



OnTeam

April 2008

Dear Parents,

As we continue our planning of new programs for the next school year, 2008-09, I want to thank the School Committee, the Superintendent, faculty and administrators who offered much support and understanding during the budget cycle this year. Yet, the real credit goes to the parents who offered their support, suggestions and advice during this cycle and especially at our parent forum on the Connections Program on April 5, 2008. They were our real pioneers and leaders who helped me shape this JH program for next year.

This newsletter summarizes our thinking and offers another invitation to discuss the program further as parents wanted to continue their discussion.

**Connections Parent Forum 2: Saturday, May 31 2008;
RJ Grey Junior High School Library, 9:00AM-11:30AM**

The slides to Forum 1 have been placed on the web for your convenience. However, I wanted to share with you some major points: By looking carefully at the needs of some of our children at Grade 6 and understanding the challenges of the JH, we teamed with the JH to create a program that meets the academic, organizational, social, and emotional needs of this emerging adolescent. But teaming with the JH is only one part; teaming must be done with the home as well and we discussed some strategies in all these areas – even with some laughs!

<http://ab.mec.edu/departments/pupilservices/pupilservices.shtml>

The Connections Program emerged for these students who have special needs (asperger, pervasive development disorder, non-verbal learning disabilities, and communications disabilities). We created a program to answer some unmet needs in executive functioning, organization, sensory-motor and/or visual spatial areas, problem solving, or in social relationships. We will emphasize both academic and social goals, including strategies to plan, organize and make priorities. Social coaching and directed social activities will remain a priority for these students so that they can blend these social, academic and non-academic challenges into a meaningful and fruitful JH experience.

Thank you so much for your input, your advice, and your encouragement as you are the pioneers that made it happen. The teaming from the administration, teachers, counselors and families was phenomenal.

Liza Huber

Director of Pupil Services