

I have always imagined that Paradise will be a kind of library."

Jorge Luis Borges

Grey Matters

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It was a beautiful spring weekend. I hope that all our A-B moms had a wonderful Mother's Day in recognition of all the special things you do for your children day in and day out.

This is going to be a busy week at RJG. This morning (Monday) we kicked off the final wave of MCAS testing for 7th and 8th graders. The schedule, which will run today through Thursday, will include: Math; Science and Technology/Engineering; and the History and Social Studies (tryout) components. Attendance to school on these testing dates is essential and as always, students should get a good night of sleep and a healthy breakfast.

Tuesday evening, at 7:30 PM, many of our 7th and 8th graders will be performing in the Spring Band Concert. They have been practicing all year and it promises to be the best show yet. You won't want to miss it!

Congratulations to the R.J. Grey Brass Ensemble who won a Gold Medal at MICCA on Saturday. Under the leadership of Bonnie Masserang, our students' hard work paid off and I know everyone is very proud of their efforts.

Last Thursday evening, Robin Crown, RJG World Language Building Leader, and Claire Dix, World Language Regional Department Leader joined me in offering parents and guardians an opportunity to talk about heterogeneous groupings in world language classes. While we only had a small turn out, we had a productive discussion about the benefits of moving grade 8 World Language on-team as well as the potential impact of moving to heterogeneous grouping.

There was complete understanding that moving grade 8 World Language would increase home/school communication, increase world language participation in interdisciplinary units and activities, enhance communication with core curricular teachers, and lower world language class sizes. Concerns focused on maintaining a rigorous academic curriculum and a concern that those who were academically strong might be held back while those who were struggling may be pushed too fast.

As part of our discussion, meaningful information regarding class size was addressed. Current world language classes have 30+ students in each class. Moving to a heterogeneous classroom will lower class size to an average of 23. With a significant reduction in class size, all students benefit. Teachers can provide increased individual

attention and instruction, more frequent opportunities for class discussion, as well as consistent feedback and support.

From a curricular perspective, our group discussed that teachers committed to using differentiated instruction will certainly be able to meet the diverse needs within the classroom and offer students the opportunity to learn from one another as well.

In sum, our discussion promoted increased understanding of all the issues and a clear sense that this change will benefit all RJG students. You are encouraged to reach out to Ms. Dix and/or Ms. Crown via email should you have any special questions or concerns.

Have a good week.