

*"If there is anything we wish to change in the child, we should first examine it and see whether it is not something that could better be changed in ourselves."*

**Carl Gustav Jung**

# Grey Matters

Volume 1

March 15 – 20, 2004

Number 27

Last Wednesday was RJG's 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Project Wellness Day. Approximately 430 7<sup>th</sup> graders, with one family member each, joined us on the Merrimack College campus for a series of workshops designed to build on and improve the lines of communication between parents and their children. This was my first experience with Project Wellness and I was very impressed. The students seemed to absorb the college environment, took the event seriously and were able to join their parents in partnership through the event. While most found the workshops quite useful, the time together was invaluable.

Once again I'd like to thank the members of the Project Wellness Committee who made all of this possible: Ann Decker, Christina Granahan, Jonathan Landman, Celeste Margolius, David Peters, Beth Petr, Jerri Ravis, and Margi Tessier. In a twisted kind of way, I view this like organizing a huge Thanksgiving meal. A massive amount of time and energy goes into making sure you have all the right ingredients, creating that magic environment, and frankly, worrying if everyone will get along. In the end, just like with Thanksgiving, everything works out and everyone walks away feeling good.

Friday was our Staff Professional Day. At RJG, much of the day was used to review the evaluation report from NELMS (a copy of which should be available for parents on the web shortly). The report is divided into 7 sections: Vigorous Curriculum, Varied Instruction, Teaming, Govern Democratically, School Environment, Involving Parents and Community, and Middle Level Teachers. Under each section are a list of strengths and recommendations.

The plan is to use this data to begin our quest for a clear definition as to our identity – is RJG a “middle school”, a “junior high”, or a hybrid. To begin this process, our first task is to review the report and select those recommendations which we believe will lead to an improved educational experience for our students. We can then use these areas of consensus as a foundation for our identity.

This process will be a multi-year project that will require a significant amount of community dialog; staff, students, and parents alike. Ultimately, the time and effort will provide us with an overarching common identity for our school. This structure will guide us in our future decision making and will allow us to have a shared vision and sense of direction.