

Generally Speaking

John Stark Regional High School • 618 N. Stark Hwy • Weare, NH 03281
603.529.7675 • <http://www.jsrhs.net> • March 2014

If you receive AlertNow messages from John Stark, you will automatically receive the Generally Speaking newsletter. If you do not receive AlertNow messages and would like a copy emailed or mailed to you, please email: deborah.young@sau24.org or call the John Stark Office at 603-529-4722.

Principal's Corner *Christopher Corkery*

Spring is around the corner and even though we've had more snow days already than anyone cares to remember, we hope to have our end of school-year calendar ready for publication by early April. I know that the Class of 2014 is looking forward to it. (Graduation will still be on June 14th).

As always, our students are very busy. Please take a look at our athletic and school calendars and join us as we watch our athletes perform in division playoffs and our students perform in spring productions. Expeditionary field work is underway for many John Stark students. The students who have been studying the culture and ecosystems of Costa Rica have just returned from the jungle and our French students are busy preparing to host exchange students from Toulouse. If you missed the Scholastic Art exhibit last month at the deliberative session, you can see our award winning student work on our website, or come in and look at our many display cases.

There has been a lot of conversation about the new diploma options that take effect for the Classes of 2016 and beyond and how the specific course requirements impact the Class of 2017 and beyond. Please see my comments in Educationally Speaking towards the end of this newsletter on those topics. The good news is that we were so overwhelmed with interest in the new Diploma with Distinction that we had to rethink our rollout for the options and our course registration process for 2014-2015. Thank you for your support for the new online registration process.

A Letter from the John Stark School Board

Dear Weare & Henniker Community Members,

The proposed contracts for the teachers and the support staff at John Stark Regional High School represent a new and creative way to provide competitive compensation and benefits to teachers and staff. Health insurance is one of the biggest and least controllable costs associated with staffing a school. Traditionally, school employment contracts included several health insurance plan offerings, which required a district to build a budget that included the possibility that all employees would choose the most expensive plan. This model did not allow the School Board or employees to control health insurance costs and effectively required the district to absorb annual premium increases dictated by the insurance carrier. As a result, every year it was harder to pay competitive salaries and wages without increasing property tax rates to unsustainable levels. The proposed contracts aim to break that cycle.

For the first time, the contracts provide that a single high deductible health plan will be offered to teachers and support staff. The premium for this plan is lower than next year's anticipated cost of the most expensive plan previously offered. This will result in savings to the district and teachers and staff. The annual deductible is \$5,000 for a family plan and \$2,500 for a single plan. To insulate teachers and staff from the impact of these annual costs, the district has agreed to fund the annual deductibles by making contributions to every employee's health savings account. Over the terms of the contracts, the cost of paying the district's share of the premiums and funding the annual deductibles will be less expensive than the old method of paying for health insurance. The premiums will be lower, and, because it is highly unlikely that every employee will spend his or her entire deductible every year, the district will not have to fully fund the deductibles every year. The result will be a savings to the district and greater control over dollars used to pay salaries, wages, and benefits.

These anticipated savings allowed the School Board to include reasonable and much deserved raises for teachers and support staff in their respective contracts. They also made it possible to restructure the way raises are distributed to compensate teachers and staff for their professional growth and retain experienced employees.

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Under this new approach, teachers will attain a professional level salary after 13 years of teaching experience. Less experienced teachers earning salaries at the lower end of the pay scale will receive higher percentage increases each year than more experienced teachers who are closer to attaining a salary at the top of the pay scale. Teachers who are at the top of the salary schedule will receive a \$1,000 increase for each year of the contract. The term of the teacher's contract is three years.

The term of the support staff contract is two years. It includes a completely retooled five-step pay scale that provides for advancement every two years. In the second year of the contract, employees on the salary schedule will receive a 1.5% cost of living adjustment and those already at the top of the schedule will receive a 2.5% cost of living adjustment. The contract also provides a financial incentive for paraprofessional staff to obtain the highest level of certification in their field.

Both of these contracts are the product of thoughtful and creative negotiations that went on throughout the fall and early winter. The School Board, the teachers, and the support staff took up the challenges of managing the costs of delivering a 21st century education and providing competitive salaries and benefits in a fiscally responsible manner. Each of these contracts breaks new ground to help meet those important goals. Their adoption by the voters on Voting Day, March 11, will help ensure the continued vitality of John Stark Regional High School.

Sincerely,

Mark Zuckerman, Chair, John Stark School District
Zack Lawson, Vice Chair
Jill Dagenais
David Getzin
Anne Mellin

To view the full John Stark Regional School District Warrant, see page 7

John Stark Stage Company Has Working Vacation *by Jill Pinard*

While many high school students spent last week hitting the slopes, putting in extra hours at work, or just sleeping late, members of the John Stark Stage Company spent their vacation rehearsing their spring musical *Once on This Island*.

Once on This Island, book and lyrics by Lynn Ahrens and music by Stephen Flaherty, debuted off Broadway in 1990. Stage Manager Riley Boss describes the show as "starting with a little girl who is scared by a horrible storm so storytellers walk her through the story of Ti Moune who falls in love with a grand homme." The audience sees this story come to life on stage in this emotional musical.

Mackenzie Peacock, a junior who plays a storyteller was grateful for vacation rehearsals. Peacock said, "We have work that needs to be done!"

Junior Hailey Nase, an ensemble member, explained that up to this point the cast and crew had been working on individual scenes and songs. "This week has given us an opportunity to put the individual elements together."

Boss mentioned that "numerous snow days have been obnoxious and have cut into rehearsal time making things much more difficult. We have made a lot of progress this week."

The play opens with a Sunday matinee on March 16 at 2:00 at John Stark. There will also be two 6:00pm performances on Monday, March 17 and Tuesday, March 18; and a 7:00 show on Wednesday, March 19. Tickets are \$5.00 for students and senior citizens and \$7:00 for adults. For more information contact director Jennifer Matzke at 529-5353.

Poetry Out Loud Winners Announced

Aliyah Browne was the winner of the John Stark Poetry Out Loud Finals held on February 10. Mackenzie Peacock was runner up. Poetry Out Loud, a national poetry recitation contest, is designed to encourage students to learn about the beauty and power of language. Browne recited "Richard Cory" by Edward Arlington Robinson and "Beau-

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tiful Wreckage” by W.D. Ehrhart. She will now compete at the semi-final competition at New England College (Simon Center) on March 10 at 7 PM.

Peacock recited “The Arrow and the Song” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and “The Way It Sometimes Is” by Henry Taylor. Other John Stark Poetry Out Loud contestants included: Nancy Anastasia Gregory, Mike Caplan, Hazel Johnston, Kathryn Nitzschke, Jacob Goldsberry, Jessie Osgood, and Gretchen Wagner. Leandra Jimmo performed for the Judges’ Calibration Round.

Poetry Out Loud is sponsored by the NH State Council on the Arts, The National Endowment for the Arts, and The Poetry Foundation.

Photo: L to R: Mackenzie Peacock, runner up, and Aliyah Browne, winner.



News from Costa Rica!!

Twenty John Stark students traveled to Costa Rica during February break as part of their year-long, for credit class for either science or Spanish. The trip included many excursions including visiting a local school to deliver school supplies collected by the JS Spanish Honor Society and to a working farm.

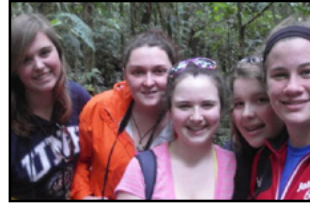
The following students were on the trip: Lucas Anderson, Nicole Beeso, Lizzie Brandt, Meghan Brown, Evelyn Cameron, Derek Clark, Kyle Clements, Kelsey Dobbins, Keith Filleul, Maddie Janelle, Kylee Frink-Kendrick, Courtney Gagnon, Jake Glover, Andrew Greene, Liz Neal, Jessie Osgood, Sam Paris, Alex Story, Stephanie Wetherbee, and Bella - Rose Zarrella.

Photo 1: JS Teacher Mr. Sullivan with a local farmer.

Photo 2: John Stark student Jessie Osgood w/Costa Rican student and w/Megan Brown and Sam Paris.

Photo 3: Costa Rican students as they ready to play soccer with the visiting John Stark Students

Photo 4: John Stark Students Megan Brown, Courtney Gagnon, Jess Osgood, Evelyn Cameron, Nicole Beeso



Robotics Team Makes Quarterfinals

The John Stark/Hopkinton robotics team competed this past weekend in the Granite State District Event held at Nashua South High School. The team made it to the quarterfinals and was awarded Safety First pins for their safe practices throughout the competition. The district competition continued the FIRST competitive approach to learning about science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM).

Three of the John Stark team members had the honor of having their photo taken with Dean Kamen, the founder of the FIRST program.

Back row: Lucas Anderson

Front Row L-R: Alyssa Robichaud, Dean Kamen and Stephanie Cisto (in costume).



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Time Talk About Spanish!!

John Stark Spanish Honor Society students traveled to the Hennifer Community School recently to talk with Spanish students there about the Spanish programs offered at the High School. Topics included the Spanish Honor Society and Spanish trips like the credited John Stark Spanish/Science class that brings students to Costa Rica for language immersion and hands on science study of the tropical environment.



Photo credit: Leanne Chauvette

John Stark Students Participate in DECA Conference

Eight John Stark student DECA members participated in 57th annual DECA Career Development Conference held at the Radisson Hotel in Manchester, NH, in February. John Stark Students competed against over 400 others students from around New Hampshire. DECA is a national organization that prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs in marketing, finance, hospitality and management. The John Stark club is advised by Business Teacher Ms. Tricia Macey.



The following students placed in their business category at the conference: Sam Paris, first overall in Business Finance; Jacob Dowd, third overall in Human Resources Management; Mike Metcalf, second in the Hotel and Lodging Role Play; James Wilson, third in the Restaurant and Food Service Role Play; and Ethan Gage, second in the Sports & Entertainment Marketing Exam.

John Stark Students “On the Air”

On February 6, ten AP English Language and Composition students travelled to New Hampshire Public Radio (NHPR) in Concord to tour the studio and to serve as “on air talent” recording different versions of the station’s identification. Production Manager and Fundraising Producer Andrew Parrella guided the students behind the scenes to observe the elements involved in creating local programming like NHPR’s The Exchange and broadcasting national and international features. Each student had an opportunity to take the microphone to record station identifications, which are required by the FCC. The students were challenged to read like a poet or put their own personal spin when recording the list of the New Hampshire stations. These recordings will be edited and air this spring.



“AP English students get behind the controls at NHPR.”

Photo credit to Laura Utley

“Junior Jodi Leclerc prepares to record a station identification with producer Andrew Parrella.”

Photo credit to Laura Utley



Happy Birthday Mr. Shakespeare

John Stark Students Commemorate Shakespeare’s 450th birthday in 2014 with the Shakespeare in Action Workshop

On March 14 Sean Eastman will present a workshop for Shakespeare I and II students on using movement to accompany Shakespeare’s words. This three-hour workshop was funded by Northern New England Repertory Theatre Company. Eastman, a professional actor, director, and artistic director of Momentum Theatre Troupe, has worked with John Stark students for the past five years. When evaluating this workshop last year one student wrote, “Sean was really fun and had a good eye for everything that was happening. He could see good in the smallest details. Also he was constructive. He really helped each group to improve their work.”

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Quiz Bowl Team

"The John Stark Quiz Bowl team looks forward to hosting teams from all over the state in their Ides of March Tournament on March 15.



JSRHS Student Delegates to Model UN Conference

Sixteen John Stark Students participated in the thirteenth annual Boston Invitational Model United Nations Conference in February. They joined 1,400 delegates at the historic Boston Park Plaza Hotel and Towers in downtown Boston for a weekend full of debate and learning.

The following John Stark students attended: Ben Trumble, Devon Lizotte, Jacob Dowd, Joseph Muzzy, Gretchen Wagner, Megan McNally, Nancy Gregory, Ryan Compagna, Nathaniel Moore, Hazel Johnstone, Lyndsay Kenney, Edward Carr, Hailey Nase, Olivia French, Kamini Jorgensen, and Bryce Moser.



Unified Basketball Team

On February 11 a new team here at Stark played its first home game. Our General Hawks came away with a win 31-30 against the Bow Falcons. The General Hawks are a Unified basketball team, combined with athletes from Hopkinton High School. They have just finished a five game season with a 3=2 record. Unified sports are sanctioned by the NHIAA and provide athletes with a disability an opportunity to play with peers on a high school team This is also a chance to learn new skills and make new friendships while competing on a higher level. Our next season will be participating on a volleyball team that will also compete on a high school level. Let the games continue!!



A Note from the Athletic Director

Spring Sports Schedule to start March 24!!

The following requirements must be met before a student is eligible to participate for a Spring Team:

- 1) Parents need to complete the on-line registration process at <http://www.familyid.com>. Registration begins March 12.
- 2) All freshman and juniors must take the ImPACT Concussion test if you did not take it this past fall or winter. Any Sophomores or Seniors that did not take an ImPACT test in 2012 or 2013 must take one this Spring. The ImPACT test will be offered on March 18 and March 20, starting at 3:15 pm. No advance sign-up is required but the on-line registration process must be completed prior to taking the ImPACT test.
- 3) Students must have passed at least 5 classes in the second quarter to be eligible to participate for a Spring team. A student that passed only four classes can see Mr. Searles to discuss applying for an academic waiver.
- 4) A current physical must be on-file with the Health Office. For Freshman, the date of exam on the physical form must be March 1, 2013 or later to be considered eligible. For Sophomores, the date of exam on the physical form must be July 1, 2012 or later to be considered eligible. For Juniors and Seniors, the date of exam on the physical form must be March 25, 2012 or later to be considered eligible.

More information on Spring Sports can be found on the John Stark Athletic Department website, <http://wordpress3.jsrhs.net/athletics/>. Please contact Mr. Searles, the Athletic Director at mark.searles@sau24.org or 529-5301 with any questions.

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In celebration of Weare's 250th Anniversary
Saturday, March 22 at 7 p.m.
Weare Town Hall

The Other Side of the Midnight Ride: A Visit With Rachel Revere

In this living history program, Joan Gattorna as Rachel Revere, tells a remarkable story of tea, trouble and revolution related by the woman who rode through life with Paul Revere. Rachel Revere tells of the Boston Tea Party, the Midnight Ride and the Siege of Boston. See these events through the eyes of a woman who engineered the escape of her family from occupied Boston and smuggled money to the Sons of Liberty. Meet the woman who kept the home fires burning while her husband fanned the flames of Revolution!

The New Hampshire Humanities Council and the Weare Historical Society sponsored this program. Refreshments will be provided.

A special experience for adults, high school, middle school and elementary school students in second grade and up.

This program is free and open to the public.

The Pine Tree Riot

From the archives of the Weare Historical Society

Did you know that the Town of Weare rebelled against England before the Boston Tea Party occurred?

The Pine Tree Riot occurred at Quimby's Inn (see millstone near the Avon Store on Eastman Hill) in South Weare on April 14, 1772. The event that spring morning was precipitated by men from Weare and surrounding towns illegally cutting white pine trees reserved for masts for the Royal Navy. But there was much more to it. Timber was to the world at that time what oil is to the world today a finite resource for which nations competed.

When the first shipment of masts from Portsmouth landed in England in 1634, England had already suffered deforestation. In order to dominate the high seas, new sources of abundant timber for shipbuilding were needed. "No ships, after all, could catch the wind without as many as twenty-three masts, yards, and spars varying in length and diameter from the bulky mainmast to its subordinate parts." Although New Hampshire's white pine was not as hard as Europe's, its height and diameter were superior. It also weighed less and retained resin longer, giving the ships a sea life as long as two decades.

When granting lands in America in 1690, King William prohibited the cutting of white pine over two feet in diameter. In 1722, under the reign of George I, parliament passed a law that reduced the diameter to one foot, required a license to cut white pine, and established fines for infractions.

This law was basically ignored until John Wentworth became governor in 1767. Appointed Surveyor of the King's Woods, he recognized the revenue potential and appointed deputies to carry out the law. He conducted his own inspections of mill yards in the Piscataquog Valley by having a servant drive him around in his coach.

Before settlers could clear the land or build cabins, barns, or meetinghouses, the king's sanction, a broad arrow mark, was required on trees reserved for the Royal Navy. The deputies charged them a "good, round sum" to mark the trees and for the license required to cut the rest. No wonder the law became unpopular. The consequences involved arrests and fines. Contraband white pine already sawed into logs could be seized and a large settlement required; if not paid, authorities sold them at public auction.

In the winter of 1771-72, a deputy Surveyor of the King's Woods found and marked for seizure 270 mast-worthy logs at Clement's mill in Oil Mill (now called Riverdale) in South Weare. He fined the log-cutters from Weare and from nearby towns where illegal logs were also found. Men from other towns paid the fines, but those from Weare refused. Consequently, the Weare men were labeled "notorious offenders."

The county sheriff, Benjamin Whiting, Esq., of Hollis, and his deputy, John Quigley, Esq., of Francestown, were charged with delivering warrants and making arrests in the king's name. On April 13, 1772, they galloped into Weare and found major offender Ebenezer Mudgett, who promised to pay his fine the next day. The officials then retired to

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nearby Quimby's Inn for an overnight stay.

News that they had come for Mudgett flew through town. Imagine wild rides on horseback that night and frantic knocking on doors: The sheriff has come for Ebenezer! They met at Mudgett's house and hatched a plan. The following morning more than twenty men with blackened faces and switches in hand rushed into Whiting's room led by Mudgett:

Whiting seized his pistols and would have shot some of them, but they caught him, took away his small guns, held him by his arms and legs up from the floor, his face down, two men on each side, and with their rods beat him to their hearts' content. They crossed out the account against them of all logs cut, drawn and forfeited, on his bare back....They made him wish he had never heard of pine trees fit for masting the royal navy. Whiting said: "They almost killed me."

As for Deputy Quigley, the Weare men wrested the floorboards from the room above his and proceeded to beat him with long poles. Nor did the officials' horses escape the men's wrath. They cropped the animals' ears and sheared their manes and tails. To "jeers, jokes and shouts ringing in their ears," the sheriff and deputy rode toward Goffstown and Mast Road, named for the logs that were moved overland to the sea and off to England for the king's ships.

The Weare men were ultimately arraigned and paid a light fine, but their rebellion against the crown, which preceded the Boston Tea Party (1773), helped set the stage for the Revolution. People in New Hampshire were probably more offended by the pine tree law than the Sugar Act of 1764; the Stamp Act (a rebellion that took place in Portsmouth, NH, in 1765); and the duty on tea, passed in 1773, which precipitated the Boston Tea Party. According to Weare's 1888 history, "The only reason why the 'Rebellion' at Portsmouth and the 'Boston tea party' are better known than our Pine Tree Riot is because they have had better historians."

JOHN STARK REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT ARTICLES 2014 WARRANT

To the inhabitants of the School District in the towns of Henniker and Weare qualified to vote in District affairs:

You are hereby notified to meet at the John Stark Regional High School Cafetorium on Thursday, February 6, 2014 at 7:00 p.m. to act on the following subjects: Ballot voting will be on Tuesday, March 11, 2014 at The Henniker Community School, Henniker (7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.) and the Weare Middle School, Weare (7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.)

To choose by nonpartisan ballot, the following School District officers:

1 School Board Member – (Henniker)	3 year term
1 School Board Member – (Weare)	3 year term
1 School Board Moderator	1 year term

Shall the District receive the reports of agents, auditors, committees and other officers chosen, as printed in the Annual Report, or to take any other action in relation thereto? (Majority vote required.)

Shall the District set the salaries of the School Board and compensation of any other agents of the District as printed in the 2014-2015 Budget, or to take any other action in relation thereto? (THIS WARRANT ARTICLE IS SUPPORTED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD.) (Majority vote required.) (The 2014-2015 amount is included in Article #3, the operating budget.)

Shall the District raise and appropriate, as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special or separate warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$12,866,824 (Twelve Million, Eight Hundred Sixty Six Thousand, Eight Hundred Twenty Four Dollars)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$12,866,847 (Twelve Million, Eight Hundred Sixty Six Thousand, Eight Hundred Forty Seven Dollars), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the District or by law or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (THIS WARRANT ARTICLE IS SUPPORTED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD.) (Majority vote required.)

Shall the District vote to approve the cost item included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the School Board and the John Stark Regional High School Teachers Association which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Year	Estimated Increase
2014-2015	\$114,900 (One Hundred Fourteen Thousand, Nine Hundred Dollars)

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2015-2016 \$ 35,023 (Thirty Five Thousand, Twenty Three Dollars)
2016-2017 \$ 93,384 (Ninety Three Thousand, Three Hundred Eighty Four Dollars)
And further raise and appropriate the sum of \$114,900 (One Hundred Fourteen Thousand, Nine Hundred Dollars) for the school year 2014-2015, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year. (THIS WARRANT ARTICLE IS SUPPORTED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD.) (This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article #3, the operating budget.) (Majority vote required.)

Shall the District if Article #4 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article #4 cost items only? (THIS WARRANT ARTICLE IS SUPPORTED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD.) (Majority vote required.)

To see if the John Stark School District will vote to approve the cost item included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the School Board and the John Stark Support Staff which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Year	Estimated Increase
2014-2015	\$45,463 (Forty Five Thousand, Four Hundred Sixty Three Dollars)
2015-2016	\$33,234 (Thirty Three Thousand, Two Hundred Thirty Four Dollars)

And further raise and appropriate the sum of \$45,463 (Forty Five Thousand, Four Hundred Sixty Three Dollars) for the school year 2014-2015, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal year. (THIS WARRANT ARTICLE IS SUPPORTED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD.) (This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article #3, the operating budget.) (Majority vote required.)

Shall the District if Article #6 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Article #6 cost items only? (THIS WARRANT ARTICLE IS SUPPORTED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD.) (Majority vote required.)

Shall the District raise and appropriate 25% of any surplus remaining at the close of the current fiscal year, up to the amount of \$80,000 (Eighty Thousand Dollars) to be placed in the John Stark District Buildings & Grounds Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund as established in March 2003, for the purpose of providing for any future upgrading, maintenance or repair of the buildings and grounds? (THIS WARRANT ARTICLE IS SUPPORTED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD.) (This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article #3, the operating budget.) (Majority vote required.)

To see if the School District will vote to authorize, indefinitely until rescinded, to retain year-end unassigned general funds in an amount not to exceed, in any fiscal year, 2.5 percent of the current fiscal year's net assessment, in accordance with RSA 198:4-b, II. Such fund balance retained may only be used to reduce the tax rate or for emergencies to be approved by the Department of Education under RSA 32:11. (THIS WARRANT ARTICLE IS SUPPORTED BY THE SCHOOL BOARD.) (Majority vote required.)

Given under our hands at said Weare this 9th day of January, 2014.

Mark Zuckerman, Chair
Zach Lawson
David Getzin
Anne Mellin
Jill Dagenais

A true copy of Warrant -- Attest

Mark Zuckerman, Chair
Zach Lawson
David Getzin
Anne Mellin
Jill Dagenais

Use the link below to find the warrant articles for the Towns of Weare and Henniker as well as the warrant articles for the schools of Weare, Henniker and John Stark Regional High School:

<http://www.jsrhs.net/index.php/information-news/general-information/303-2014-henniker-and-weare-warrant-articles>

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Educationally Speaking *by Principal Christopher Corkery, M.Ed.*

I had the good fortune to cover an Advisory group last Monday for one of our several teachers who were out with the flu. (Advisory is our mentoring program in which students meet in small groups with a faculty advisor to find ways to connect with the school and to stay focused on their goals.) There was a planned activity, but I gave them the option to play the game, or to just have a chat with their principal. They took me up on my offer, and we had a wonderful conversation. My own boys are in eighth and ninth grade, so I figure I know as much as any parent about what's on in teenagers minds (meaning very little). I tossed out a couple of leading questions and we ended up digging into that age-old, first day of school question, with a twist. Instead of asking them what they did last summer, we talked about what they wanted to do this coming summer.

Getting our young adults to become more Career and College Ready means focusing them on personal goals that blend their passion with their talents. Employers who offer jobs in career paths that can support a family don't look to hire people who just want to make money for themselves; colleges don't either. They want to surround themselves with people who are passionate about their field; people who like to learn and grow; people who want to help the business or college achieve their mission-- lots of fluffy words, but somewhere in there is a nugget of truth, so back to the conversation with the kids.

Getting ready for graduation doesn't mean just working hard during the school year. It means having a plan for the summers in between. How many college campuses will you visit before your son or daughter asks you to underwrite the equivalent of a mortgage for their education? Whether it's learning about life through work or volunteering, or learning about their passion through job shadowing or a course, your students will do well to make the best use of their time. It will come through in their interviews and their essays and gain them more opportunities.

Soon, our conversation turned towards the new diploma options and the expectation that each student take seven credit bearing courses each semester. With the new flex block schedule we are implementing next year, each student will have the equivalent of a 40 minute study period each day in which they can meet with teachers, makeup missed work, or just get their school work done. By taking seven courses (instead of eight), the students will have the equivalent of two study halls every two days.

The last thing a college admissions team wants to see is a candidate "taking it easy" just as they are about to embark on a spending spree for four years of education that costs as much as a house. Sure, some have bemoaned that they wanted to "take it easy their senior year," but when I ask them who is paying for their college education I get a sheepish look. Students should strive to complete required coursework as freshmen and sophomores so that they can take electives that they are passionate about as upperclassmen. What about the student who wanted to work to save for his coursework at NHTI? "Go and do it," I said, "but let's connect you with our Work-Study teacher and have you earn work study credits (up to two) while you earn money and learn more about the workforce with your teacher."

Students who elect to attend the Concord Regional Technical Center will only have room in their schedule for six courses, but what about the student who wants to take five Advanced Placement courses and only one more elective? Sounds good to me! Students are expected to take "seven credit bearing courses," but, as we discussed in their class meetings, if they want to take fewer than seven, they should expect to have to sell their four year plan to their guidance counselor. As with every change, we expect that there will be a lot of questions we could not foresee. The guidance director and I will review our progress and requests for exceptions to see if we can't better articulate the expectations and revise our program of studies as we go forward. Remember, it's about developing Career and College Ready graduates, one at a time.

March Events

SAT dates are March 8, May 3, June 7

Go to <http://www.collegeboard.org> for registration information

3/5/14 - School Board meeting at 6:30

3/6/14 - Parent Coffee with the Principal at 7:30 am

3/8/14 - French Exchange students arrive

3/9/14 - Daylight Savings starts - Clocks ahead 1 hour

3/11/14 - Voting Day

3/16-3/19 - Spring Show, Musical "Once On This Island"

3/19/14 - Winter Sports Awards at 5:30 pm

3/25/14 - Early Release - Students dismissed at 12:30

3/27/14 - Band & Chorus trip to Boston Symphony

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Friends of Weare Public Library Indoor Yard Sale

SPRING CLEANING?? WHAT TO DO WITH ALL THAT STUFF??? The Friends of the Weare Public Library, which sponsors the annual Book and Bake Sale in August each year, is holding an INDOOR YARD SALE on SATURDAY, MARCH 29th, from 9-2 at the Town Hall. Donations of your "stuff" (with the exception of clothing and furniture) will be gratefully accepted at the Town Hall on Friday, MARCH 28th, from 1-6 p.m. All proceeds from the sale will directly benefit children and adult programming at the Library.

Looking ahead...

April Events

4/ 4/14 - Quarter 3 Ends

4/ 9/14 - Junior Parent College Night at 6:30, in the Cafe

4/10/14 - Financial Aid Award Letter Night at 6:30, in the Cafe

4/11/14 - Teacher Association Meeting

4/15/14 - Blood Drive sponsored by Leo Club

4/17-4/18/14 - Intra-Session

4/21-4/25/14 - Spring Recess

SAT dates are May 3, June 7

Go to <http://www.collegeboard.org> for registration information

*** Is it a snow day? Parents/students should receive an AlertNow message. You can also check the Snow Line at 529-8000, WMUR, and local radio stations.

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