

“Destiny is not a matter of chance. It is a matter of choice; it is not a thing to be waited for, it is a thing to be achieved.”

William Jennings Bryan

Grey Matters

Volume 2

February 7 – 11, 2005

Number 22

Congratulations to the New England Patriots for the outstanding last minute victory in the Super Bowl. There were a number of tense moments but everyone, except for those foolish diehard Eagles, walked away at the end of the evening wearing a big smile!

As many of you may recall, the results of a recent survey showed that there was not enough parental interest for the school to organize a parent funded after school bus. Mary Amato, an RJG parent, has stepped forward and expressed an interest in organizing a parent run co-op carpool program. If you are interested in such a venture, please feel free to contact Mary at: m.g.amato@att.net.

While this after school transportation issue may only effect a small portion of the RJG community, the Acton Boxborough Regional School District budget for the 2005-06 school year will effect us all. It should be common knowledge that the staff of RJG is committed to teaming and believes that teaming is the appropriate educational model for middle level children. RJG has worked under this model for many years, and it is clearly one of the key factors for our great success. It is unfortunate that fiscal realities may require RJG to change how it educates the children of Acton and Boxborough.

Over the last few months, my Leadership Team and I have worked vary hard to create two budgets for the 2005-06 school year, the “A” Budget (if the override passes) and the “B” Budget (if the override does not pass). Under the “A” Budget, RJG will be able to maintain the current educational services at the same levels. While there will be no additional funding for increased enrollment, teaming in grades 7 and 8 will continue as we know it and there will be no reductions in programs. The “B” Budget is based on a \$411,000 reduction at RJG, which is the equivalent of over nine full time teachers. At this level of reductions, there will be significant changes to the educational programming at RJG, and our school will become a very different place.

Last Thursday evening, the Acton Boxborough Regional School Committee approved our “B” budget recommendation, which calls for the elimination of 6.3 teachers, .3 of an assistant, the intramurals program, all clubs and student activities, and one of the Assistant Principals. Under this model, which we are calling the “Split School Model,” 7th grade will continue to operate under the teaming structure, but the 8th grade will function as a straight junior high. The majority of the teaching positions lost will be reflected in a reduction and/or elimination of portions of the Exploratory curriculum. Art, Music, and Study Skills will each be reduced by 50%. The Minuteman Technology programs, which focus on Engineering and applied Science and Math will be eliminated. For additional information, please look at the chart which provides more detailed information. (Go to: http://ab.mec.edu/rjweb/splitschoolmodel_v2.pdf)