

# Principal's News

Richard K. Wheeler, Jr.  
Principal

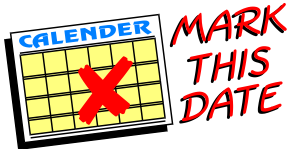
September 12, 2011

Wendy Parente  
Assistant Principal

## Welcome

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome all of you back for another exciting year at Barrington Middle School, and to thank you for helping to make the first week of school such a great success. Faculty, parents, and students have indicated that our opening ran smoothly. I'd like to give special thanks to parents who drop their children off at school each morning for following the traffic pattern. Traffic appears to be flowing very well.

Remember: Do your best to have your child in school by 7:40 so they will not be late for homeroom attendance at 7:50.



### **OUR HOUSE WILL BE OPEN ON SEPTEMBER 22**

Open House is scheduled for Thursday, September 22 at 6:30. Your child will be bringing home a schedule on Thursday for you to follow Thursday evening. For those of you who arrive without a schedule you may pick one up in the main office. We expect to complete Open House at 8:12. Open House is a great time for you to meet your child's teachers and to hear about this year's curriculum. It is not a time to talk to teachers about individual issues concerning your child. If you need to speak to a teacher about your child specifically, please contact the guidance office (247-3160) to set up an appointment or you may email your child's teacher. All email addresses of our faculty are listed on the school's Website. <http://www.barringtonmiddle.org>



### **Catch Your Child Being Good**

Would you rather get a paycheck or a bill? Most people agree that receiving money is better than handing it over. Similarly, your child would rather be praised for good behaviors than punished for bad ones. Consider these positive approaches to better behavior.

The moment counts. Congratulate your middle grader as soon as you see him being responsible. Example: "Thanks for starting your homework without being reminded." Noticing his/her good deeds while the moment is fresh encourages more of the same.

Specifics matter. Let your child know the "whys" behind your approval. If he/she makes a difficult choice, for instance, say, "I know it was hard not to go to the party with your friends. I'm glad you stayed home and helped watch your little brother like you promised." Your middle grader will remember your reasons the next time he has a tough decision to make.

Styles differ. Find out how your child likes to be complimented. Some middle graders enjoy a hug or pat on the back. Others want to talk about what they're doing. Still others prefer a written note. See what your child responds to best.

# Connect



## ***Adviser/Advisee (Connect) Program to Begin at BMS***

About five years ago the Rhode Island Department of Education began plans to require that all middle schools in Rhode Island offer an advisory program for students. At BMS, we call this program "Connect".

**Mission:** The Mission of the Barrington Middle School Advisory Program is to provide each student with a concerned professional who acts as an advocate and advisor helping to improve his/her educational experience.

The objectives of the program are:

1. Provide a safe and caring environment and activities that will foster bonding with an advisory group so that students will feel accepted and valued by teachers and peers.
2. Help students cope with academic concerns and set goals that will facilitate positive school experiences.
3. Give students avenues to discover their uniqueness so that they might come to appreciate differences among people.
4. Help students develop positive relationships through experiences that utilize group dynamics.
5. Promote critical thinking skills through discussion and problem-solving activities so that students can learn to make responsible choices.
6. Develop listening skills and an understanding of the roadblocks that hinder effective communication.
7. Foster self-esteem in students so that they might become competent, capable young people who accept responsibility for their own actions.
8. Heighten student awareness of good citizenship through providing opportunities for meaningful contributions to their school and community.
9. Provide opportunities for extensive student involvement through shared decision making.
10. Improve home-school relationships.

Connect is presently scheduled to meet each Wednesday, for approximately 35 minutes. Time for this program will be made by reducing each of our existing seven periods by five minutes. Our first Connect experience will begin during the first week of October.

Each adviser will be responsible for:

1. developing interpersonal relationships
2. understanding students and tune into feelings
3. exploring ideas and feelings – questioning
4. clarifying and summarizing student perceptions
5. providing feedback – complimenting and confronting
6. setting limits/problem solving
7. structuring group experiences
8. providing for incidental learning – holidays/current events
9. following curriculum scope and sequence
10. *utilizing support and referral systems.*



***"To the world you may be just one person, but to one person you may be the world!"***



## ***A.C.E. Award***

### ***(Awarding Caring Efforts)***

*Each week Barrington Middle School recognizes students for touching the lives of others in a positive manner while at school. Because of these students, our school is a better place to learn. They have demonstrated through their actions that one person can make a difference. Our school community applauds these students for what they have accomplished and we look forward to hearing even more great things about them in the future.*

*Nominees are submitted by adults and students. Each week our selection committee will select three students.*



### **Dress Code Guidelines**

**DRESS GUIDELINES:** The Barrington Public Schools recognized that individual student dress is primarily a parental responsibility. Student dress should reflect concern for health and safety of the student and others. When the dress of an individual student constitutes a health problem, seems to be unsuitable for school wear, is a physical danger to any person, or when the student's manner of dress or grooming causes a disruption or disturbance, administrators shall take appropriate action to correct the situation.

Inappropriate items for the school day include but are not exclusive of the following:

1. Clothing, apparel or jewelry that by words, signs, pictures or any other combinations thereof, advocate or promote sexual activity, violence, death, suicide, or the use of alcohol or drugs, or demean, degrade, or intimidate another because of race, sex, sexual orientation, religious persuasions, national origin, disability, or signify gang membership.
2. Apparel that reveals or exposes the midriff/lower back or sides of the upper body or torso and/or undergarments.
3. Any clothing of transparent material through which underwear or any type of undergarment may be seen.
4. Clothing which does not cover backs, clothing which exposes cleavage, halter tops, tank tops with open sides, spaghetti strap tops, and muscle/tank shirts.
5. Skirt, dresses and shorts which are excessively short (mid-thigh or longer is acceptable).

Students may be required to wear certain types of clothing while participating in physical education classes, technical education, extracurricular activities, or other situations where special attire may be required to ensure the health or safety of the student. Individual building requirements are to be considered to be applicable and in addition to those found herein. Students and their parents should make themselves aware of the requirements of each building which serves those students.

## **A Journey is Really Just a Lot of Small Steps.**

Start by taking these steps with your family:

1. *Create a positive relationship built on friendship with your child. We're many things to our children, and while we may not want to be our child's pal, we can be a friend who is kind, loving, and respectful—a person who will always lend a listening ear.*
2. *Make memories with your child. Take some time out of your busy day to imprint a memory in your child's mind, whether it's singing a funny song together, reading a story, or just enjoying each other's company.*
3. *Get to know your child's friends. Make sure that he or she is developing healthy relationships with people who have positive values and beliefs.*



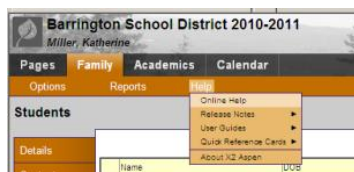
## Aspen X2

Aspen is a secure, web-based school information system produced by the X2 Development Corporation. Aspen protects your student's information with the same advanced technology your bank uses to protect your financial accounts. Aspen users will only have access to needed information.

This system manages all facets of student data – from attendance to conduct, grades to schedules, health and enrollment. Teachers have been trained in how to use the system and you will be receiving a password to allow you access to the system.

Both parents, and your child will receive individual accounts.

The link to X2 can be found on each of the district websites or accessed directly using the link on your account label, which you will receive in the mail. Once logged in, you can access a complete user guide :



You will be asked to change your password on first login, but your password can be changed at any time by selecting **Set Preferences** in the upper right corner and clicking on **Security**. Please make sure to setup security questions so that you can easily reset a lost or forgotten password.

If you have questions, please email us at [x2help@bpsmail.org](mailto:x2help@bpsmail.org) We look forward to working with all of you to further bridge home/school communication. Have a great school year!

### **Barrington Police and Substance Abuse Task Force**

Tip Line  
437-3933



The Barrington Police and Substance Abuse Task Force have a confidential phone line set up for you to report information about underage drinking, drinking parties or illegal drug activities. You do not have to leave your name when calling.



### ***Helping Hand – After School Support Available***

All cluster teachers are available to help students after school every Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday from 2:05 – 2:35. Many teachers may stay much longer than this mandatory time. Teachers will be attending “Response to Intervention” meetings on Wednesday and will work on curriculum after school each Friday.

***Those who watch too much t.v. will go down in history...***

***As well as science, math, and language arts.***

## *State Requires Emergency Drills*



Rhode Island is requiring that all schools have a total of fifteen emergency drills before the last day of school. Two of these must be lockdowns and two must be evacuations. (See Emergency Drill Code below for more information.) Within the next few weeks students will be informed about these drills but they will not be notified when the drills will actually take place.

### 1. Evacuations (For use when conditions outside are safer than inside)

When announcement is made or alarm sounded:

- Take the closest and safest way out as posted (use secondary route if primary route is blocked or hazardous)
- Teachers take roll book for student accounting
- Teachers assist those needing special assistance
- Do not stop for student/staff belongings
- Go to designated Assembly Area
- Check for injuries
- Take attendance; report according to Student Accounting and Release procedures
- Wait for further instructions.

### 2. Lockdown (For use to protect building occupants from potential dangers in the building)

When the announcement is made:

- Students are to be cleared from the halls immediately and to report to nearest available classroom
- Assist those needing special assistance
- Close and lock all windows and doors and do not leave for any reason
- Stay away from all doors and windows and move students to interior walls and drop
- Shut off lights
- BE QUIET!
- Wait for further instructions



## *Parent Conferences*

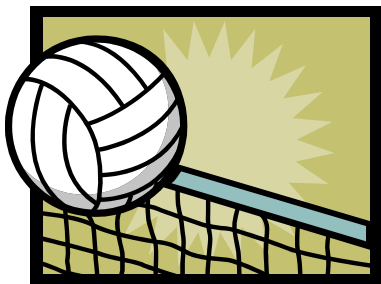
Now that the school year is fully underway I thought it might be a good idea to remind parents that you should always request parent conferences directly through our guidance office. Due to the large number of requests for conferences you may have to wait for up to seven days to actually meet with your child's teachers. If an appointment cannot be made during school hours within seven school days of your request, our guidance secretary will do her best to schedule you and the teachers either before or after school hours.

Grade 6 guidance counselor: Lori Mason [masonl@bpsmail.org](mailto:masonl@bpsmail.org)

Grade 7 guidance counselor: Natalie Stein [steinn@bpsmail.org](mailto:steinn@bpsmail.org)

Grade 8 guidance counselor: Sandy McCauley [mccauleys@bpsmail.org](mailto:mccauleys@bpsmail.org)

Barrington Middle School works hard to have all teachers on a cluster meet with parents, even when the parent has requested to meet with only one teacher. We do this because each of our clusters functions as a team and collaborate to solve problems. Sometimes, for example, your child may be having problems in only one class but when the entire team meets to hear about the concerns, they work together to improve the situation. One teacher may have suggestions they have found worked well with this child in their own classroom. We find the team approach works extremely well.



## Sportsnight

The first sportsnight of the year is scheduled for Friday, September 23, from 7:00 – 9:00 pm. This fun night filled with games, sports, and music is a great opportunity for our students to meet and let off some steam. Dates for all sportsnights are listed on line.

## Stay Healthy During Flu Season

### **Everyday steps to protect your health:**

- Cover your nose and mouth when you cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.
- Alcohol-based hand cleaners are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread this way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- If you are sick with flu-like illness, CDC recommends that you stay home for at least 24 hours after your fever is gone except to get medical care or for other necessities.
- Your fever should be gone without the use of a fever-reducing medicine.
- Keep away from others as much as possible to keep from making others sick.

## Barrington Middle School Acronyms

**ACE** – Awarding Caring Efforts – Each week the guidance department and administration recognize a student from each grade for doing good things at BMS. Their picture is placed in the foyer each week and the child’s parent receives a letter of recognition.

**ADA** – American with Disabilities Act – A law that (1992) that defines “disability” and prohibits discrimination by employers, by any facility open to the general public, and by State and local public agencies that provide such services in transportation.

**ADD** – Attention Deficit Disorder – A neurobiological disorder. Developmentally inappropriate behavior, including poor attention skills and impulsivity.

**ADHD** – Attention Deficit With Hyperactivity Disorder – Developmentally inappropriate behavior, including poor attention skills, impulsivity, and hyperactivity.

**BMS** – Barrington Middle School

**BD** – Behaviorally Disordered – A term used by some states for children who exhibit difficulties with social interactions and inappropriate behavior that interferes with learning.

**BEF** (Barrington Education Foundation) – Group of community members who work hard to raise funds for the Barrington School Department. Provides grant money to each school in the district. Their next function is the “Rubber Ducky Race”.

**BIP** – Behavioral Intervention Plan – A plan that is put in place to teach a child proper behavior and social skills.

**Cluster** – Group of teachers at the middle level who work with the same group of students and teach core subjects. There are nine clusters, three at each grade level, at the middle school.

**DCYF** – Department of Children, Youth and Families

**DI** – Differentiated Instruction – DI is a teaching practice in which teachers provide different types of instruction within one classroom based on students’ ability.

**DOE** – Department of Education

**ED** – Emotionally Disturbed – A condition exhibiting one or more characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects educational performance.

**ELA** – English/Language/Arts

**ESL** – English as a Second Language

**Formative Assessments** – Short, uniform assessments given every four weeks in math and language arts to determine students’ level of understanding.

**GLE** – Grade Level Expectations

**HQ** – Highly Qualified

**IAP** – Individual Accommodation Plan (aka 504 Plan)

**IDEA** – Individual With Disabilities Act – The federal law that provides the legal authority for early intervention and special educational services for children, birth to age 21.

**IEP** (Individual Education Plan) – A written statement of a child’s current level of educational performance and an individualized plan of instruction, including the goals, specific services to be received, the staff who will carry out the services, the standards and timelines for evaluating progress, and the amount and degree to which the child will participate with typically developing peers (Inclusion/Least Restrictive Environment). It is required by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) for all children eligible for special education.

**IFL** (Institute For Learning) – The Institute was developed by Dr. Lauren Resnick for the University of Pittsburg and has been providing professional development training for Barrington administrators and teachers for the past three years.

**ILPs** – Individual Learning Plans – all students in grades 5 – 12 have a plan which highlights their interest, goals, strengths, etc. This plan is updated by students each year and then passed to the next grade.

**iParent** – Parents have access to their child’s grades via the internet. All parents receive a pass code to enter their child’s grade book.

**ISS** – In School Suspension

**Kidscope** – Barrington Middle School Newsletter which is sent via the mail to all Middle School families.

**Learning Walk** – Groups of administrators and teachers visit classroom for less than ten minutes to examine walls and to check on student understanding of instruction.

**LEP** – Limited English Proficiency – Children whose primary language is other than English.

**LRE** – Least Restrictive Environment – This is the educational setting that permits a child to receive the most educational benefit while participating in a regular educational environment to the maximum extent appropriate. LRE is a requirement under IDEA.

**MAP Testing** – District developed testing which provides specific information relative to student performance. This assessment is done on a computer and is usually given twice per year.

**MS** – Middle School

**National Blue Ribbon School** – BMS has been named one of 14 middle schools in the United States as a Blue Ribbon School based on high performance and exemplary programming. This award is recognized for a period of three years.

**NCLB** – No Child Left Behind – The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is the principal federal law affecting education from kindergarten through high school for children who are “at risk” of making educational progress.

**NECAP** – Assessment given in the fall of each year to all public school students in Rhode Island, New Hampshire and Vermont.

**NELMS** (New England League of Middle Schools) – Professional development organization servicing more than 2600 middle schools in New England.

**NMSA** (National Middle School Association) – National organization providing professional development to middle schools.

**PD** – Professional Development

**Performance Based Assessment** – Rhode Island assesses students each year at various grade levels in the areas of math, writing, reading, and health.

**PLC** - Professional Learning Community

**PLP** – Personal Literacy Plan – Students who are reading below grade level are identified as having services in reading.

**POL** (Principles of Learning) – Nine principles, which the IFL has focused on to improve teaching and student performance.

**PTO** – Parent Teacher Organization

**Principal’s Award** – Every quarter ten students from each cluster are identified as those who make a difference because of their positive attitude and behavior.

**Quarter** – 10 week period of school. Report cards are sent home quarterly.

**Quinta** – 8 week period of school. Many of the Rainbow Classes rotate each quintal.

**Rainbow or Unified Arts**, commonly referred to as “specials” – Middle level classes: art, music, band, chorus, robotics, wood shop, family and consumer sciences, computer, keyboarding, health, physical education, foreign language.

**RIDE** – Rhode Island Department of Education

**RTI** – Response to Intervention – To provide high quality instruction and intervention matched to student needs. Frequent monitoring of instruction is done to make decisions about changes in instruction. At BMS the RTI committee meets every week.

**SEAC** (Special Education Advisory Committee) – Group of parents, teachers, and administrators who meet on a regular basis to discuss special education issues and to provide advice and support to the district on special education related topics.

**SALT** – School Accountability for Learning and Teaching - SALT (School Accountability for Learning and Teaching) is a school-centered cycle of activities to improve school and student performance in the Rhode Island public schools. The SALT cycle was developed by the department of education with the help of many Rhode Island educators.

SALT asks schools to begin by forming the school improvement team, which conducts various self-study activities including analyzing the results of state tests and the bi-annual SALT Survey of parents, teachers, and students. Based on what the team learns through self-study, it then develops a school improvement plan for improving student performance at a school report night, which is

open to all members of the school and its community. Once every five years, the school hosts a SALT visit. As they put their improvement plans in place, schools, districts, and the Rhode Island Department of Education create a compact for learning, outlining the roles and responsibilities of each part of the school system. In some cases, RIDE and the districts may take on a more active role, known as Progressive Support & Intervention.

**Spotlight School** – BMS has been named a Spotlight School, which is a training facility for middle level teachers, administrators and colleges/universities from all over New England and Canada.

**SIT** (School Improvement Team) – A school based advisory group made up of the building principal, four teachers, three parents, and a community member. Students may be invited to meetings when appropriate. The role of the SIT is to develop action plans and oversee their implementation.

**SIP** (School Improvement Plan) – The SIT develops and series of action plans to improve the school.

**Student Assistance Counselor** – This counselor deals predominantly with students and families who have alcohol, tobacco and other drug concerns. Each year in September parents will have the opportunity to opt their child out of this service.

**TEAM** – Formerly the MDT (multi-disciplinary team), which consists of teachers, guidance, social worker, psychologist, administrator, parent, special education personnel, and others, to discuss students who might be referred for special education services. This committee meets once per week.

**504 Plan** – Special accommodation plan for students with, usually medical/health issues.

### **Introduction of new staff/assignments:**

Andrew Weiss – Razzmatazz Social Studies

Marta Iachetta – Student Assistance Counselor

Kenneth Salhany – Computer Technology

Janet Johnson – Nurse

Diana Turgeon - Teacher Assistant

Diana Thomas - Teacher Assistant

Louise Pouliot - Teacher Assistant