

“Spring is when you feel like whistling even with a shoe full of slush.”

Doug Larson

# Grey Matters

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For parents and guardians of 7th grade students, we are excited to remind you that Project Wellness is this Wednesday, March 26, at Merrimack College. All 7th grade students will be bringing home a flyer tomorrow (Tuesday) with registration information, directions and bus information. The drive time to Merrimack can take far longer than you might expect due to rush hour traffic. **Please leave early to allow for delays.** For those students taking the bus, the bus will return to RJ Grey at 3:15PM. Please be sure to arrange for transportation home for your child at that time. We are looking forward to a great day.

Specific to our 8<sup>th</sup> graders, the following message is from the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School:

## Course Planning for 8<sup>th</sup> Graders

A team of high school staff visited 8th grade homerooms on Thursday, March 20<sup>th</sup> to distribute the *ABRHS Program of Studies* for 2008-2009 and to speak with students about course planning for next year. Students were asked to take their *Program of Studies* home to discuss offerings with parents and guardians between now and the beginning of the course selection process on March 31. Students received a sample request form so that they will know what to expect when filling out the form with their classroom teachers and counselors. Students also received a Time Management Worksheet to help them plan coursework appropriately in combination with anticipated after-school and personal activities. When students consider academic coursework in the larger context of their weekly schedule, they are more likely to make balanced choices and make the best use of the myriad opportunities available to them throughout their high school careers.

High school staff discussed the recent graduation requirement increase to 100 credits along with the 990 hour yearly time and learning requirement. Freshmen will fill seven periods per day with classes or directed studies, thereby meeting the 990 requirement by default. Directed studies will be added to student schedules automatically in empty periods and are not part of the Pupil Course Request process. Two course changes that affect rising freshmen are the availability of Fundamentals of Computer Networking I to all grade levels, and the omission of String Orchestra, which cannot be offered in 2008-2009.

After course selections are made, a verification form will be returned to students during the week of April 7. The information on this form should be checked for accuracy. Change request forms and override forms will be available in the Counseling Office at the junior high school. All course changes must be submitted by May 2. Students and parents are asked to carefully

consider teacher's level recommendations before initiating the override process. Levels are recommended based on careful consideration of a student's current aptitude, commitment, and success in a subject area. Continued success depends upon appropriate challenge. Also, parents and students are urged to consider each level recommendation in light of the student's overall course load and weekly schedule in order to plan a demanding, yet manageable first year of high school.

Most questions on the course scheduling process will be answered by junior high teachers as they guide students through the process, but any remaining questions can be directed to high school assistant principal Larry Dorey ([LDorey@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:LDorey@mail.ab.mec.edu)).

Finally, as mentioned last week, "MCAS Season" has arrived! Seventh and eighth graders will take the Reading Comprehension portions of the exam on Thursday and Friday of this week (March 27 and 28). On Monday March 31, 7th graders will continue with the Long Composition. As a point of information, the Math, Science, and Social Studies sections of the MCAS will be presented in May. While we all recognize the importance of these tests, it is also imperative that we do not take them more seriously than necessary. Our students are best served by remembering to relax and not to worry.

Have a great week.