

# MARSH MATTERS

Edition 11-1

September 2011

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Welcome back to school! Although the administrative team works all summer long, closing out one school year and preparing for the next – the building comes alive at the end of August when teachers start to trickle in, getting their classrooms ready. And Marsh finally is complete when the students arrive on the first day of school, bringing their energy and enthusiasm into the building!

I met with your children in an assembly format on the first morning of school – to let them know how excited we are to have them back - and also to review some rules from the handbook (found this year in the front of their agenda book). Please take some time to look through that handbook as you need to sign a paper indicating that you have read and reviewed it.

While much about our school year remains the same for parents and students in grades 6-8, I want to take this opportunity to tell you of some changes. Last year, new specialists' schedules were piloted at some of the other schools and the grammar school administrators worked closely this summer to align our schedules. We will have 'blocks' of specials this year, i.e. your child will go to art daily for approximately 7 weeks. He/she will have an opportunity to work in-depth on projects and complete them in a timely manner. Then your child will rotate to the next special; at the completion of this school year each student will have two blocks of physical education and one block each of art, music, and health.

I have visited all of the classrooms daily and have worked closely with the fifth grade teachers to ensure that all of the students are making a successful transition. We are pleased to let you know that their guidance counselor, Ms. Fruscio, will continue to work with them to facilitate the adjustment from lower to upper school. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact their teachers or Ms. Fruscio.

We are delighted to see our building looking as good as it does. We want to thank the Blood Family Foundation and the Methuen Recreation Department for the installation of the two new basketball hoops. The cafeteria has been infused with COLOR thanks to Mrs. Pappalardo and Mrs. Veilleux. The custodians have begun the task of power-washing and staining the wood on the outside of the building and it looks great.

I want to remind you of our upper school schedule. Students are not to be dropped off before 7:30 as there is no supervision. Students in grade 5, 6, and 7 are outside in the playground (no parents please) and grade 8 students are in the gym. There is no ball-playing (basketball, football, etc.) in the morning. At 7:50 am, our 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students go upstairs while the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> line up and then enter the building. There is time for all

children to go to their lockers and into homeroom for morning announcements and the Pledge of Allegiance. Students arriving after 8:05 am, are considered tardy and must get a pass from the Upper School office. At the end of the day, our students return to homeroom at 2:10 and dismissal begins at 2:15. We usually call our walkers and parent pick-ups first, then the buses as they arrive. For everyone's safety, I ask that you do not drop-off or pick-up from the lower school or church parking lots.

If you need to dismiss your child during the day, please send them with a note for their teacher. The teacher will send them down at the appropriate time or we will call up to the classroom. We cannot call for dismissals after 2:10 as we are announcing buses. If your child is assigned to ride a bus, that is the bus that they will be riding on a daily basis. If they are walking home or you will be in the pick-up line, please send in a note for the teacher. We cannot allow your child to ride a bus other than the one to which he/she is assigned. You will need to contact Mr. Brian Fowler, transportation director, at 978-722-6016 in advance.

I am happy to recognize former 8<sup>th</sup> graders whose poetry was published in *Creative Communication Spring, 2011*. Congratulations to Julia Boisvert, Brittany Braga, Megan Bruneau, Mia Eliopoulos, Rebecca McLaughlin, and Rebecca Santone and to their teacher, Ms. Burke for this wonderful honor.

Our Open House for Upper School is September 13<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:00 pm. The teachers will present their curriculum and will be able to answer any questions. I will be circulating in the hallways to help you with any matters. We look forward to seeing you then.

JoAnn Lakow  
Upper School Associate Principal

**School Committee**

**Mayor William M. Manzi III, Mr. Robert F. Vogler, Mr. Evan J. Chaisson, Ms. Barbara Grondine, Mr. Kenneth A. Henrick,  
Mr. Gary M. Marcoux, Mr. Kenneth Willette, Jr.**