ✓ Varied instructional strategies
- ✓ Middle level teachers being prepared to teach this age group
- ✓ Teaming practices where teachers and students work together on a team
- ✓ Democratic government where all constituencies share information
- ✓ School environment which leads to effective learning
- ✓ Parent and community involvement

These indicators work together to ensure success for every student.

Thank you for completing this survey and providing important information to your school. In responding to the questions, please indicate your opinion by marking each statement as follows:

Circle Always
Circle Sometimes
Circle Rarely
Circle Don’t Know

Example:

There are scheduled times to meet with teachers.

Always	Sometimes	Rarely	Don't Know
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In this case, the parent felt the practice was always evident.

The format of this document uses information from *Turning Points 2000* written by Anthony W. Jackson and Gayle A. Davis, published by Teachers College Press, New York, NY in 2000. The copyright is held by the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

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Click on the link below to go directly to the questionnaire. Be sure to click "submit" when you are finished. Thank you.

<http://ab.mec.edu/cgi-bin/survey.pl?s=JHS-Parent>