

"Books and ideas are the greatest weapons against intolerance and ignorance."

Lyndon B. Johnson

Grey Matters

Volume 1

April 12 – 16, 2004

Number 31

Following-up on the *Let's Get Real* video, members of the Student Council, its advisors, and staff gave a presentation on bullying and harassment at the staff meeting last week. As part of this presentation, students wrote a series of short skits about harassment at RJG which were performed by teacher volunteers. The purpose of these skits was to present the students' perspective regarding harassment and bullying that occurs at RJG and to start a dialog about ways to address this concern.

This group of students and staff has given a tremendous amount of their time and effort to making RJG a safer place for everyone and should be commended. I am especially impressed with the maturity, dedication and commitment of this group of young men and women, mostly 8th graders, who want to take an active role in making their school a better place. Working together as a community to identify ways of resolving these issues is a goal we can all embrace.

The two films shown in our 7th grade Social Studies Programs, *That's a Family*, and *A Place at the Table* are now available for viewing at the Acton Memorial Library. **Accordingly, I am canceling the viewing previously scheduled for tomorrow afternoon (Tuesday 4/13) here at RJG.**

Now that the weather is getting warmer and there are more daylight hours, Community Education has ended their evening Open Gym program for the remainder of the year. I want to thank Linda Mathinos and the rest of the Community Ed. staff for offering such a wonderful program. It has been a great opportunity for students to stay active during the winter and I anticipate that the program will recommence next fall.

The National Day of Silence is being held in Massachusetts on April 14th. Founded in 1996, the Day of Silence has become the largest single student-led action towards creating safer schools for all, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. The Day of Silence is a student-led day of action where those who support making anti-LGBT bias unacceptable in schools take a day-long vow of silence to recognize and protest the discrimination and harassment -- in effect, the silencing -- experienced by LGBT students and their allies. In 2003, over 250,000 students in nearly 2,000 K-12 schools and 400 colleges and universities participated in the Day of Silence.

A group of students has requested and received my permission to participate in the National Day of Silence. All students who participate will wear name tags saying that they are not speaking today and will have note cards explaining why. They have been encouraged to let their teachers know in advance of their participation and I have asked the staff to be as flexible as is reasonable to support this student initiative.