



**Acton-Boxborough  
Regional School Committee Meeting**

**September 3, 2009**

**7:30 pm**

**at the**

**R.J. Grey Junior High Library**

ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

Library  
R.J. Grey Junior High School

September 3, 2009  
(following JT meeting)

AGENDA

- I. 9:30 CALL TO ORDER
- II. 9:31 STATEMENT OF WARRANT AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES
- III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
- IV. UNFINISHED AND NEW BUSINESS
  - 7:30 1. Gift to RJG Junior High Theater and Theater Program – Steve Mills and Bernard Haan
    - Memorandum of Understanding
    - Recommendation to Accept Gift - **VOTE**
  - 9:35 2. Boys Varsity Volleyball Team (new)
    - Recommendation from Steve Desy - **VOTE**
  - 9:40 3. Boxborough/BLF Report - FY'10 Budget
- V. 9:50 FOR YOUR INFORMATION
  1. ABRHS Info
    - Student Assistance Team Summary 2008-09
  2. RJGrey Info
    - Back to School Letter to Parents/Students
  3. School Committee Meeting Schedule, Revised 2009-2010  
(Location of meeting Nov 5 will be at ABRHS)
  4. OnTeam – September 2009
  5. Pupil Services Directory
  6. SpEd PAC Survey - Platform for Next Steps
  7. Regional PTSO Newsletter
  8. Interaction – Fall 2009
  9. the Lamplighter – September 2009
  10. Parent Communication Map (also on website)
  11. Fall Athletics Schedule
- VI. ISSUES FOR THE COMMITTEE
- VII. EXECUTIVE SESSION (*if needed*)
- VIII. NEXT MEETING: October 1 - 7:30 pm, JH Library
- IX. 10:00 ADJOURNMENT



# NEW BUSINESS

## RESTRICTED GIFT AGREEMENT

This Restricted Gift Agreement (this "Agreement") is made as of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009 ("Effective Date"), by and between Bernard Haan, an individual ("Haan"), and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District (the "District"). Haan and the District are sometimes referred to herein, individually, as a "Party" and, collectively, as the "Parties."

### BACKGROUND

- A. Haan desires to grant the District a restricted gift of up to \$500,000, to be made in fifteen (15) installments over a period of fifteen (15) years (the "Gift"), in memory of his wife, Jennifer Doran Haan.
- B. It is Haan's intention that each of (i) the first installment of the Gift and (ii) the subsequent annual installments of the Gift be conditioned upon the District's satisfaction of certain conditions.
- C. The District desires to accept the Gift on the terms and conditions set forth herein and intends to satisfy the conditions for each installment of the Gift.

NOW, THEREFORE, for good and valuable consideration, the receipt and sufficiency of which are hereby acknowledged, the Parties agree as follows:

#### 1. Gift Funding and Conditions.

1.1 First Installment. Haan shall grant to the District the first installment of the Gift in the amount of \$150,000 within sixty (60) days following the Effective Date, provided that the following conditions are met within such sixty (60) day period:

- (a) The Parties shall establish a gift committee consisting of three (3) members to oversee administration of the Gift (the "Committee"), which Committee is constituted in accordance with Section 3 below;
- (b) Haan and each other member of the Committee shall participate in the design, including details relating to size and materials, of two (2) signs containing the name "Dragonfly Theater" for the auditorium (the "Auditorium") located at 16 Charter Road, Acton, Massachusetts 01720 on the premises of the R.J. Grey Junior High School (the "Jr. High School"), one of which shall be posted inside the Jr. High School building near the Auditorium entrance, and one of which shall be posted on the outer Auditorium wall of the Jr. High School building; and
- (c) The District shall allow Haan to design, and the District shall affix, a plaque that describes the Gift and its purpose (the "Plaque") inside the Jr. High School building near the Auditorium entrance. The Plaque shall be subject to the District's prior approval with respect to text, size and materials, which shall not be unreasonably withheld. The text inscribed on the Plaque shall also be posted on the District's website at appropriate web pages covering the theater or theater related programs.

(d) The District may use the first installment of the Gift to pay for the costs of the signs described in Section 1.1(b) and the Plaque.

1.2 Subsequent Installments. Haan hereby agrees to grant to the District on each anniversary of the Effective Date through the fourteenth anniversary thereof, an installment of the Gift in the amount of \$25,000; provided that the District has met the following conditions during the course of the twelve month period immediately preceding the date such installment payment is made:

(a) The District shall have granted the Open Door Theater of Acton, Massachusetts or any applicable successor organization (the "Open Door Theater") access to the Auditorium for rehearsals and performances for at least the time periods set forth on Exhibit A hereto. For clarity, the District may charge the Open Door Theater the District's standard rates, if any, for use of the Auditorium.

(b) The Auditorium shall have been continuously named the "Dragonfly Theater" (and not any other name), and the District shall have used all reasonable efforts to incorporate the name "Dragonfly Theater" in all event programs, advertising, promotional materials, Internet web sites and other media of the District in which the name of the Auditorium appears.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, the District may grant naming rights to third parties for portions of the Auditorium space, such as individual wings or seating sections.

## **2. Gift Expenditures.**

2.1 The District may use the funds from the Gift solely for the following purposes, and in the following amounts (collectively, the "Purposes"):

(a) Up to \$250,000 for capital improvements to the Auditorium (e.g., stage repair, new lighting and sound systems, signage); and

(b) The remainder of the funds to support the theater programs in the Jr. High School and the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School ("High School" and, collectively with the Jr. High School, the "Schools"), including but not limited to (i) purchasing artistic additions to the Auditorium's lobby, costumes and other supplies for the Schools' theater program, and copyright licenses for productions at the Schools, and (ii) granting scholarships to worthy students in the Schools' theater programs.

## **3. Gift Committee.**

3.1 Committee Composition. Haan shall have the right to designate one (1) member of the Committee, who shall initially be Haan. The District and the Jr. High School shall each have the right to designate one (1) member of the Committee. Haan, the District, and the Jr. High School may replace their respective designees at any time during the existence of the Committee.

3.2 Committee Term. Each Committee member shall serve in a volunteer capacity until the Committee is terminated upon depletion of funds from the Gift, unless such member resigns or is replaced by the person or entity responsible for designating such member.

3.3 Committee Duties. The Committee's duties shall include the following:

- (a) Participating in the design of any signage displaying the Auditorium's new name and any artistic additions to the Auditorium's lobby.
- (b) Reviewing and approving requests from the District regarding use of funds from the Gift and determining whether such requests are consistent with the Purposes.
- (c) Selecting scholarship recipients from a pool of applicants or by other means determined by the Committee.

3.4 Information Rights. If Haan chooses to no longer serve as a member of the Committee or chooses not to designate a member to the Committee, as applicable, Haan shall have the right to request and receive information concerning the District's use of funds from the Gift.

#### **4. Term.**

4.1 Term. This Agreement shall be effective until the earlier of (i) depletion of funds from the Gift, whereupon this Agreement shall expire; or (ii) termination by either Party for material breach of this Agreement by the other Party, if such breach is not cured within thirty (30) days following written notice thereof (which termination shall be effective upon expiration of such thirty (30) day period).

4.2 Effect of Termination. If this Agreement is terminated prior to its expiration as set forth in Section 4.1(ii) above, Haan shall not be obligated to make any installment of the Gift that is not yet due and, if requested by Haan, the "Dragonfly Theater" name shall be removed from the name of the Auditorium and all related materials, the Plaque shall be removed from its place, and the related text shall be removed from the Jr. High School's web page and any other portion of the District's website at Haan's cost.

#### **5. Miscellaneous Provisions**

5.1 This Agreement contains the entire understanding of the Parties with respect to its subject matter.

5.2 No modification or waiver of any of the terms of this Agreement shall be valid unless it is in writing and executed with the same formality as this Agreement by both Parties hereto. No waiver of any breach or default hereunder and no failure to exercise any right created by this Agreement shall be deemed a waiver of any subsequent breach or default of the same or similar nature, or a waiver of such right in the future.

5.3 Any provision contained in this Agreement which shall be determined to be invalid shall be deemed a separate provision, severable from the remainder of the provisions herein contained which are not invalid, and this Agreement, without said invalid provision, shall continue to be the Agreement of the Parties with full effect just as if said invalid provision were not contained herein.

5.4 This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts without regard to conflicts of laws principals.

5.5 This Agreement shall inure to the benefit of the Parties hereto and their heirs, executors, administrators, successors and assigns.

5.6 This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be deemed an original, but all of which shall together constitute one and the same instrument. This Agreement may also be executed and delivered by facsimile signature.

Signed under seal as of \_\_\_\_\_, 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Bernard Haan

Acton-Boxborough Regional School District

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name:

Title:

## **EXHIBIT A**

### **OPEN DOOR THEATER AUDITORIUM ACCESS**

Each year's specific rehearsal and performance schedule from 2010 through 2025 shall be as provided in the attached schedule. For the period from 2026 through 2050 set forth in the attached schedule such dates constitute a proposed schedule of use of the Auditorium between the District and Open Door Theater but is not committed to as part of this Agreement.



Dates for Musicals for RJGrey (JH) and Open Door Theater -- Acton, MA  
Updated 8/19/2009 Glenn Herdeg (Open Door President)

Year	Open Door Move Sets to JH Stage	Open Door Tech (Saturday-Thursday)	Open Door Shows	Open Door Snow Day (stage)	JH Chorus Concert (usually mid-January)
2011	March 20 7 PM	March 26 - 31	April 1 - 10	None	OK
2012	March 11 7 PM	March 17 - 22	March 23 - April 1	None	OK
2013	Jan 2 7 PM	January 12 - 17	January 18 - 27	February 2	Need to move
2014	March 16 7 PM	March 22 - 27	March 28 - April 6	None	OK
2015	March 8 7 PM	March 14 - 19	March 20 - 29	None	OK
2016	March 13 7 PM	March 19 - 31	April 1 - 10	None	OK
2017	March 19 7 PM	March 25 - 30	March 31 - April 9	None	OK
2018	Jan 3 7 PM	January 13 - 18	January 19 - 28	February 3	Need to move
2019	March 17 7 PM	March 23 - 28	March 29 - April 7	None	OK
2020	March 15 7 PM	March 21 - 26	March 27 - April 5	None	OK
2021	March 7 7 PM	March 13 - 18	March 19 - 28	None	OK
2022	March 20 7 PM	March 26 - 31	April 1 - 10	None	OK
2023	March 12 7 PM	March 18 - 23	March 24 - April 2	None	OK
2024	Jan 3 7 PM	January 13 - 18	January 19 - 28	February 3	Need to move
2025	March 16 7 PM	March 22 - 27	March 28 - April 6	None	OK

Colors:

2011 and beyond expected dates are  
two weekends before Feb Vac

Agreement of JH and Open Door dates for 2011-2025

		Feb Vac		JH (RJ Grey)		Tech weekend		Easter		Apr Vacation	
		2011 and beyond expected dates are two weekends before Feb Vac						Guess at April Vacation dates (below)			
2011	1/16	1/23	1/30	2/6	2/13	2/20	2/27	3/6 Tech	3/13	3/20	4/17
2012	1/15	1/22	1/29	2/5 Tech	2/12 Tech	2/19	2/26	3/4	3/11	3/18	4/15
2013					2/10	2/17	2/24	3/3 Tech	3/10	3/17	4/14
2014	1/12	1/19	1/26	2/2	2/9	2/16	2/23	3/2 Tech	3/9	3/16	4/13
2015	1/11	1/18	1/25	2/1 Tech	2/8 Tech	2/15	2/22	3/1	3/8	3/15	4/12
2016	1/10	1/17	1/24	1/31	2/7	2/14	2/21	2/28 Tech	3/6	3/13	4/11
2017	1/15	1/22	1/29	2/5	2/12	2/19	2/26	3/5 Tech	3/12	3/19	4/10
2018					2/11	2/18	2/25	3/4 Tech	3/11	3/18	4/9
2019	1/13	1/20	1/27	2/3	2/10	2/17	2/24	3/3 Tech	3/10	3/17	4/16
2020	1/12	1/19	1/26	2/2	2/9	2/16	2/23	3/1 Tech	3/8	3/15	4/15
2021	1/10	1/17	1/24	1/31 Tech	2/7 Tech	2/14	2/21	2/28	3/7	3/14	4/14
2022	1/16	1/23	1/30	2/6	2/13	2/20	2/27	3/6 Tech	3/13	3/20	4/13
2023	1/15	1/22	1/29	2/5 Tech	2/12 Tech	2/19	2/26	3/5	3/12	3/19	4/12
2024					2/11	2/18	2/25	3/3 Tech	3/10	3/17	4/11
2025	1/12	1/19	1/26	2/2	2/9	2/16	2/23	3/2 Tech	3/9	3/16	4/10

Exhibit A (P.3)

Updated 8/19/2008 Glenn Herdag (Open Door President)

Dates for Musicals for RJ Grey (JH), ABRHS (AB HS), and Open Door Theater - Acton, MA

1982-2010 (Known dates of shows)

2011-2025 (Agreement of JH and Open Door dates)

2026-2050 (Working proposal showing similar strategy as 2011-2025)

Colors:

		2011 and Payroll extended dates are two weeks before Feb/Vac.																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																																					
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**Vote to Accept ABRSD Jr. High School  
Theatre and Theatre Program Gift**

**Proposed Vote for School Committee**

The School Committee having been offered a monetary gift by Bernard Haan to (i) enhance the physical condition of the theater at the Jr. High School and (ii) support the District's theater programs and having received advice on the subject, and after due deliberation and consideration of the same, hereby votes to accept Mr. Haan's generous gift and to enter into the Restricted Gift Agreement related thereto which has been presented to the School Committee for review and discussion.

The School Committee further authorizes and directs the Superintendent to sign the Restricted Gift Agreement, and upon signing by the Superintendent the terms of such gift and Restricted Gift Agreement shall be deemed hereby approved and the same shall be conclusive evidence that the terms thereof have been duly authorized by the School Committee on behalf of the School District. This School Committee further authorizes and directs the Superintendent to from time to time designate the District member of the "gift committee" under the Restricted Gift Agreement.

The School Committee hereby expressly thanks Mr. Haan for this thoughtful and generous gift which will redound to the benefit of the students and the residents of the District and the theater arts in our communities.

To: Stephen Mills  
From: Steve Desy  
CC: Alixe Callen  
Date: August 25, 2009  
Subject: Addition of a boys' volleyball program

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I recommend that you accept Mark Starr's proposal to fund a junior varsity and varsity boys' volleyball team for the 2010-2012 seasons.

The Dual County League currently has seven schools sponsoring boys' volleyball programs. The addition of a volleyball teams in the spring will allow an additional twenty-four to thirty students the opportunity to participate in athletics.

Attached is Mark's proposal.

## **Proposal**

### **Varsity and Junior Varsity Boys' Volleyball Team**

#### **Rationale:**

Boys Volleyball is growing in popularity in the surrounding communities. There are currently boys programs in 7 DCL schools. Lincoln-Sudbury and Newton South have 3 teams (Varsity, JV, and freshman) with approximately 45 boys participating. Boston Latin, Westford, Arlington, and Wayland have JV and Varsity teams. Cambridge Rindge & Latin plays boys' volleyball in the DCL and has both a varsity and JV team.

The current girls program is extremely popular with over 40 girls participating on 3 teams.

A Community Ed program last winter attracted over 25 boys and an intramural program this past spring drew similar numbers. If volleyball became a varsity sport it would provide an additional 30-40 boys the opportunity to play a spring sport.

#### **Schedule/Competition:**

The previously mentioned 7 boys' teams in the DCL would constitute the majority of the competition. There are many other programs in this area (Chelmsford, Marlboro, and Lowell for example) that would be used to fill out a season schedule of approximately 18 games.

#### **Equipment/Game Areas:**

All required equipment for this program is already used for the girls' program so there should be no additional expenses for equipment. Both gyms have volleyball setups and are available in the spring since there are no other indoor spring sports.

#### **Tryouts/Requirements:**

Tryouts for the teams would be in early spring, and would be conducted in a similar manner as other interscholastic teams at ABRHS.

## Summary/Budget Proposal:

This Volleyball program would be totally self-funded for the first 3 years as required by the school committee. The major expenses are uniforms, buses, referees, and coaches salaries as follows:

• 30 uniforms @ \$30.00/ea.	\$ 900.00
• 9 away bus trips at\$300.00/game	\$2700.00
• 9 home game referees	\$2304.00
○ <b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$5904.00</b>

### Revenue Sources:

• Student activity fee @ \$190.00x30	\$5700.00
• Colonial Club donation 1 <sup>st</sup> yr (committed)	\$2000.00
• Private Pledges (committed)	\$2000.00
○ <b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$9700.00</b>
• <b>NET</b>	<b>\$3796.00</b>

Since there is no team yet, there is no booster club. Additional support is anticipated once a program is established – which should help to make up this deficit.

The Colonial Club has pledged additional funds if needed – and we have reached out to the US Volleyball Association (USVBA) which contributes funds to new H.S. and College teams to encourage and promote boys' volleyball.

Any additional deficit after exhausting these resources has been committed by a private donation.

Mark Starr has been running all of the previously mentioned Community Ed and Intramural Volleyball programs – and will serve as the ABRHS coach. If necessary Mark is willing to volunteer his time so as to keep expenses at a minimum. Coaching salaries are anticipated to be \$7373 (JV and varsity).

Dear School Committee Members:

I am writing to ask for your support in starting a boys' volleyball team/program at ABRHS. I have had many meetings with Steve Desy over the last two years and he suggested that I write to you.

Last winter I ran a Community Ed program at the junior high, and had more than 25 AB boys participating. Starting in April I ran an intramural program at the high school and had a similar number of boys participating in that. The Dual County League currently has 7 schools with boys' volleyball, so the interest in the sport is there and I believe that I would have no problem fielding a competitive team within a short time frame.

I understand having the interest is only part of the issue. I know that any new sport has to be self-funded for the first 3 years. While I haven't actively started collecting any funds, I have made contact with people and organizations that have expressed both interest and enthusiasm in helping to fund a team. I'm confident that I will be able to raise the necessary funds to pay for the program for the 3 years. I'm also aware that at some point the program would need support from the school athletic funds - and that is why I am asking for your support.

I am a 1969 graduate of ABRHS and my wife is also an AB graduate. We have lived in town ever since and have raised 3 sons who also graduated from AB. I played a number of sports for AB including basketball and soccer. In college I fell in love with the sport of volleyball, and it was and is my passion ever since. I've played at the highest level of the sport, (USVBA, Yankee and Turner Volleyball) and competed in both National and New England Championship Tournaments. I have also coached at various levels over the years. I'm currently the girls JV volleyball coach at AB and enjoy it tremendously. I am at the point in my professional and private life that I have both the time and enthusiasm to pass along my love for the game to others and I am hoping that with your support I will have that opportunity.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark Starr



TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH  
FINANCIAL MODEL  
FY2010 PROJECTION -ATM  
FINAL

Revised 05/15/09

	FY2009	FY2010	FY2010	FY2010		
	Budget	% Inc vs FY09	\$ Inc vs FY09	Final Budget		
<b>Summary of Expenditures</b>						
<b>Operating Budget</b>						
General Government	\$ 845,788	-0.77%	\$ (6,480)	\$ 839,308		
Protection	\$ 2,172,644	0.64%	\$ 13,942	\$ 2,186,586		
Public Works	\$ 878,429	0.27%	\$ 2,366	\$ 880,795		
Health	\$ 89,810	-3.60%	\$ (3,230)	\$ 86,580		
Cultural & Recreation	\$ 332,430	2.19%	\$ 7,289	\$ 339,719		
<b>SUBTOTAL - TOWN GOVERNMENT</b>	<b>\$ 4,319,101</b>	<b>0.32%</b>	<b>\$ 13,887</b>	<b>\$ 4,332,988</b>		
<b>Education</b>						
Blanchard School	\$ 5,273,401	1.14%	\$ 60,189	\$ 5,333,590		
A/B Regional School	\$ 5,732,440	1.84%	\$ 105,650	\$ 5,838,090		
Minuteman Technical	\$ 299,902	20.61%	\$ 61,802	\$ 361,704		
<b>SUBTOTAL - EDUCATION</b>	<b>\$ 11,305,743</b>	<b>2.01%</b>	<b>\$ 227,641</b>	<b>\$ 11,533,384</b>		
<b>Reserve Fund</b>						
Debt Service - Exempt	\$ 185,000	0.00%	\$ -	\$ 185,000		
Debt Service - Non Exempt	\$ 935,403	-2.49%	\$ (23,303)	\$ 912,100		
Debt Service - A/B Regional/Exempt	\$ 110,105	-10.87%	\$ (11,968)	\$ 98,137		
Employee Benefits	\$ 311,601	-6.29%	\$ (19,600)	\$ 292,001		
<b>SUBTOTAL - OTHER</b>	<b>\$ 1,807,298</b>	<b>6.15%</b>	<b>\$ 111,085</b>	<b>\$ 1,918,383</b>		
<b>SUBTOTAL - OTHER</b>	<b>\$ 3,349,407</b>	<b>1.68%</b>	<b>\$ 56,214</b>	<b>\$ 3,405,621</b>		
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 18,974,251</b>	<b>1.57%</b>	<b>\$ 297,742</b>	<b>\$ 19,271,993</b>		
<b>ATM Warrant Articles Within 2 1/2</b>						
One Time Capital Exclusion Articles	\$ 51,950	24.74%	\$ 12,850	\$ 64,800		
Snow and Ice Deficit	\$ -	0.00%	\$ -	\$ -		
Stabilization Fund - Warrant Articles	\$ 94,435	-100.00%	\$ (94,435)	\$ -		
Overlay Reserve Known after tax rate setting)	\$ 36,000	358.33%	\$ 129,000	\$ 165,000		
Overlay Reserve Known after tax rate setting)	\$ 211,688	-17.33%	\$ (36,888)	\$ 175,000		
<b>Total to Fund Budget Articles Overlay</b>	<b>\$ 19,368,324</b>	<b>1.59%</b>	<b>\$ 308,469</b>	<b>\$ 19,676,793</b>		
<b>Sources of Funds</b>						
Year Levy Limit	\$ 13,925,438	3.81%	\$ 530,430	\$ 14,455,868		
2 1/2 Growth	\$ 348,136	3.81%	\$ 13,261	\$ 361,397		
Override	\$ -		\$ -	\$ -		
Prior Year Tax Rate	14.14	14.84				
New Growth (estimate determined by town Policy Makers)	12,892,057	7,000,000	\$ 103,880	\$ 103,880		
<b>Current Year Levy Limit</b>	<b>\$ 14,455,868</b>	<b>4.48%</b>	<b>\$ 647,570</b>	<b>\$ 14,921,144</b>		
<b>One Time Capital Exclusion Articles</b>						
Exempt Debt Service ( Net of State Reimbursement)	\$ -	0.00%	\$ -	\$ -		
<b>Maximum Allowable Levy</b>	<b>\$ 962,912</b>	<b>-4.46%</b>	<b>\$ (42,903)</b>	<b>\$ 920,009</b>		
<b>Maximum Allowable Levy</b>	<b>\$ 15,418,780</b>	<b>3.92%</b>	<b>\$ 604,667</b>	<b>\$ 15,841,153</b>		
<b>State Aid</b>						
State Aid (Cherry Sheet Assessments)	\$ 1,761,124	-3.52%	\$ (61,975)	\$ 1,699,149		
State Aid (Cherry Sheet Assessments)	\$ (61,418)	-0.03%	\$ 20	\$ (61,398)		
State Aid ( Construction Reimbursement )	\$ 284,092	0.00%	\$ -	\$ 284,092		
Bond Premium used to fund debt expense	\$ -	0.00%	\$ -	\$ -		
Local Receipts (Determined by town policy makers)	\$ 1,462,000	0.00%	\$ -	\$ 1,462,000		
Overlay Surplus released for appropriation	\$ 70,000	207.42%	\$ 145,197	\$ 215,197		
<b>Total State Aid and Local Revenue</b>	<b>\$ 3,515,798</b>	<b>2.37%</b>	<b>\$ 83,242</b>	<b>\$ 3,599,040</b>		
<b>Additional Available Funds Required</b>	<b>\$ 433,746</b>	<b>-87.48%</b>	<b>\$ (379,440)</b>	<b>\$ 236,600</b>		
<b>(to Avoid Operating Override @ Max. Levy)</b>						
<b>Total Available Funds Required</b>	<b>\$ 433,746</b>	<b>-87.48%</b>	<b>\$ (379,440)</b>	<b>\$ 236,600</b>		
<b>(@ Max. Tax/Levy Including ATM/STM Articles)</b>						
<b>Available Funds Used- Free Cash (to fund budget)</b>						
Available Funds Used- Free Cash/Warrant Articles	\$ (209,373)	-96.75%	\$ 202,573	\$ (6,800)		
Available Funds Used- Free Cash/Warrant Articles	\$ (94,126)	-31.16%	\$ 29,326	\$ (64,800)		
Available Funds Used- Stabilization/Warrant Articles	\$ (36,000)	358.33%	\$ (129,000)	\$ (165,000)		
Available Funds Used- Capital Exclusion/Warrant Articles	\$ (94,435)	-100.00%	\$ 94,435	\$ -		
	\$ (433,934)	-45.48%	\$ 197,334	\$ (236,600)		
<b>ADDITIONAL FUNDS NEEDED TO FUND BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ (188)</b>	<b>-99.96%</b>	<b>\$ 187</b>	<b>\$ (0)</b>		

TOWN OF BOXBOROUGH  
FINANCIAL MODEL  
FY2010 PROJECTION -ATM  
FINAL

Revised 05/15/09

	FY2009	FY2010
<b>For Tax Rate Calculation</b>		
Operating Budget	\$ 18,974,251	\$ 19,271,993
ATM Warrant Articles Within 2 1/2 - Free Cash	\$ 87,950	\$ 64,800
ATM Warrant Articles - Stabilization Fund		\$ 165,000
Overlay Reserve - raised on tax recap	\$ 211,688	\$ 175,000
Snow and Ice Deficit - raised on tax recap		
Less: Funding Sources		
Available Funds Used for Articles - Stabilization Fund	\$ (36,000)	\$ (165,000)
Available Funds Used for Articles - Free Cash	\$ (94,126)	\$ (64,800)
State Aid	\$ (1,761,124)	\$ (1,699,149)
State Aid (Cherry Sheet Assessments)	\$ 61,418	\$ 61,398
State Aid ( Construction Reimbursement )	\$ (284,092)	\$ (284,092)
Local Receipts	\$ (1,462,000)	\$ (1,462,000)
Bond Premium to offset debt interest expense	\$ -	\$ -
Overlay Surplus released for appropriation	\$ (70,000)	\$ (215,197)
Available Funds Appropriated from Free Cash (for budget)	\$ (209,373)	\$ (6,800)
Adjustment factor to enable setting rate @ max allowable levy	\$ 188	\$ 0
To Tax at maximum allowable levy	\$ 15,418,780	\$ 15,841,153
Total Valuation (Assessor sets tax rate)	\$ 1,038,208,419	\$ 1,025,481,898
	\$ 14.84	\$ 15.45
TM Estimate	\$ 1,037,855,197	
	\$ 14.82	
FY2008 Val	1,052,195,628	
	\$ 14.65	

## Student Assistance Team Summary 2008-2009

Acton-Boxborough Regional High School's Student Assistance Team is a multidisciplinary group designed to support students who are experiencing a myriad of difficulties. This year's Team was comprised of eight individuals including Elizabeth Warren, team leader/school psychologist; Colleen McGovern, school nurse; Cheryl Simmons, special educator; Courtney Carp, classroom teacher; Jen Moss, classroom teacher; Parindar Miller, classroom teacher; Emily Zotto, counseling intern; and Susan Atwater-Rhodes, administrative liaison. The High School's ten school counselors joined meetings on a rotating basis to discuss their students and present new cases.

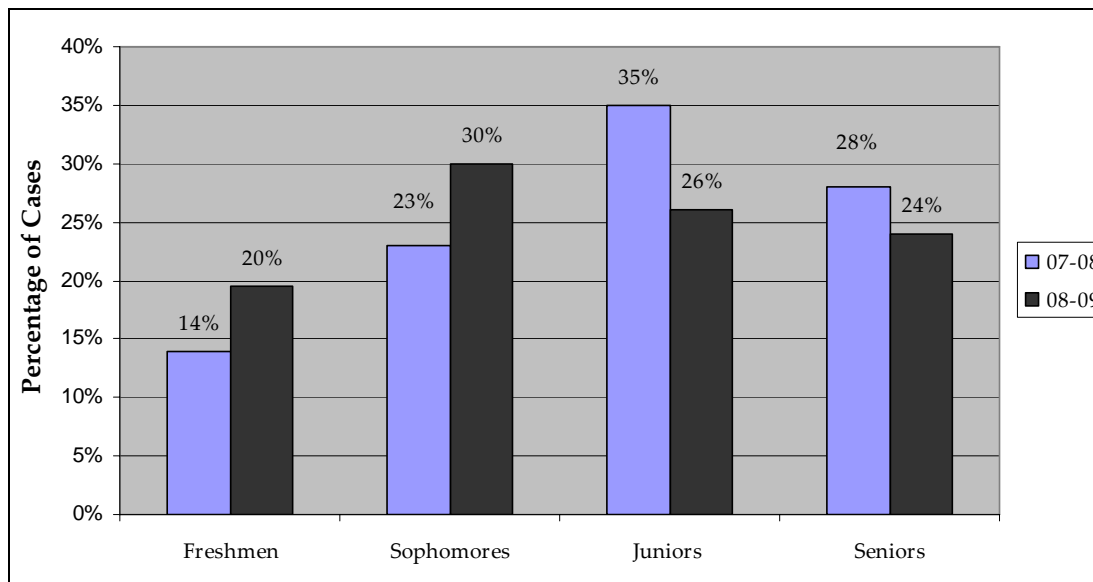
### **Student Referrals**

#### **Who is being referred?**

The SAT discussed 175 students during the 2008-2009 school year. This represents approximately 9% of the student body. Referrals increased almost 20% from the previous year, a noteworthy figure considering the student population remained relatively stable. Of the students followed by the Team, approximately 60% were newly referred by counselors, vice principals or teachers. The remaining 40% of students had initially been referred during the previous academic year, but continued to be tracked by the Team. Cases are followed and reviewed regularly until students demonstrate progress, graduate, leave ABRHS, or are found eligible for special education (at which time the special education liaison follows the student).

The SAT continues to follow more males than females (59% males, 41% females). For the first time in recent years, however, underclassmen were referred at a similar rate to upperclassmen. Sophomores were the "most referred" group of students, with juniors following them (see Figure 1). ELL students and students who are new to AB continue to be overrepresented in the referral pool. This year, current or former ELL students made up about 7% of cases while transfer students accounted for 8%.

*Figure 1 – SAT Referrals by Grade*



#### **Why are students being referred?**

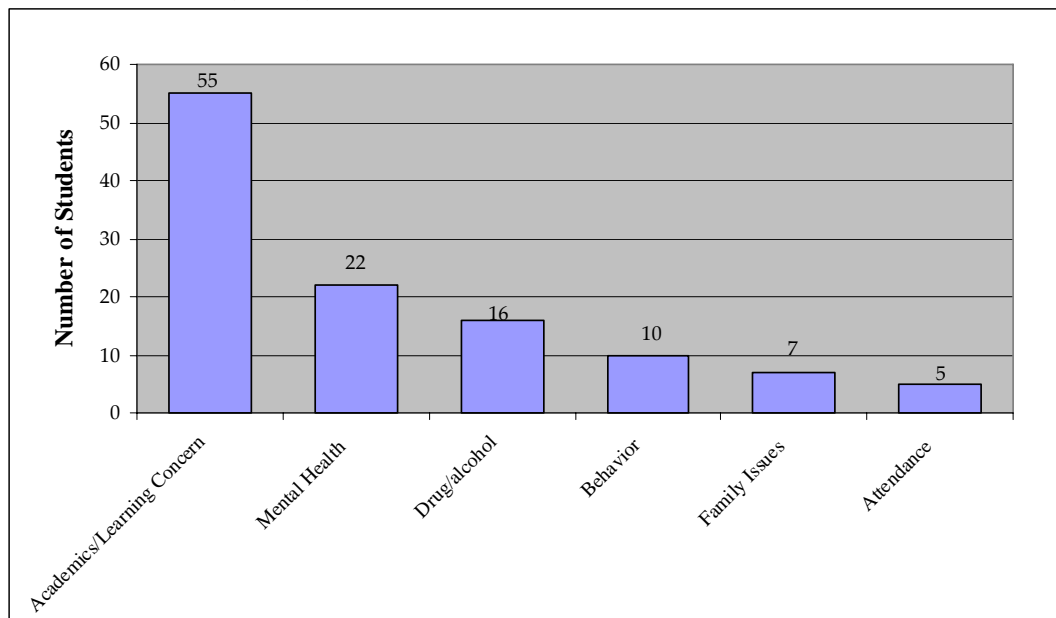
Students are referred to the SAT with a variety of presenting problems (see Figure 2 – note that some students were referred for multiple reasons.) Just over half of this year's new referrals were initiated by failing grades or significant drops in student performance. As the SAT serves as a pre-referral team where students are automatically referred if they receive two or more Ds or Fs in major subjects, it is not surprising that academic concerns continue to be a leading reason for referral. Though students often are initially referred for academic concerns, it is worth noting that further investigation frequently reveals that students are concurrently experiencing other issues (e.g. drug and alcohol problems, social and emotional issues, etc.).

Mental health concerns also continue to significantly impact students' functioning. Approximately 20% of students were referred to the Team due to social-emotional issues. While students dealt with a variety of difficulties, including anxiety and eating disorders, it appeared that depression was the year's most prevalent mental health problem. In some cases, depressed students also experienced suicidal ideation or engaged in self injurious behavior.

Students who violate the chemical health policy or are involved in drug/alcohol disciplinary infractions are automatically referred to the SAT. This year 16 students were newly referred due to substance use. Though this is a decrease from previous years, this data must be interpreted cautiously. While it is possible that substance use is declining, it is also likely that referrals decreased because so many students with substance issues were identified last year. The reduction in the grant funded social worker's hours also may have also contributed to this decrease. Though the social worker used to screen all students with suspected drug/alcohol issues, this year she only saw "high priority" students who had more substantial difficulties. As a result, counselors may have been less likely to refer students with mild drug/alcohol issues to the Team.

Finally, ten students were referred due to behavioral issues. Behavioral concerns ran the gamut from bullying to aggression to extreme fatigue. Seven newly referred students were experiencing significant issues within their families. Home related stressors, such as family discourse or a family member's illness, have the potential to affect students' school performance. Five other students were referred for significant attendance issues. While students seemed less likely to be truant from specific classes this year as opposed to previous years (likely tied to the new attendance policy), some had trouble attending school altogether.

*Figure 2 – Reasons for Referral*



### **Intervention**

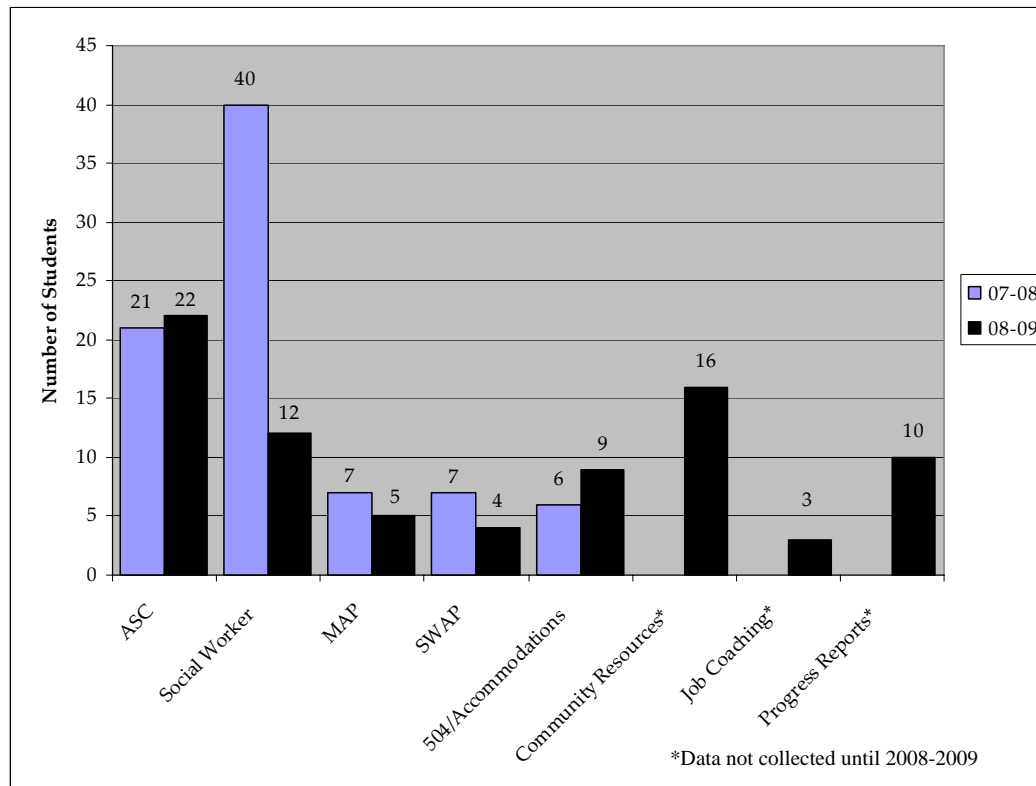
When students are first referred, the Team completes an assessment of the individual's needs. Namely, the Team may consult the school counselor about the student's and parents' perspective of the problem, review school records and obtain feedback from teachers. When there are indicators that even more information is needed to understand a pupil's needs, a screening may be recommended. With parental consent, the Team may conduct a psychological, learning, reading, attention, vision or speech/language screening. This year, the SAT recommended 19 screenings and carried out nine of them.

After the Team gathers information, it makes need-based recommendations to support students (see Figure 3). Among other recommendations, students may be referred to the ASC, to alternative programs (MAP or SWAP), to the School-to-Work Coordinator, or to the social worker. Referrals to the social worker dropped significantly this year, in part because her services were reserved for students with more considerable needs. In

addition, the Team may suggest that the student pursue educational accommodations through a 504 plan, receive school-based counseling support, receive weekly progress reports to track academic progress, change his/her schedule or course levels, or take part in MCAS tutoring. At time students and families are also connected with community based services, such as the Metrowest Free Medical Program and the family support services at Emerson Hospital. The addition of Acton's Community Outreach Coordinator at the Town Hall was also a welcome new resource this year.

When there are signs that a student may have a disability that impacts his or her ability to access the curriculum without specialized instruction, the Team recommends a special education evaluation. Parents or students (if 18 years old or over) must consent to an evaluation. This year, the SAT newly referred 21 students for special education evaluations. Of these students, nine students were found eligible for special education services, three were not, and four will be evaluated in the fall. The parents of the four remaining students have not yet consented to evaluations.

*Figure 3 – Number of students recommended for each intervention*



### **Looking Ahead**

As the Team enters the 2009-2010 academic year it will strive to increase its school presence and improve its efficacy. One specific goal is to increase communication with teachers. Though teachers provide valuable input, lack of time and resources make it challenging for the Team to follow up regularly with teachers. Ideally, the Team would like to develop a system to provide teachers with quarterly updates. An additional area of focus is to identify more regular education supports for students with mental health difficulties. This need is highlighted by the growing number of students who are found eligible for special education due to emotional disabilities. Finally, as students often struggle academically because they are placed in incorrect levels, it appears that parent education around course selection remains an area of need.

There are 88 students whose cases remain under review by the SAT. It will be the charge of the coming year's team (Elizabeth Warren, Susan Atwater-Rhodes, Colleen McGovern, Cheryl Simmons, Courtney Carp, and Parindar Miller) to assist these and newly referred students in reaching their potential. We appreciate the ongoing support of the school community and administration in our efforts.



August, 2009

Dear Families of R.J. Grey:

The summer is rapidly coming to an end and I am writing to welcome both new and returning families to RJ Grey Junior High School for the 2009-10 school year. Enclosed with this letter you will find:

- Emergency Card Letter
- RJG Sports Tryout Schedule
- A team-specific supply list (team assignments announced August 21<sup>st</sup>)
- RJG Night Staples Flyer
- PTSO volunteer form
- English and Social Studies curriculum letter
- RJG Parent Communication Guide
- and, for our incoming grade seven families, a document titled,  
    *“Adjusting to the 7th Grade: Helpful FYIs to Smooth the Transition.”*

As those of you who were members of the RJG community last year will remember, one of my long standing priorities as principal has been to ensure that effective communication happens between home and school. In this regard, I will continue to offer monthly “drop in” hours, and will also continue to utilize my principal’s e-mail list.

If you wish to receive my weekly newsletter, *Grey Matters*, as well as receive the daily announcements and other timely school information and news via this method, please go to our website (<http://ab.mec.edu/rjweb/index.html>) and click on the link “Sign up for RJ Grey emails”, and complete the registration form. Please note that parents and guardians who already completed this new registration form in the spring or earlier this summer do not need to repeat this process.

If you do not have e-mail but wish to receive this newsletter, just send a note to my office either with your child or at the address above. Copies of *Grey Matters* can also be found on our website.

As you can imagine, scheduling a school with almost 1000 youngsters is a complex process of check and balances and a significant portion of the summer was spent building these teams in order to balance them by:

- sending school
- gender
- race
- world language requests
- special education and ELL services

Given all of these variables, it is virtually impossible to build the schedule around individual team requests. Accordingly, we cannot promise to meet the numerous parent and guardian placement requests we receive. With that said, I am confident that the teams have been built in a manner which will ensure that every student will have the opportunity to maintain old friendships and develop new ones throughout the school year in an academically challenging environment. Looking ahead to the upcoming year, hearing from all of you and hearing from your young adults will be my top priority as we work together to ensure that the junior high is providing the most supportive educational atmosphere possible.

On Friday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, at approximately 3PM, we will post the team assignments on the front door of RJG. To ensure confidentiality, students will be identified by their ID number. This ID number can be found on the emergency card letter included in this mailing. **Please be sure not to throw this letter away!** We will also post team assignments on our website: <http://ab.mec.edu/rjweb/index.html>.

In reviewing the emergency card letter previously mentioned, please note that the capabilities of the on-line “parent portal” have been expanded. Once you enter the parent portal and complete your child’s emergency card information, you will also be asked to answer some additional school permission related questions, including specific PTO permission. For your convenience, the on-line parent portal will open on Friday afternoon, August 21<sup>st</sup>, the same time team assignments are posted.

**In summary, to complete the emergency card, and to access your son/daughter’s team assignment on-line, please mark your calendars that the parent portal will open on August 21<sup>st</sup> at 3PM.**

Regarding some basic school procedures, if your child will be absent from or late to school, please call the absence line at (978)264-4700 ex: 3333 **before** 7:30AM and state your child’s:

1. name
2. team
3. and, briefly, the reason for the absence or tardy arrival.

If you need to call during school hours (7:30-3:30), please call extension 3304 to leave a message with a member of our office staff.

Our office staff will then compare the messages with our homeroom attendance records. Students who are marked absent in homeroom but for whom we did not receive a call will be marked as “unexcused.” An unexcused absence will generate a call home. Please assist us in this process and remember to call the school if your child will be absent.

To maintain student safety and building security, the doors to the front lobby doors are the only public entrance to school during the school day (visitors are asked to check-in at the Main Office upon arrival). All other doors will be locked during the school day.

Along a similar topic, I want to remind everyone of our student drop-off/pick-up procedures:

1. The front entrance loop is for buses only between 7:00AM – 7:45AM and 1:45PM – 2:30PM. 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 area except in a visitor’s space.
7. Lastly, please remember not to pass the busses.



**For seventh graders, the first day of school is Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>.** Students should report to the following areas by 7:30AM where they will meet with their team teachers and other member of their team:

7 Blue	- Front Gym
7 Gold	- Café
7 Green	- Library
7 Orange	- Band Room
7 Red	- Back Gym

After a series of team building activities, students will be divided into their homerooms and will proceed with the school day. Students may bring their own lunch or purchase lunch at our outdoor cookout, where I will be cooking burgers, hotdogs, and a vegetarian option. After lunch we will hold an assembly where I will meet with the students to talk about our expectations along with our Assistant Principals, Ms. Warren and Mr. Shen.

All eighth grade students *new to the Acton-Boxborough District* are invited to participate in an orientation program on **Tuesday, September 1<sup>st</sup>** beginning at 12:30 PM and ending at 2:06 PM, so that students may ride home on their regular bus. Students are invited to gather in the lobby where they will be directed to a meeting location.

**The first day of school for all other grade eight students is Wednesday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>.** Eighth graders should report to the auditorium by 7:30 AM on Wednesday morning, September 2nd for a short program before proceeding to their homeroom.

I hope to meet many of you at our Back-To-School Night on Wednesday, September 30<sup>th</sup> At 7PM for parents/guardians of both seventh and eighth grade students. You will receive more information about this event in a few weeks. Meanwhile, the best person to talk to regarding any academic concerns is the specific classroom teacher. While teachers are not routinely at their computers, they can be reached through email or voicemail. The format for our email is first initial, last name, followed by our server address (mail.ab.mec.edu). For example, my address is [chardimon@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:chardimon@mail.ab.mec.edu). Teachers can also be reached through voicemail by calling our main number (978)264-4700 and asking for the teacher's voice mail.

Enjoy the last weeks of summer. The building seems empty without the hustle and bustle of students and I look forward to seeing everyone soon. This is going to be a fantastic year!

Sincerely,

Craig Hardimon  
Principal  
R.J. Grey Junior High

ACTON and ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL  
SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETINGS  
2009-2010

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**Meetings are held in the Junior High School Library unless otherwise indicated.**

Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee meetings are held on the first Thursday of the month; Acton Public  
School Committee meetings are held on the third Thursday.  
Meetings start at 7:30 p.m., unless otherwise noted.

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July 1, 2009	<b>Joint School Committee Workshop</b> - 6 pm, Sargent Library, Boxborough
August 6	<b>Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee</b> meeting, 6:30 p.m. followed by <b>Joint meeting</b> , followed by <b>Acton School Committee</b> meeting
September 3 September 17	<b>Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee</b> <b>Acton School Committee @ GATES</b>
October 1 October 15	<b>Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee Meeting</b> <b>Acton School Committee @ MERRIAM</b>
November 5 November 19	<b>Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee @ ABRHS</b> <b>Acton School Committee @ MCCARTHY-TOWNE</b>
December 3 December 17	<b>Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee</b> <b>Acton School Committee</b>
January 7, 2010 January 21	<b>Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee</b> <b>Acton School Committee</b>
February 4	<b>Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee</b> (open budget hearing- required by law)
February 25	<b>Acton School Committee</b> (open budget hearing-required by law)
March 4 March 18 March 25	<b>Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee</b> <b>Acton School Committee @ DOUGLAS</b> <b>Joint Meeting</b> (serves as April mtgs.)
May 6 May 20	<b>Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee</b> <b>Acton School Committee @ CONANT</b>
June 3 June 17	<b>Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee @ Admin. Bldg.</b> <b>Acton School Committee</b>



## **OnTeam September 2009**

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Welcome to the 2009-2010 school year. As we begin the year, we can celebrate how federal and states policies laws and their subsequent regulations have given great credibility for the education of students who have special needs. While our task is never done, this month I am dedicating this issue to review those highlights.

We celebrate schools in the United States who have moved from excluding students with special needs to an entitlement that every child have an opportunity to attend public school (Congress, 1975). You have heard at IEP Team meetings that your child is entitled to a “free and appropriate public education (FAPE)” and later, added through IDEA (Individual Disability Education Act), “in the least restrictive environment (LRE)”. Although there are many interpretations of LRE, today there are significantly more students who are integrated into regular education classes, participating with their peers and “modeling up”, supported by appropriate accommodations and modifications, if needed.

Federal special education law further requires an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) and parent participation. Parents are team members and are considered integral to the thinking and development of this IEP. Inherent are civil rights protections, which guarantee reasonable accommodations, which require aids and services to make access to regular education meaningful.

Although federal and state funding has fallen short of what was anticipated by the school district, some funding has been received. We recognize that this funding is not enough.

In August, the SpEd PAC presented to the School Committee a thorough review of your input survey results from the 2008-09 school year. Although PAC’s sample from parents was less than 10%, examining general themes and reaching out to those parents/guardians are top priorities for my team. Specifically, it is important to recognize that all our families have important opinions about school-parent partnerships and communication; IEP development, its processes and goals; parents perceptions about communication with teachers and administrators; the quality and provision of services and on a more systemic level, bullying. Many themes focused on communication within these categories. The actual survey report is available on our web site and hard copies are available in Pupil Services.

Similar to the work that was done subsequently to the Special Education Fiscal Task Force, my intention is to address the PAC survey results through the development of action plans. I plan to similarly address many of these themes through OnTeam issues in which information will be shared as well as an

opportunity for parents to join a selected number of community forums during the next school year. This format is similar to the design of the demographic forums, which are currently being coordinated as well. As always, I will emphasize heavily the issues of communication and have a dialogue for parents to address their concerns. Again, the major sections from the survey are: school and parent partnership, IEP development, teachers and administration; quality and provision of services, and on a more systemic level, continuation of anti-bullying efforts.

Using the PAC survey as a guide, I have developed a “next steps” approach to address each concern that is listed in the survey report by professional development, more communication with parents through forums and OnTeam topics, and review of guidelines and policies at the levels of teachers and staff, administrators, Superintendent and School Committee. I hope you are able to join us during these sessions and give us your feedback.

Finally, no matter where your son/daughter is attending school, the OnTeam attachment provides you with a school directory which includes all specialists’ names and telephone numbers. Please be sure to print out the documents applicable to you and your family. In general, parents should call the regular education teacher; for specific IEP related matters, the special education liaison. You may also wish to refer to the 2009-2010 Parent Communication Map, which is available by accessing the link <http://ab.mec.edu/pdf/ParentCommunicationMap.pdf>

Welcome again to the 2009-2010 school year not only to our returning students and families but also to our new students and families. If you are an elementary parent, please take time to meet and say hello to our interim elementary Chairperson, Lynne Laramie, who oversees the coordination of services and faculty at the elementary schools. Lynne has been a member of our school system for 23 years and a Special Educator at the Gates school. On behalf of the Pupil Services leadership team, we look forward to a wonderful year.

Sincerely,

*Liza Huber*

Director of Pupil Services



Co-Chair: Nancy Sherburne (978) 635-0968 [nsherburne@mindspring.com](mailto:nsherburne@mindspring.com)

Co-Chair: Bill Guthlein (978) 263-0610 [guthw@aol.com](mailto:guthw@aol.com)

AB SpEd PAC Website <http://www.abspedpac.org>

### **Oktoberfest 5K Run/Walk in West Acton**

Looking for something fun to do with your family or friends that will support a worthy local cause? Come join us for a family friendly 5K Run/Walk in West Acton on **Saturday, October 3<sup>rd</sup>**. After running/walking the route you can check out all the vendors and fun family activities at the West Acton Oktoberfest. If you **name the AB SpEd PAC as your Charity of Choice on the registration form**, \$5 of the \$15 registration fee will be donated to the AB SpEd PAC to help fund quality speakers and other events that support families and children in our community with special needs. To register go to the Middlesex West Chamber of Commerce’s website at [www.mwcoc.com](http://www.mwcoc.com) and click on the Calendar of Upcoming Events, then follow the link to this event. Feel free to share this information with family, friends or coworkers whom you think might enjoy participating. We’re all looking for creative ways to raise funds these days and this sounds like a wonderful opportunity for all!

## **Pupil Services Directory Information**

I am tremendously proud to be working with a leadership team who is committed to offering the finest education services and am sharing a list of the Pupil Services Chairpersons and Coordinators with their areas of responsibility.

*Liza Huber*

Director of Pupil Services

Matthew Kidder 978-264-2700, Ext: 3266

Out-of-District Coordinator

[mkidder@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:mkidder@mail.ab.mec.edu)

Carol Huebner 978-264-4700, Ext: 3268

Coordinator of Early Childhood Services  
and Elementary Out-of-District

[chuebner@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:chuebner@mail.ab.mec.edu)

Lynne Laramie 978-264-4700, Ext: 3268

Coordinator of Pupil Services – Grade K-6

[llaramie@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:llaramie@mail.ab.mec.edu)

Mary Emmons 978-264-4700, Ext: 3266

Coordinator of Pupil Services – Grade 7-12

[memmons@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:memmons@mail.ab.mec.edu)

Ginny Conway 978-264-4700, Ext: 3236

Chairperson of Counseling and  
Psychological Services - Grade K-6

[gconway@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:gconway@mail.ab.mec.edu)

Stephen Hitzrot 978-264-4700, Ext: 3430

Chairperson of Counseling and  
Psychological Services - Grade 7-12

[shitzrot@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:shitzrot@mail.ab.mec.edu)

Jenny Gormley 978-264-4700, Ext: 2058

Chairperson of Health and  
Nursing Services - Grade K-6

[jgormley@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:jgormley@mail.ab.mec.edu)

Diana McNicholas 978-264-4700, Ext: 3418

Chairperson of Health and  
Nursing Services - Grade 7-12

[dmcnicholas@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:dmcnicholas@mail.ab.mec.edu)

## **Acton Public Schools Integrated Preschool Program**

### **Specialists' Names and Contact Information**

#### **Special Educators:**

Debbie Bennett	Extension: 3262	<a href="mailto:dbennett@mail.ab.mec.edu">dbennett@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Julie Sleeper	Extension: 3311	<a href="mailto:jsleeper@mail.ab.mec.edu">jsleeper@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Bethany Ellis	Extension: 3240	<a href="mailto:bdelollis@mail.ab.mec.edu">bdelollis@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

#### **ABA Team Leader**

Shelagh Conway	Extension: 3238	<a href="mailto:sconway@mail.ab.mec.edu">sconway@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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#### **Speech and Language Specialists:**

Gabriel Prosnitz	Extension: 3236	<a href="mailto:gprosnitz@mail.ab.mec.edu">gprosnitz@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Cindy Mate	Extension: 3278	<a href="mailto:cmate@mail.ab.mec.edu">cmate@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

#### **OT:**

Niki Holtzman	Extension: 3268	<a href="mailto:nholtzman@mail.ab.mec.edu">nholtzman@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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#### **PT:**

Anne Dempsey	Extension: 3268	<a href="mailto:adempsey@mail.ab.mec.edu">adempsey@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**The Luther B. Conant School**  
**80 Taylor Road, Acton, MA 01720**  
**978 266 2550**

**Specialists' Names and Contact Information**

**Special Educators:**

Jane Tibbetts	Primary	Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:jtibbets@mail.ab.mec.edu">jtibbets@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Jana Bardsley		Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:jbardsley@mail.ab.mec.edu">jbardsley@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Nicole Loveland		Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:nloveland@mail.ab.mec.edu">nloveland@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Kristin Kelley	Intermediate	Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:kkelley@mail.ab.mec.edu">kkelley@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**Speech and Language Specialists:**

Meredith Toll-Abramowitz	Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:mtoll-abramowitz@mail.ab.mec.edu">mtoll-abramowitz@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Wendy Hartman	Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:whartman@mail.ab.mec.edu">whartman@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**Counselor:**

Debby Dawson	Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:ddawson@mail.ab.mec.edu">ddawson@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Psychologist:**

Nancy Ferraro	Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:nferraro@mail.ab.mec.edu">nferraro@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**ELL Teacher:**

Suzanne Szwarczewicz	Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:sszwarczewicz@mail.ab.mec.edu">sszwarczewicz@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Nurse**

Jenny Gormley	Extension: 2058	<a href="mailto:jgormley@mail.ab.mec.edu">jgormley@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**OT:**

Kathleen Harrington	Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:kharrington@mail.ab.mec.edu">kharrington@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**PT:**

Anne Dempsey	Extension: 2050	<a href="mailto:adempsey@mail.ab.mec.edu">adempsey@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**The C.T. Douglas School**  
**21 Elm Street, Acton, MA 01720**  
**978 266 2560**

**Specialists' Names and Contact Information**

**Special Educators:**

Rena Linnell	Primary	Extension: 1100	<a href="mailto:rlinnell@mail.ab.mec.edu">rlinnell@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Helen Epstein	Intermediate	Extension: 1100	<a href="mailto:hepstein@mail.ab.mec.edu">hepstein@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**Speech and Language Specialists:**

Jayne Carter		Extension: 1100	<a href="mailto:jcarter@mail.ab.mec.edu">jcarter@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Counselor:**

Hilary Bonnell		Extension: 1100	<a href="mailto:hbonnell@mail.ab.mec.edu">hbonnell@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Psychologist:**

Nancy Ferraro		Extension: 1100	<a href="mailto:nferraro@mail.ab.mec.edu">nferraro@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**ELL Teacher:**

Suzanne Szwarczewicz		Extension: 1100	<a href="mailto:sszwarczewicz@mail.ab.mec.edu">sszwarczewicz@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Nurse:**

Stacey Waite		Extension: 1100	<a href="mailto:swaite@mail.ab.mec.edu">swaite@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**OT:**

Kathleen Harrington		Extension: 1100	<a href="mailto:kharrington@mail.ab.mec.edu">kharrington@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**PT:**

Marion Beardsley		Extension: 1100	<a href="mailto:mbeardsley@mail.ab.mec.edu">mbeardsley@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**The McCarthy-Towne School**  
**Parker Damon Building, 11 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720**  
**978 264 4700**

**Specialists' Names and Contact Information**

**Special Educators:**

Linda Roy	Primary	Extension: 3701	<a href="mailto:lroy@mail.ab.mec.edu">lroy@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Isabelle O'Connor	Intermediate	Extension: 3701	<a href="mailto:ioconnor@mail.ab.mec.edu">ioconnor@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Allison O'Leary		Extension: 3701	<a href="mailto:aoleary@mail.ab.mec.edu">aoleary@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Cindy Tamaren		Extension: 3701	<a href="mailto:ctamaren@mail.ab.mec.edu">ctamaren@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**Speech and Language Specialists:**

Bethany Vinal		Extension 3701	<a href="mailto:bvinal@mail.ab.mec.edu">bvinal@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Counselor:**

Kristina Morgan		Extension: 3701	<a href="mailto:tmorgan@mail.ab.mec.edu">tmorgan@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Psychologist:**

Dr. Carolyn Imperato		Extension: 3701	<a href="mailto:cimperato@mail.ab.mec.edu">cimperato@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**ELL Teacher:**

Suzanne Szwarczewicz		Extension: 3701	<a href="mailto:sszwarczewicz@mail.ab.mec.edu">sszwarczewicz@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Nurse:**

Betty Johns		Extension: 3704	<a href="mailto:bjohns@mail.ab.mec.edu">bjohns@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**OT:**

Tammy Kucharski		Extension: 3701	<a href="mailto:tkucharski@mail.ab.mec.edu">tkucharski@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**PT:**

Marion Beardsley		Extension: 3701	<a href="mailto:mbeardsley@mail.ab.mec.edu">mbeardsley@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**The Paul P. Gates School**  
**75 Spruce Street, Acton, MA 01720**  
**978 266 2570**

**Specialists' Names and Contact Information**

**Special Educators:**

Johanna Pyle		Extension: 4051	<a href="mailto:jpyle@mail.ab.mec.edu">jpyle@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Kelli Sullivan	Primary	Extension: 4051	<a href="mailto:ksullivan@mail.ab.mec.edu">ksullivan@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Susan Hunt	Intermediate	Extension: 4051	<a href="mailto:shunt@mail.ab.mec.edu">shunt@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**Speech and Language Specialists:**

Jane Zimmerman		Extension: 4051	<a href="mailto:jzimmerman@mail.ab.mec.edu">jzimmerman@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Counselor:**

Jennifer DeLucia		Extension: 4051	<a href="mailto:jdelucia@mail.ab.mec.edu">jdelucia@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Psychologist:**

Nancy Ferraro		Extension: 4051	<a href="mailto:nferraro@mail.ab.mec.edu">nferraro@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Nurse:**

Diane Spring		Extension: 4056	<a href="mailto:dspring@mail.ab.mec.edu">dspring@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**OT:**

Tammy Kucharski		Extension: 4051	<a href="mailto:tkucharski@mail.ab.mec.edu">tkucharski@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**PT:**

Marion Beardsley		Extension: 4051	<a href="mailto:mbeardsley@mail.ab.mec.edu">mbeardsley@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**The Merriam School**  
**Parker Damon Building, 11 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720**  
**978 264 4700**

**Specialists' Names and Contact Information**

**Special Educators:**

Renee Hill	Primary	Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:rhill@mail.ab.mec.edu">rhill@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Amy Herrick	Intermediate	Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:aherrick@mail.ab.mec.edu">aherrick@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Beth Tafler		Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:btafler@mail.ab.mec.edu">btafler@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Jen Washburn		Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:jwashburn@mail.ab.mec.edu">jwashburn@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**Speech and Language Specialist:**

Patricia Kaminsky		Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:pkaminsky@mail.ab.mec.edu">pkaminsky@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Counselor:**

Ginny Conway		Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:gconway@mail.ab.mec.edu">gconway@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Psychologist:**

Dr. Carolyn Imperato		Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:cimperato@mail.ab.mec.edu">cimperato@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**ELL Teacher:**

Suzanne Szwarczewicz		Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:sszwarczewicz@mail.ab.mec.edu">sszwarczewicz@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
----------------------	--	-----------------	--

**Nurse:**

Betty Mazzone		Extension: 3752	<a href="mailto:emazzone@mail.ab.mec.edu">emazzone@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**OT:**

Niki Holtzman		Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:nholtzman@mail.ab.mec.edu">nholtzman@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**PT:**

Anne Dempsey		Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:adempsey@mail.ab.mec.edu">adempsey@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**The Raymond J. Grey Junior High School**  
**16 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720**  
**978 264 4700**

**Specialists' Names and Contact Information**

**Special Educators:**

Karoly Baglio		Extension: 3369	<a href="mailto:kbaglio@mail.ab.mec.edu">kbaglio@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Vanessa Banyas		Extension: 3381	<a href="mailto:vbanyas@mail.ab.mec.edu">vbanyas@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Kerry Byrne		Extension: 3349	<a href="mailto:kbyrne@mail.ab.mec.edu">kbyrne@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Lana Peone		Extension: 3349	<a href="mailto:lpaone@mail.ab.mec.edu">lpaone@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Denis Reedy	CLASS	Extension: 3342	<a href="mailto:dreedy@mail.ab.mec.edu">dreedy@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Shauna Wilkinson	Connections	Extension: 3347	<a href="mailto:swilkinson@mail.a.mec.edu">swilkinson@mail.a.mec.edu</a>
Pamela Radler	LLP	Extension: 3386	<a href="mailto:pradler@mail.ab.mec.edu">pradler@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**Speech and Language Specialists:**

Kristen Yargeau		Extension: 3365	<a href="mailto:kyargeau@mail.ab.mec.edu">kyargeau@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Annmarie Chang	Connections	Extension: 3347	<a href="mailto:aching@mail.ab.mec.edu">aching@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**Counselors:**

Michelle Dancause		Extension: 3330	<a href="mailto:mdancause@mail.ab.mec.edu">mdancause@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Katie Chakarian		Extension: 3330	<a href="mailto:kchakarian@mail.ab.mec.edu">kchakarian@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Jon Duclos		Extension: 3330	<a href="mailto:jduclos@mail.ab.mec.edu">jduclos@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Caroline O'Brien		Extension: 3330	<a href="mailto:cobrien@mail.ab.mec.edu">cobrien@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**Psychologists:**

Rick Cowen		Extension: 3293	<a href="mailto:rcowan@mail.ab.mec.edu">rcowan@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Rachel Kalinsky		Extension: 3347	<a href="mailto:rkalinsky@mail.ab.mec.edu">rkalinsky@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**ELL Teacher:**

Pat Garrison		Extension: 3398	<a href="mailto:pgarrison@mail.ab.mec.edu">pgarrison@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
--------------	--	-----------------	--

**Nurses:**

Erin Livie	Extension: 3318	<a href="mailto:elivie@mail.ab.mec.edu">elivie@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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Cathy Loeb	Extension: 3318	<a href="mailto:loeb@mail.ab.mec.edu">loeb@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
------------	-----------------	--

**OT:**

Tammy Kucharski	Extension: 3719/4024	<a href="mailto:tkucharski@mail.ab.mec.edu">tkucharski@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
-----------------	----------------------	--

**PT:**

Anne Dempsey	Extension: 2050/3751	<a href="mailto:adempsey@mail.ab.mec.edu">adempsey@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**The Acton-Boxborough Regional High School**  
**36 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720**  
**978 264 4700**

**Specialists' Names and Contact Information**

**Special Educators:**

Cheryl Alfieri-Simmons	Dept. Bldg. Leader	Extension: 3490	<a href="mailto:csimmons@mail.ab.mec.edu">csimmons@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Judy Smith-Prather	Learning Center 1	Extension: 3469	<a href="mailto:jsmithprather@mail.ab.mec.edu">jsmithprather@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Susan Ervais-Bohmiller	Learning Center 2	Extension: 3441	<a href="mailto:sbohmiller@mail.ab.mec.edu">sbohmiller@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Gary Holbrook-DeFeo	Learning Center 3	Extension: 3459	<a href="mailto:gholbrook@mail.ab.mec.edu">gholbrook@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Nikki Jeannotte	Learning Center 4	Extension: 3583	<a href="mailto:njeannotte@mail.ab.mec.edu">njeannotte@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Carol Moser-Wight	MAP Program	Extension: 3441	<a href="mailto:cmoserwight@mail.ab.mec.edu">cmoserwight@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Tim Malloy	SCE Program	Extension: 3447	<a href="mailto:tmalloy@mail.ab.mec.edu">tmalloy@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Tammy Morgan	ODP Program	Extension: 3449	<a href="mailto:tmorgan@mail.ab.mec.edu">tmorgan@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Erica Cohen	The REAL Program	Extension: 34381	<a href="mailto:ecohen@mail.ab.mec.edu">ecohen@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

**Speech and Language Specialist:**

Judi Painter	Extension: 3496	<a href="mailto:jpainter@ab.mec.edu">jpainter@ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Counselors:**

Stephen Hitzrot	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:shitzrot@mail.ab.mec.edu">shitzrot@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Todd Chicko	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:tchicko@mail.ab.mec.edu">tchicko@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Wioletta Pavlowska	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:wpavlowska@mail.ab.mec.edu">wpavlowska@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Jodi Chu	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:jchu@mail.ab.mec.edu">jchu@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Andy Palmer	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:apalmer@mail.ab.mec.edu">apalmer@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Brian Doherty	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:bdoherty@mail.ab.mec.edu">bdoherty@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
Shannon Dandridge	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:sdandridge@mail.ab.mec.edu">sdandridge@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
I'Esha Thomas	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:ibrown@mail.ab.mec.edu">ibrown@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>

Lindsay Rosenman	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:lrosenman@mail.ab.mec.edu">lrosenman@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Psychologists:**

Elizabeth Warren	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:ewarren@mail.ab.mec.edu">ewarren@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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Kate Hermon (Aleardi), MAP	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:khermon@mail.ab.mec.edu">khermon@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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Susan Root	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:sroot@mail.ab.mec.edu">sroot@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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Kristin Vanderstucken	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:kvanderstucken@mail.ab.mec.edu">kvanderstucken@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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Cynthia Sweeney-Adamchek	Extension: 3430	<a href="mailto:cadamchek@mail.ab.mec.edu">cadamchek@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**ELL Teacher:**

Pat Garrison	Extension: 3279	<a href="mailto:pgarrison@mail.ab.mec.edu">pgarrison@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**Nurses:**

Diana McNicholas	Extension: 3418	<a href="mailto:dmcnicholas@mail.ab.mec.edu">dmcnicholas@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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Colleen McGovern	Extension: 3418	<a href="mailto:mcgovern@mail.ab.mec.edu">mcgovern@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**OT:**

Tammy Kucharski	Extension: 3719	<a href="mailto:kucharski@mail.ab.mec.edu">kucharski@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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**PT:**

Anne Dempsey	Extension: 3751	<a href="mailto:adempsey@mail.ab.mec.edu">adempsey@mail.ab.mec.edu</a>
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## **Out of District (OOD) School Placements**

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Your student is part of our school family in Acton and Acton-Boxborough, even though your child, for unique educational reasons, has been placed in one of our out-of-district programs. But, with our desire to have you and your child connected both to the out-of-district placement and to us, general guidelines have been written below to help you receive the best intervention in the shortest time.

Routine and day-to-day matters (e.g., homework, progress, communication/feedback): Please call the classroom teacher/specialist at the out-of-district school.

Long-range planning matters (e.g., IEP goals, transitional planning, transportation, planning for next year and years to come, etc.): Please call Matt Kidder at 978 264 4700 ext 3266 or email him at [mkidder@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:mkidder@mail.ab.mec.edu)



**SpEd PAC Parent/Guardian Survey**  
Pupil Services Platform for Next Steps  
By Liza Huber, Director of Pupil Services  
August, 2009

Although we have well satisfied parents, evidenced by the PS and PAC surveys, we must always strive to listen to those parents and guardians who do not necessarily share those views. In light of that fact, this stepladder is used to create the next steps to ensure that we are open, transparent, listening and acting on behalf of all parents.

**Key Observations** (pages 4-12)

***Key Observation #1: Autism parents and Specific Learning Disability parents have very different perceptions of special education services than other parents. In particular, Autism parents are substantially less satisfied while Specific Learning Disability parents are substantially more satisfied with special education programs and services offered to them by the district. We believe this difference in perception and experience is not random. (page 4)***

Next steps:

- We intend to explore with groups of identified parents their concerns about special education services, while building on the PAC's finding: ***Autism parents were more satisfied than SLD parents specifically in the areas of: their child's principal (Q28), regular classroom (Q29, Q30), and before and after school programs (Q46).***

**a. Activities:**

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**b. Date completed:**

---

- We will invite our families who have a child on the autism spectrum (8-09 SIMS data: 22 at ABRSD; 42 at APS; 20 at OOD) to a special forum to participate in a dialogue about the continuity of autism spectrum services, the breadth of those services, and ways to enhance specific programs.

**c. Activities:**

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**d. Date completed:**

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- Our OnTeam newsletter will address major educational topics for the preschool level, specifically around play and its importance in the learning cycle for academic, behavioral and social issues.

**e. Activities:**

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**f. Date completed:**

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- Specifically, we will address concerns from the preschool programs in our forum since there are discrepancies between the PAC survey and the APS Preschool survey, which was compiled June 12, 2009.

**g. Activities:**

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**h. Date completed:**

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***Key Observation #2: A large percentage of special education parents indicated that their children have experienced bullying in the Acton Public and Acton-Boxborough Regional School Districts. A significant percentage of special education families find the schools' current bullying prevention programs ineffective. (page 10)***

***"My child has experienced bullying on the school campus, on the bus, during school field trips/activities, or via the internet by classmates." (page 10.)***

***Parents disagreed that an effective bullying prevention program exists at either the school or district level. (page 10.)***

**Next Steps:**

- We will review the guidelines/policy for bullying for the school campus, during field trips/activities, cafeteria time, unstructured time, and internet related issues.

**i. Activities:**

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**j. Date completed:**

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- Concurrently, we will be establishing a review/updating of the policies for bullying system-wide through a task force, which will include legitimate and significant opportunities for parent and guardian input, as stakeholders.

**k. Activities:**

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**l. Date completed:**

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- We will seek out consultation in a timely manner from experts Nancy Mullin and Elizabeth Englander to address systemic issues in bullying as we move forward with our comprehensive district plan.

**m. Activities:**

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**n. Date completed:**

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- Through the implementation of bullying curriculums, teachers, specialists, counselors and psychologists will continue to work towards integrating students with social challenges, explore and practice strategies for students to use when feeling teased or bullied, and establish peer mentoring programs.

**o. Activities:**

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**p. Date completed:**

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- Our administrative team will discuss and review guidelines that have been established in our safe schools initiative to ensure compliance and brainstorm additional strategies to keep our schools safe and free from harassment. We will review the consistency of terminology and response across schools as well.

**q. Activities:**

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**r. Date completed:**

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- We will meet with our parents to have a discussion about ways in which the home can help with bullying incidents.

**s. Activities:**

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**t. Date completed:**

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### **Other Observations (pages 13-18)**

***1. Open, Strong Relationships Between Parents and Staff (page 13)***  
***... responses expressed concern about speaking freely with or disagreeing with SpEd staff without experiencing negative consequences either for themselves or their child***

#### **Next Steps:**

- Encourage staff to empower parents to freely speak and/or disagree. Professional training will encourage the use of enumerating what has been agreed upon and what has been disagreed upon and the next steps for resolution in a respectful and thoughtful manner.

**u. Activities:**

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**v. Date completed:**

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- Targeted training will focus on regular and special education initiatives. In other words, these focused trainings will be for regular/special education faculty and staff.

**w. Activities:**

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**x. Date completed:**

---

**2. Pre K – First Grade (page 13, 15)**

***We believe this is enough evidence to justify a review of the Pre-School to 1st Grade age group to better understand the underlying cause(s) of parents' below average satisfaction.***

Next Steps:

- Encourage parents to visit programs especially at the points of transition; establish educational revolving groups at this level to elicit open and meaningful dialogue so that trust is enhanced.

**y. Activities:**

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**z. Date completed:**

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- In our open forums as well, we will discuss the results of both the PAC survey and the school's initiated preschool survey to help open dialogue and determine the underpinnings of any dissatisfaction.

**aa. Activities:**

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**bb. Date completed:**

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- We will chart those comments, review them, discuss them with all interested parties, and act upon them expeditiously.

**cc. Activities:**

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**dd. Date completed:**

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**3. Program Development (page 16)**

***... the perceived difficulty in observing programs, in receiving information (IEE forms) for diagnosis purposes, and in having third party professional opinions given equal consideration with school district opinions – it is not surprising to us that some parents communicate a high level of frustration with the special education process.***

Next Steps:

- Encourage staff to fully review the above topics where applicable at the IEP Team meeting ; the principal will intentionally encourage a program observation within the guidelines of the school district.

**ee. Activities:**

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**ff. Date completed:**

---

- Parents will receive more information about these issues through OnTeam as well as the regulatory issues listed below.

**gg. Activities:**

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**hh. Date completed:**

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**4. SpEd Service Concerns (page 16)**

*Parents are not convinced that the district is adequately addressing home-based services or assistive technology to support their child (-.54, Question 13) or delivering all the services called for in their child's IEP.*

*With respect to other programs available outside of normal school hours, 50% of families surveyed are not satisfied with the before and after school programs that support their child's special needs (-.35, Question 46) and 45% of families disagree that the school ensures that after-school and extracurricular activities are accessible to students with disabilities (-.29, Question 43).*

Next Steps:

- Discuss generally with parents about home-based issues, assistive technology, and how before and after school programs assist in the enhancement of IEP goals.

**ii. Activities:**

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**jj. Date completed:**

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- Discuss specifically through IEP meetings the above topics (checklist recommended).

**kk. Activities:**

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**ll. Date completed:**

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- Address the issue of acceptance of children with special needs into programs and what accommodations are needed, if applicable, with teachers, staff, and coaches running those programs.

**mm. Activities:**

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**nn. Date completed:**

---

**5. Classroom Size (page 16)**

*Over 40% of surveyed parents strongly agreed that class size negatively impacts their child's ability to make effective progress in the regular classroom without additional supports.*

Next Steps:

- Although Pupil Services does not have the authority to change class size, Pupil Services will review IEPs to ensure that children who are integrated into the regular classroom will receive additional supports when and if needed. This is an on-going process and will become a part of the Pupil Services agendas set for the schools.

**oo. Activities:**

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**pp. Date completed:**

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**6. Regulatory Issues (pages 17-18)**

The concerns listed by parents were: *disagreed that IEPs and amendments are delivered to parents within 5-10 days after a Team meeting; whether the child's IEP adequately addressed all areas of his/her suspected/identified disability;*

*whether the district offered new/different strategies to help a child when his/her IEP goals were not met; whether IEE Teacher Report forms were completed within 3 weeks and whether the Team gave equal weight and consideration to outside specialist' testing/recommendations; whether parents were encouraged/permitted to observe the child's program; whether all of the services identified in their child's IEP had been delivered over the last two years; whether after-school and extracurricular activities were accessible to students with disabilities; receiving appropriate extended year programming if a child was at risk of regression over the summer due to his/her disability; and when a child began receiving special education services if he/she was eligible to do so at the beginning of the school year...parents reported that services began three or more weeks into the school year.*

Next Steps:

- Each of these recommendations will be addressed in staff meetings as well as OnTeam.

**qq. Activities:**

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**rr. Date completed:**

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**Survey Results**

<i>School and Parent Partnership (page 19)</i>
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*The lowest ranking answer in this section at -0.23 (Question 7) relates to the special education administration sharing enough information about its budget and programs so that parents can provide educated feedback on programs and services.*

Next Steps:

- We will continue our open meetings with parents regarding the budget process and OnTeam newsletters. As in the past, we will encourage parent participation in the development of programs.

**ss. Activities:**

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**tt. Date completed:**

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<i>IEP Development (page 20)</i>
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See above Sections 4 and 6 for discussion of next steps

*However, approximately 15% of families require more than 3 revision cycles while 10% currently don't have a fully accepted IEP in place. This seems like an inappropriately large number of families without a fully accepted IEP. (page 22)*

Next Steps:

- We have reviewed, school by school, both issues: revision cycles and a less than fully accepted IEP. Given that only 4-5% of all Pupil Services IEPs are unsigned, we will explore the reasons and if necessary, make recommendations for improvement and monitoring over the next school year.

**uu. Activities:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**vv. Date completed:**

\_\_\_\_\_

<i>Teachers and Administrators (page 22)</i>
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*The lowest scoring questions in this section (Questions 33 & 28) at an average of -0.15 and -0.08 respectively, reflect that parents don't agree they are encouraged/permitted to observe their child's current programming nor do they agree that their child's principal is knowledgeable about their child's disability and necessary social and academic supports. 42% – 46% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction in these two areas.*

Next Steps:

- Pupil Services will encourage observation, consistent with the district's guidelines, and will address the principals' issue at a special meeting of principals.

**ww. Activities:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**xx. Date completed:**

\_\_\_\_\_

- Pupil Services will continue to offer support and training for the principals in areas of disability so that they will maximally appreciate the connections of the learner-involving climate, disability, accommodations, and social and behavioral supports.

**yy. Activities:**

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**zz. Date completed:**

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<i><b>Quality and provisions of Services (page 23)</b></i>
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See above Sections 4 & 6 for discussion of next steps.

<i><b>Bullying (page 25)</b></i>
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See Key Observation #2 for discussion of next steps



ACTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
ACTON-BOXBOROUGH REGIONAL SCHOOLS  
16 Charter Road, Acton, MA 01720  
<http://ab.mec.edu/>

Telephone: (978) 264-4700  
Fax: (978) 264-3340

### PARENT COMMUNICATION MAP

2009-2010

Dear Acton and Acton-Boxborough Parents,

The school districts always seek to promote good communication – with parents, the civic and business community, the Town, and within and among the schools themselves. This *Parent Communication Map* is a tool that facilitates good communication.

While some types of communication – for example, congratulations – engender little or no confusion, other categories can sometimes lead to unnecessary misunderstanding, conflict, or frustration. The purpose of the "map" is to prevent some of the more avoidable communication problems.

We expect that the *parent communication map* will help parents to obtain assistance when they have questions, comments or concerns about the educational program or some aspect of their children's school experience. The map indicates where parents should begin with various kinds of queries, concerns or ideas. Many issues can be addressed through this initial contact. In the "referral" column, the map also lays out the next step parents may take if their problem is not resolved or their question cannot be answered through the initial contact. The structure of the map is grounded in one underlying principle: If the solution to a problem is achieved at the level closest to that problem, the result will be more effective and lasting.

The Acton Public Schools and the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District are two distinct entities. This *communication map* indicates how you should pursue questions or concerns within each of these two distinct organizational structures. If you know the name of the person you are supposed to contact, you may call (978) 264-4700 and connect to that individual through our automated telephone system, or you may call your school directly.

We would like to emphasize the importance of the map structure when it comes to classroom inquiries. At fall open houses and back-to-school nights, or even earlier via memo or other communication, your children's teachers will provide you with information about how to contact them. Please bring to the teacher first any question related to classroom issues. Supervisors and administrators are willing to listen to questions and concerns related to classroom issues, but if you haven't spoken to the teacher yet, they will ask you to begin there. Most problems can be resolved when parents take this initial step. Teachers are interested in the concerns of parents and want to address those concerns in an open and professional manner.

If you have any suggestions after you have "road tested" our map, please don't hesitate to share them with us. Thank you.

I wish you well in the upcoming school year.

Sincerely,

Stephen E. Mills, Superintendent  
August 2009

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS**

<b>NATURE OF CONCERN</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>INITIAL CONTACT</b>	<b>REFERRAL</b>
<b>Policy</b>	Schoolwide	Principal	Superintendent
<b>Pupil Placement</b>	Early Admission to Kindergarten	Coordinator of Special Education	Director of Pupil Services
	Kindergarten Registration/ Placement	Registrar	Director of Personnel and Administrative Services
	Classroom	Principal	Superintendent
<b>Student Records</b>	Content/Availability	Principal	Director of Pupil Services
<b>Transfers</b>	Within School District (Not Out of District)	Principal/Coordinator of Special Education	Director of Pupil Services/ Director of Personnel and Admin. Services
<b>Transportation</b>	Busing/Crossing Guards	Principal	Director of Facilities and Transportation
<b>Teaching/Instruction</b>	Performance	Teacher	Principal
<b>Student Progress</b>	Academic Progress	Teacher	Principal
	Social Development	Teacher/Counselor	Principal
<b>Discipline</b>	Classroom	Teacher	Principal
	Lunchroom	Teacher	Principal
	Playground/Recess	Teacher	Principal
<b>Curriculum</b>	Content	Teacher	Principal/Specialist/Department Head
	Content/Policy	Special Subject Teacher	Specialist/Curriculum Coordinator Department Head/ Assistant Superintendent
	Policy	Teacher	Principal/Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
<b>Special Learning Needs</b>	Regular Education/ Special Needs	Counselor/Special Educator	Counseling Chairperson/Coordinator of Special Education/ Director of Pupil Services
	APS Preschool Screening	Coordinator of Early Childhood	Director of Pupil Services
	Transportation	Special Educator	Early Childhood Coordinator/ Coordinator of Special Education/ Director of Pupil Services
	Kindergarten Screening	Kindergarten Teacher	Principal/Director of Pupil Services
<b>Counseling</b>	Program/Performance	Counselor	Principal/Counseling Chairperson/ Director of Pupil Services
<b>Instrumental Music</b>	In-school Lessons	Instrumental Music Specialist	Director of Music
<b>Extended Day Opportunities</b>	Programs	Community Education	Community Education Director/ Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
	Registration Information		
<b>Private Tutoring</b>	Referrals	On-line Tutoring Database <a href="http://ab.mec.edu/">http://ab.mec.edu/</a>	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
<b>Health</b>	Medical Issues	School Nurse	Chairperson of Nursing/ Director of Pupil Services
<b>On-line Emergency Card</b>	School-related	Principal	Information Management Specialist

## **SECONDARY SCHOOLS**

<b>NATURE OF CONCERN</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>INITIAL CONTACT</b>	<b>REFERRAL</b>
<b>Policy</b>	School-related	Principal	Superintendent
<b>Administrative Decision</b>	School-related	Principal	Superintendent
<b>Information</b>	Schoolwide/Systemwide	Principal	Superintendent
<b>Discipline</b>	School-related (including attendance and tardiness)	Assistant Principal	Principal
<b>Transportation</b>	Regular	Assistant Principal	Director of Facilities and Transportation
	Special Needs	Counselor/Special Educator	Coordinator of Special Education/ Director of Pupil Services
<b>Personal or school-related issues that may impact educational performance</b>	Counseling	Counselor or Assistant Principal	Counseling Department Chairperson/ Director of Pupil Services Assistant Principal/Principal
<b>Student Records</b>	Content/Availability	Counselor	Counseling Chairperson Coordinator of Special Education Director of Pupil Services
<b>Student Progress</b>	Classroom issues: grades/academic concerns; pupil/teacher relationships	Classroom Teacher	Counselor/Department Leader Assistant Principal/Principal
<b>Scheduling</b>	Placement/programs: schedules, placement, college/postgraduate admissions, career planning	Counselor	Counseling Department Chairperson/ Director of Pupil Services Assistant Principal/Principal
<b>Special Learning Needs</b>	Regular Education and Special Needs	Counselor/Special Educator	Counseling Department Chairperson/ Coordinator of Special Education/ Director of Pupil Services
<b>Curriculum: course content</b> <b>Placement: policy information and advice</b> <b>Approval for credit</b>	Departmental	RDL (Regional Department Leader) BDL (Building Department Leader)	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
<b>Health</b>	Medical Issues	School Nurse	Chairperson of Nursing/ Director of Pupil Services
<b>Athletics</b>	Schedules Team Activities	Coach	Athletic Director
<b>Curriculum and Instruction</b>	Systemwide	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction	Superintendent
<b>Private Tutoring</b>	Referrals	On-line Tutoring Database <a href="http://ab.mec.edu/">http://ab.mec.edu/</a>	Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction
<b>Home/Hospital Programming</b>	Regular Education and Special Needs	Counselor/Special Educator	Counseling Department Chairperson/ Director of Pupil Services Assistant Principal/Principal
<b>On-line Emergency Card</b>	School-related	Principal	Information Management Specialist

Any concern should be directed first to the teacher, counselor or principal, using the charts provided inside. Should further information and assistance be needed, the following directory may be used. Call (978) 264-4700 to reach all departments.

### **ELEMENTARY CONTACTS**

#### **LEVEL I – SYSTEMWIDE SPECIALISTS**

Curriculum Coordinator, K-12: Deborah Bookis  
Curriculum Specialist, K-6: Eileen Sullivan

#### **SPECIAL SUBJECTS**

Reading Specialists: Melany Appelle, Amy Barrett,  
Laurie Jaffe, Renee Luttati, Sharon Ryan  
Art Teachers: Melissa Hayes, Celia Knight, Anne Kress,  
Heidi Kupferman, Hilary Tolan  
Music Teachers: Peter Broggi, Judy Melillo, Chris Porth,  
Karen Sheppard, Kim Ward  
Physical Education Teachers: William Chan, David James,  
Mary O'Brien, Jill Reed  
Special Education Staff: Check with each building

#### **LEVEL II – PRINCIPALS**

Conant School: Christine Price  
Douglas School: Christopher Whitbeck  
Gates School: Lynne Newman  
McCarthy-Towne School: David Krane  
Merriam School: Ed Kaufman

#### **PROGRAM MANAGERS**

Elementary Principals: See above  
Title I Coordinator: Susan Horn, Asst. Superintendent  
Special Needs/ESL: Lynne Laramie, Coordinator of  
Special Education  
Counseling/Psychological Services: Ginny Conway,  
Chairperson  
Preschool Services: Carol Huebner, Coordinator  
Nursing Services: Jenny Gormley, Chairperson  
Health Education: Susan Horn, Asst. Superintendent  
World Languages: Claire Dix, RDL, ABRHS  
Visual Arts: Diana Woodruff, Director  
Music: Mark Hickey, Director  
Physical Education: Susan Horn, Asst. Superintendent  
Out-of-District Coordinator: Matthew Kidder

### **SECONDARY CONTACTS**

#### **LEVEL I – SYSTEMWIDE SPECIALISTS**

Curriculum Coordinator, K-12: Deborah Bookis

#### **Regional Department Leaders located at the High School**

English Language Arts RDL: Dianne Telicki  
Math RDL: Bill Noeth  
Science RDL: David Palmer  
Social Studies RDL: Pam Lynn  
World Languages RDL: Claire Dix  
Special Education BDL: Cheryl Alfieri-Simmons

#### **Building Department Leaders located at the Junior High**

English Language Arts Contact Person: Melanie Scalice  
Math BDL: Philip Stameris  
Science BDL: Mary-Frances Doiron  
Social Studies BDL: Lynne Bover  
World Languages BDL: Robin Crown

#### **LEVEL II – PROGRAM MANAGERS**

High School Principal: Alixe Callen  
High School Assistant Principal: Susan Atwater-Rhodes  
High School Assistant Principal: Larry Dorey  
High School Assistant Principal: Jim Marcotte  
Junior High School Principal: Craig Hardimon  
Junior High School Asst. Principal: Andrew Shen  
Junior High School Asst. Principal: Allison Warren  
Title I Coordinator: Susan Horn, Asst. Superintendent  
Special Needs/ESL/Academic Support: Mary Emmons  
Coordinator of Special Education  
Counseling/Psych. Svcs: Stephen Hitzrot, Chairperson  
Nursing Services: Diana McNicholas, Chairperson  
Visual Arts: Diana Woodruff, Director  
Music/Performing Arts: Mark Hickey, Director  
Athletics: Steve Desy, Director  
Summer School: Chris Clinton, Director  
Physical/Health Education: Susan Horn, Asst. Superintendent  
Out-of-District Coordinator: Matthew Kidder

### **OTHER (ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY)**

Information Technology Services: Steve Hall, Director  
Technology Integration & Instruction:  
Priscilla Kotyk, Director

Food Services: Kirsten Nelson, Coordinator  
Community Education: Erin Bettez, Director

#### **LEVEL III – CENTRAL OFFICE**

Susan Horn, Assistant Superintendent for  
Curriculum and Instruction/Community Education  
Marie Altieri, Director of Personnel and  
Administrative Services

Sharon Summers, Director of Finance  
Liza Huber, Director of Pupil Services  
John D. Head, Director, Transportation and Facilities  
Marty Finnegan, CASE Transportation Administrator

Stephen E. Mills, Superintendent of Schools  
email address: [smills@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:smills@mail.ab.mec.edu)