

"Shared laughter creates a bond of friendships. When people laugh together, they cease to be young and old, teacher and pupils, worker and boss. They become a single group of human beings."

W. Lee Grant

Grey Matters

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The school year is off to a great start. The 7th graders have begun to settle in and are making RJG their new home. The energy within each team and within each classroom has been exciting to see and I am thrilled to see our 8th graders stepping up to be role models for our school.

Thank you to Andrew Shen and Bob Daley for all their efforts in making sure that every student has a functioning locker, and kudos to all the teachers for their patience in showing the students how to open those lockers! I also want to acknowledge Steve Hall, Director of Technology, and all members of the Technology Resource Center (TRC) for the updating and upgrading of all technology in our building.

RJG is a wonderful place to be!

As everyone is aware, the Acton and Acton-Boxborough School Districts have moved to an on-line emergency card system. While many RJG families have completed this form, there are still a number of parents and guardians who have yet to complete this process. If you have not already done so, please follow the directions in the letter you received in August and provide this important information. If you have any questions regarding this process, please call Marcia Charter at 978/264 - 4700, ext. 3303 for assistance.

For parents/guardians interested in taking a more active role in our school, let me take a moment to talk about the RJG School Council. The school council is comprised of a school administrator, teachers, and parents who are responsible for assisting the principal in identifying the educational needs of students, reviewing the annual budget, and formulating a school improvement plan and educational goals.

This year, two parents or guardians of 7th graders are needed for participation on the RJG School Council. Interested candidates should submit a short paragraph about themselves by noon on Friday, Sept. 20 for the ballot and voting will take place at Back-to-School Night on September 25th. Write-ups should be sent to PTSO Co-Chair Chris Renzi at: chrisrenzi@comcast.net or Principal Craig Hardimon at chardimon@mail.ab.mec.edu.

Regarding transportation services at RJG, I want to thank our transportation department for all their hard work in developing bus routes that accommodate all of our students. It is important to note that with our increase in enrollment and bus usage, all of our buses are currently at maximum capacity. As a result, we will not be able to write bus passes for students to travel on alternate buses. Should space become available later in the year, we will certainly inform parents of routes where bus passes can be considered.

While still on the topic of transportation, some of you may have noticed that the traffic pattern around the building has changed. Specifically, speed bumps have been added in the driveway leading from the front loop to Charter Road and this driveway is now one-way. If you wish to enter the front loop from Charter Road, we ask that you first enter the campus from the entrance on Rt. 111 or by the tennis courts. These changes are a direct result of some serious "near misses" over the past few years and we appreciate your flexibility as we make our campus safer for our students.

Finally, I must ask all parents/guardians to be cognizant of our schools' drop-off/pick-up procedures. We are still struggling with cars being parked in pre-assigned spaces, students being dropped off in unsafe locations, and buses being blocked in the front loop. Please be aware of the following reminders:

1. Between 7:00AM - 7:45AM and 1:45PM - 2:30PM, the front entrance loop is for buses only. Other vehicles are not to enter the loop during these times.
2. Student drop off and pick-up is allowed at the bottom of the steps in the lower parking lot only. This lot is located east of the building, behind the tennis courts, just off Charter Road. Please pay particular attention for students entering and/or exiting cars when driving through this area.
3. Parents are asked to enter and exit the parking lot via Charter Road, not Mass. Avenue (Route 111). Driving through the campus during bus drop off and pick-up interferes with the buses and causes unnecessary traffic problems.
4. Students are not to be dropped off in front of the Blanchard gym or in the parking lot on the west side of the building. Again, doing so interferes with our school buses and causes unnecessary traffic problems.
5. Parent parking is only allowed in the lower lot and in the visitor spaces off the front loop. Please note that these visitor spaces are for short term parking only.
6. Cars are not to be parked - momentarily or otherwise - in the front loop except in a legitimate visitor's space.
7. Lastly, please remember never to pass the buses.

The Acton Memorial Library has informed us that many of our students provided excellent services to Acton residents through their summer volunteer work. These students contributed five hours of work that included preparing materials for the library's story time program and craft days, reading shelves, and other important tasks. The library noted their great cooperation and commitment to the task at hand and contributing to the "fine sense of community across our town". Please join me in recognizing Nicole Butler, Amartya Chakraborty, Nathanael Durrant, Ajana Gupta, Alexandra Katis, Billy Ma, Rosemary Quinn, Breanna Taylor, Ben VanDerAa, Laurel Willis, Poojitha Yarabolu, Jenna Zhang, and Joyce Zhu.

If you have not already done so, mark September 25 on your calendars as our Back To School Night beginning at 7:00PM. For 7th grade parents, please remember to join me at 6:45PM for a brief presentation on the developmental needs of 7th and 8th graders and the various ways the administration, faculty and staff support our students.

Have a great week.