

# Quabbin Regional Middle School Newsletter

September 2009

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## FROM ADMINISTRATION:

Mrs. Susanne R. Musnicki, Principal

Mr. Todd D. Stewart, Assistant Principal

We would like to invite all 8<sup>th</sup> grade students and parents to our 1<sup>st</sup> annual "Welcome Back Night" on Wednesday, September 23, 2009. Student schedules will be distributed in the cafeteria beginning at 5:30 p.m. A short general meeting will be held in the high school gym to explain the Washington, D.C. trip which will take place April 26-29, 2010. We will then follow a mock schedule so that parents can meet their child's teachers and hear class expectations. During period D class, parents will be able to ask D.C. questions. Please plan to attend.

We would like to thank the 7<sup>th</sup> grade parents and other relatives who took time from their busy schedules to attend orientation night on August 31<sup>st</sup>. Ninety-six percent of our incoming 7<sup>th</sup> graders and parents attended. We hope that meeting the teachers, hearing course expectations, and finding your way around the building made the first day of school easier for you and your child.

We are pleased to announce that Todd Stewart has been named to the position of Assistant Middle School Principal. Mr. Stewart has been a member of the administrative team since November, 2008.

Continuing as a member of the middle school social studies department is Michael Smith. Mr. Smith replaced Mr. Stewart as a 7<sup>th</sup> grade geography teacher in November, 2008.

This year the middle school welcomed three new teachers to our faculty.

- Christopher Nosek is replacing Sue Flagg as the middle school alternative room teacher. Mr. Nosek comes to us from the North Brookfield School District.
- Teaching grade 8 Earth Science is Michael Donofrio. Mr. Donofrio was a long term substitute at Ruggles Lane School in Barre last school year.
- Joseph Janack is our new instrumental music teacher, the position left vacant by the retirement of Bob Pereira. Mr. Janack is a recent graduate of the University of Massachusetts in Amherst. His teaching assignment includes the middle school, Ruggles Lane, and Oakham Elementary School.

Our web address is [www.qrsd.org](http://www.qrsd.org). Follow the link to the middle school for important middle school information including a current calendar and athletic news. The monthly lunch menu can also be viewed on the web site.

**Please be aware that due to the number of students on our busses, we cannot honor requests for students to ride a different bus. In case of an emergency, please contact the middle school office so that arrangements can be made.**

Again this year we will be using school agendas. Our staff is helping students to build the "agenda habit" by reminding them to enter their assignments and doing regular follow-up. We would ask that you also check at home

to be certain that your child is using this valuable organizational tool. The front section of the agenda contains the student handbook. We would ask that you also take the time to review this important document.

Please note that checks for all field trips and fund raisers should be made out to Quabbin Regional School District (not Quabbin Regional Middle School). In the memo section of your check, please place your child's name. Thank you for your help with this matter.

Please establish a plan with your child in case of an unscheduled early dismissal. Unfortunately, it is impossible for us to contact all parents or allow all students to use the telephone. Many parents make it possible for their child to get into the house and have him/her call a parent at work. Others have an arrangement with a neighbor for the child to report there. Early dismissals are posted on the Quabbin web site as soon as that decision is made.

The middle/high school is a large place. It is helpful to set up a meeting place if you are picking up your child at the end of the school day or after school.

Please remember to notify the middle school office if there are any changes in your child's emergency information, even if it is temporary. For example if you are going out of town and your child will be staying with someone else, please contact us so that we will be able to help your child in case of an emergency. We also should be made aware of any court orders that would involve the school. Thank you for your help in these matters.

As the new school year begins, it is time to form a new middle school council. If you are interested in becoming a member, please attend the first meeting on Wednesday, October 14 at 7:00 p.m. in room M114. If you cannot attend but would like to be involved, please contact the middle school office.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact us at the middle school: 978-355-5042.

#### FROM THE GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT...

The counselors for the middle school are: Mrs. Barbara Page for grade 8 students and Mrs. Chris Daviau for grade 7 students. Please feel free to contact them at 978 355-5042 if you have concerns, questions and/or you want to share information regarding your child. Periodically, check out the guidance link on the middle school website for announcements and information.

- Be prepared to hold your ground when TV, IM or Video games become an issue. We recommend none of the above during homework.
- Where homework is done is an individual or family choice, preferably the same place each night.
- Reviewing notes and worksheets from class are important tasks which should be incorporated into the nightly study routine.
- A strong well developed reading habit is a key to improving one's vocabulary and English language skills.

#### How Parents Can Help

A parents' role is to help their child set up where, when and how homework will get done. The question to ask your child is "what do you need to do first for homework?" rather than "do you have homework?"

#### Homework Hints

- Determine a specific nightly time (allow about an hour).
- If your child spends regular time in a household other than home, the same routine should be established.
- Chores and other responsibilities need to be scheduled at a different time.

#### Washington, D.C. Trip

8<sup>th</sup> grade is planning a trip to Washington, D.C. from Monday, April 26 to Thursday, April 29, 2010. More information about the trip will be available at the "Welcome Back Night" on September 23, 2009 (see page 1).

The initial deposit of **\$150.00** and the **signed permission slip** are due no later than **Thursday, October 1, 2009**. This deposit is non-refundable and holds your child's spot on the trip. If we do not receive a deposit and signed permission slip by the

above date, we will assume that your child is not attending the trip.

The total cost of the trip is \$580.00. The payment schedule for this trip is as follows:

<i>Due Date</i>	<b>Payment</b>
<b>October 1, 2009</b>	<b>\$150</b>
<b>October, 29, 2009</b>	<b>\$ 90</b>
<b>November 30, 2009</b>	<b>\$ 90</b>
<b>January 21, 2010</b>	<b>\$ 85</b>
<b>February 23, 2010</b>	<b>\$ 85</b>
<b>March 25, 2010</b>	<b>\$ balance due</b>

*Please make checks payable to:*

***QUABBIN REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT***

### ***From the Nurse...***

#### **Backpack Safety for Teenagers (recommendations by the American Academy of Pediatrics)**

Backpacks have become a very popular way for students to carry supplies and books.

Backpacks used improperly can cause injuries to muscles and joints. These injuries can lead to severe back, neck, and shoulder pain.

Choosing the right backpack should include the following features:

- Wide, padded straps
- Two shoulder straps
- Padded back
- Waist strap
- Lightweight backpack
- Rolling backpack

#### **Guidelines to prevent backpack injuries are:**

Always use both straps because the use of one strap can strain shoulder muscle and could increase curvature of the spine.

Straps should be tight enough to keep backpack 2 inches above waist and close to back.

Backpacks should not weigh more than 10-20 percent of total body weight.

Organize backpack so heavy items are close to the center of the pack. Use all compartments of pack to distribute items evenly in pack.

Do not carry all books and supplies in backpack. Stop at locker whenever possible.

When wearing or lifting a backpack never bend over at the waist. Bend using both knees when picking up a backpack.

Back strengthening exercises can help develop muscles that are used to carry a backpack and help prevent injuries.