

“Self-respect is the cornerstone of all virtue.”

John Herschel

Grey Matters

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While I know that we all received a phone call from Superintendent Bill Ryan last Friday evening, I want to again remind everyone that Tuesday, November 6th is the Acton and Acton-Boxborough Professional Day. For students, this means a long shorter week. For teachers, professional development is a process of continuous learning and the district is committed to providing high-quality professional development opportunities for its staff. This year, the RJG faculty and staff will focus on responding to issues of bullying and harassment, both in school and in cyberspace. Additional information regarding the district's Professional Day can be found on the district website:

<http://ab.mec.edu/curriculum/proffdevelop.shtml>

This past Thursday, I had the opportunity to share some RJG program initiatives with our school committee. The main focus of our discussion was a proposal to reduce class size across all curricular areas, and to lower the staff: student ratio in counseling and nursing. I would like to thank Nikita Khan, and Ashwin Aravinthan for sharing their thoughts on life at the RJG from a student's perspective. They were terrific!

After our Back to School Night, we asked parents and guardians to complete a brief survey regarding the opening days of school. A summary of the results was published in the October *Shades of Grey*. As mentioned, a similar survey was developed to hear from our students as well. Questions included what has proven easy for students at RJG; what was difficult; what does the school do well in supporting students and what can we do better; what advice do they have for future students; and what concerns might they have for the coming school year. While we are still evaluating the data, some common themes included:

- The teachers are supportive and respectful of their students.
- The teachers made the opening of school easy for everyone.
- Students are particularly enjoying the Exploratory Programs and after school sports, clubs, and activities.
- Students wished they could be on-team with more of their friends from the previous year.
- Students report that making new friends was surprisingly easy.
- Next year's 7th graders should not be afraid of school and that it will be easier than they anticipate.
- Both 7th and 8th graders reported feeling some anxiety about the workload for the upcoming year.

Please remember that the end of the first term is Friday, November 9th (not Thursday as I said last week). Please encourage your children to touch base with their teachers to confirm that they are all caught up on their work or if they have any final questions as the term comes to an end.

In recognition of Veterans Day, school will be closed on Monday, November 12th.

Have a great week.