

NASHOBA Pride

The Nashoba Regional High School community works together to achieve high intellectual and ethical standards while discovering and developing the gifts and talents of all. Each member of our school community recognizes his or her role and responsibility in creating a learning environment based upon respect, trust, teamwork and enthusiasm.

Jeremy Roche, Principal
Tracey Calo, Assistant Principal
Brian Cote, Assistant Principal

High School Office (978)779-2257

<http://nrhs.nrsd.net>

Guidance Office (978)779-0122

Volume 11 Issue 1

September 2009

From the Principal's Desk

To all members of our Chieftain community, welcome back to NRHS!! I am hopeful that it has been a great summer and will be an even better school year. We have been busy preparing the school over the summer as we prepare for the upcoming year. There have been a few new developments that I would like to share.

First, welcome to our newest class, the Class of 2013. In addition, welcome to all new members of our school. Next, we have some new faculty members to the Nashoba community who bring with them a variety of experiences and insights. Carol Chan, mathematics, comes to us from Hale Middle School where she was an instructional technology teacher. Ann DeCristofaro, mathematics, also comes to us from Hale Middle School. Ann brings many years of experience in a variety of settings to enhance our school and math department. Rhonda Jardine-Yeats, chemistry, joins us after numerous years and varied experiences at Tewksbury High School. Sarah Daoudi, ASC Directed Study Tutor, will be shifting to general education support and working with upperclassmen. Michelle Hirth, Life Skills 2, will be joining our special education team while seeking to further strengthen the inclusive connection of Life Skills in our school at large. Finally, Jamie Tucker, Life Skills 2 Instructional Aide, will be continuing to work with our Life Skills program in a different role.

As we begin the 2009-2010 school year, there are numerous areas of the school program and process that our community should be aware. First, long awaited curriculum guides in a wide variety of subject areas will be made available to all parents and student via our Student and Parent SharePoint website this fall. This will enable parents, students, and community members the opportunity to review our curriculum materials that are used in the respective classes and units. Additionally, we have modified our master schedule with the goal of enhancing the student lunch period. Essentially, the response to last year's rotation was very positive. There were some areas that we need to address, specifically teaching strategies geared towards the longer instructional period, and we began several initiatives

last school year that will continue during this one. With respect to the schedule modification, we need to move to four lunches as three is simply too crowded for the growing population we have. By adding a fourth lunch, there will be a more relaxed atmosphere in the cafeteria with shorter queue times and more seating options. We are hopeful that with the efficiencies that PowerLunch added that this modification will make that bit of downtime even more enjoyable. Finally, we received the update from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) that our accreditation status has been reviewed and maintained as full accreditation without any warning or remediation areas. The full report can be reviewed on our website under the *News* tab and the *Accreditation* subfolder (August 10th, 2009 Response from NEASC).

Clearly, our District and school faced some stiff challenges at the end of the last school year. I am pleased to note that NRHS emerged from the end-of-year budget discussions essentially intact. Though we did lose the capacity of a few sections in mathematics, we will be able to maintain reasonable class sizes and all of the various course offerings that our students are accustomed to and deserve. As 2009-2010 progresses, there will likely be challenges to the federal, state, and local budgets; however, I can assure you that our faculty is committed to ensuring all students learn while maintaining our mission in helping students discover and develop their gifts and talents.

The school year begins on Wednesday, September 2nd at 7:40 a.m. Students will connect with their graduating class homeroom teachers for an overview of the student handbook, an update to their locker assignment, and a review of their schedule. Please call for clarification for any questions about the opening week and utilize our web site as a resource for information as it contains many details and information pertinent to students and parents.

There is much to be excited about at Nashoba Regional High School. We have been recognized by *Newsweek* again as a top performing high school, and we are still a

(Continued on page 2)

Massachusetts Compass School. As such, we intend to continue our focus on student learning in an effort to ensure that each student develops to his fullest potential. We look forward to what will surely be an exceptional school year. Thank you for your support and interest.

Attendance Policy:

Nashoba Regional High School has made some changes to the attendance policy in order to comply with Massachusetts General Law (Chapter 76). The changes occur specifically to the number of allowed absences per course and the process by which to document those absences.

Students will be allowed 14 unexcused absences total for a year long course (4 credits) and 7 unexcused absences for a semester course (2 credits). This is a slight change from years past when the allowable limit was 18 and 9 respectively. As noted previously, we needed to come into compliance with the state regulations on attendance, thus the change. Another area that we have modified is with respect to parent notes to excuse absences. In the past several school years, parent notes did not excuse absences for illness. This year, parent notes will excuse the first 7 absences; all other absences must be excused by formal documentation which is outlined in the student handbook on page 33 (<http://nrhs.nrsd.net/index.php?id=70>).

The full law and district policies can be reviewed on the District website per policy JE (<http://www.nrsd.net/assets/files/School%20Committee/POLJ.pdf>) or by reviewing the Massachusetts General Laws, specifically Chapter 76.1, 76.2, 76.4, and 76.19. If you have any questions, please contact a member of the administrative team at the high school.

Parent and Senior Exit Survey:

I would like to thank the community for taking time to complete the Parent Satisfaction Survey at the end of June. We were pleased with both the number of respondents (121) and the fact that the results indicated that the vast majority of our parent community feels that the overall educational experience has been positive. Notable areas from the survey are as follows:

- ✦ 77% of respondents felt the relationship between faculty members and students is outstanding or positive;
- ✦ 88% felt that a culture of respect exists at NRHS;
- ✦ 71% noted that communication was excellent/good, and most importantly;
- ✦ 78% explained that the overall academic experience was excellent/good.

Clearly, we were heartened by the results that support the hard work and commitment of the faculty and staff

here at NRHS. That aside, we also appreciate the critique and suggestions for improvement as it helps to support initiatives for change while providing an insight that is extremely valuable and sometimes hard to gather. For example, there were numerous comments specific to incorporating more seminars to introduce students to various careers and vocations. That is a plan that is in place in various forms this upcoming school year via a career orientation day on October 30th and through career/college planning seminars offered by our guidance counselors. That was a specific example of the feedback that is not only useful but helpful in determining our course of action as an institution. The full survey results can be reviewed on our website in October after our NRHS School Council has an opportunity to review the results in their September meeting.

To summarize, as one parent aptly noted, [“Set a goal to be the best school district in the state. . . the one thing would be to aim high, execute and promote that this is the goal.”](#) This statement captures the focus that our faculty envisions for the future of NRHS. Again, thanks for the participation in this important survey and please look for future surveys that will help NRHS gather information from all members of our community.

Chemistry Olympiad Finalist- Yivan Jiang:

I am pleased to pass along some positive information about a member of our school. Yivan Jiang has received high honors (Top 50) in the 2009 United States National Chemistry Olympiad Competition. Yivan learned about the Chemistry Olympiad after chatting with a senior from another high school. He just made the deadline for the local competition where he placed 4th and qualified for the National competition. He then focused a great deal of effort to study Chemistry in advance of the Nationals and made the top 50. He intends to continue with the Chemistry Olympiad in the future while also encouraging more of our students to participate. More information about the program can be reviewed at the following website: http://portal.acs.org/portal/acs/corg/content?nfpb=true&pageLabel=PP_SUPERARTICLE&node_id=1019&use_sec=false&sec_url_var=region1&uuid=dcf51d6d-d1b8-4bc3-99e6-2444ddf8a3ff

Destination Imagination (DI) at Nashoba 2009 - 2010

Hi everyone, just a reminder that the DI program will be starting up soon. For those of you who may not be aware of the Destination Imagination program, Destination ImagiNation is a volunteer-driven organization devoted to helping kids gain practical life skills through interesting, entertaining and mind-boggling challenges.

(Continued on page 3)

Teams of up to seven students choose their challenge and work developing their solution. Volunteer team managers (parents, teachers or community volunteers) facilitate the group, but cannot give technical or other assistance. Kids are empowered to design, produce and present all of their own work. Teams present their solutions at regional and state tournaments, which demonstrate to teams that there are many ways to solve the same problem. High scoring teams may advance to the ultimate creativity showdown, Global Finals, held each May at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

The Destination ImagiNation™ competition has two components:

Instant Challenges teach students to respond quickly to an unplanned event by requiring them to solve a fun, surprise challenge on the spot. Teams must work together to quickly assess the situation and generate a creative response within just a few minutes.

Central Challenges require teams to utilize each member's skills in such diverse areas as art, writing, technology, performance, engineering, and music to create a unique solution that can take from several weeks to several months to develop. Students learn to work together as they practice project management skills by meeting deadlines imposed by tournament dates and completing their solution within a specified budget. Teams present their solutions before a live audience and panel of appraisers. Scoring is based on criteria specified in the challenge, which usually includes analysis of the team's innovation, risk-taking and teamwork. Teams may also choose to be non-competitive.

With today's corporations looking for young people who can work on a team to brainstorm, problem solve, and develop solutions all within a time limit and budget, Destination ImagiNation offers a fun way to get there.

If you would like to join a team this year, I will be holding an **informational meeting on Tuesday, October 8th at 7 p.m. in the High School Cafe**. I will answer any questions you may have as well as have copies of the full challenges for you to review and sign up for a team. If you can't make this meeting, please give me a call or send me an email. You can go to the Massachusetts DI site at www.madikids.org and you will find additional information about the DI program.

A DI mail box is set up in the main office with registration forms and Challenge summaries. We look forward to a great year as the 5 challenges look to be fun, interesting and of course challenging. If you have any questions or if anyone would like to coach a team or be an appraiser

for a team, please feel free to contact Debbie Woods at dwoods@aol.com or 978-897-1779.

Here is a summary of each of the five DI challenges to give you an idea of what's in store this year.

Challenge A: Direct Deposit

Teams will present a team-created Story about making a decision. They will design and build Delivery Equipment that delivers Objects to a Target. Teams will analyze ways to increase the value of Objects and consider risk versus reward through strategic delivery to Targets. The major focuses of this Challenge are Engineering, Cost/Benefit Analysis, Innovation and Design Process, Technical Design and Construction, Experimentation, Mathematics, Communication, Theater Arts, and Teamwork. Standards addressed in this Challenge are Mathematics, Science, Technology, Economics, Research, Theater, Innovation and Design, Performance Skills, Working with Others.

Challenge B: DI-BOT

Teams will learn about Robotic Technology and the changes it causes. They will create an original Story which envisions and shows how at least one character's life is changed by Robotic Technology. They will design, create, and integrate a device called DI-BOT, which completes a motion task, into the Story. Teams will create a Method to change at least one prop or set piece, or part(s) of the prop or set piece, into DI-BOT or part of DI-BOT. Teams will create a scene change that enhances the Presentation by providing an effective transitional link from one scene to another. The major focuses of this Challenge are Robotic Technology, Technical Design and Construction, Science, Theater Arts, and Teamwork. Standards addressed in this Challenge are Research, Science, Mathematics, Theater, and Working with Others.

Challenge C: You're Gonna Flip!

Teams will present an Original Story dramatizing how a Character experiences a Flip (a change of point of view) about someone or something. Teams will design, construct, and feature at least one Puppet as a character in the Story. They will create a piece of Live Visual Art that is to be completely produced LIVE during the Presentation. The major focuses of this Challenge are Storytelling, Puppet Design and Construction, Puppetry, Theater Arts, Visual Arts. Standards addressed in this Challenge are Visual Arts, Theater, Writing, Speaking, and Working with Others.

Challenge D: Do or DI

Teams will create a five-minute Improvisational Skit about a Threatened Thing in danger of extinction. They will present the skit using a Stock Character. Teams will

(Continued on page 4)

incorporate props and/or scenery to enhance the performance. They will integrate a randomly selected Unimpressive Superpower. The major focuses in this Challenge are Improvisational acting, Story Development, Teamwork, and Research Skills. Standards addressed in this Challenge are Theater Arts, Reading, Writing, Listening, Speaking, Research, and Working with Others.

Challenge E: Breaking DI News

Teams will design, build, and test a Structure made only of newsprint and glue. Teams will reduce the props and scenery used in the Presentation to fit inside a 30 in x 24 in x 48 in (76.20 cm x 60.96 cm x 121.92 cm) container. They will Reuse a story about a Newsworthy Event in a nation other than their own. They will Recycle newsprint by using it creatively in a costume or prop. The major focuses of this Challenge are Structural Engineering, Materials Science, International Relations, Research, Innovation and Design Process, Mathematics, Theater Arts, Teamwork. Standards addressed in this Challenge are Mathematics, Science, Behavioral Studies, Technology, Theater Arts, and Working with Others.

September Friends of Drama News

Nashoba Drama needs you! All students and parents are welcome to join us in putting together another year of terrific productions by participating in the Drama Society and the Friends of Drama. Our first meetings will be on **Wednesday, September 9** in the NRHS auditorium lobby. Drama Society will meet from 6 - 7 p.m.; Friends of Drama meets at 7:00 p.m.

We begin our year promoting Performing Arts at Nashoba with the annual **Friends of the Arts Ad Campaign**, done in partnership with the Friends of Music. Businesses, families, and community members support students' efforts by purchasing ads that appear throughout the year in the program booklets for each concert or drama production. Audience members are encouraged to patronize the businesses and services advertised at every performance. Students are grateful for the support that allows them to provide exceptional musical and dramatic productions. It's win-win all the way around! This is our **major** fundraiser – your help is needed in soliciting and following-up on ads! The commitment is a short-term one—work is completed by mid-October in time for printing programs for the first show of the year. **Please join us in this effort.** Contact Kathy Quirk (kathq@comcast.net) if you can help.

Auditions for the first production of the year are scheduled for September 14 & 15 from 6:30 – 9:00 p.m. in the auditorium. (Note: students audition on only **one** night.) Play rehearsals will be 6:00 - 8:30 Mondays and Wednesdays with an occasional weekend (mostly for the leads). Parents and students who can help build and

paint sets are welcome to join the action once the play is cast. Mark your calendars now for performances on November 20-22 in the Nashoba auditorium.

The Drama Society handles the face-painting booth at the **Bolton Fair**. The students endured the scorching-four day event in August this year. It's always a popular booth and a fun way for students to raise funds to support Nashoba Drama. Thanks to all who participated and made it a great success.

We're looking forward to seeing you at the **FOD meeting on September 9**. For more information, contact FOD Co-presidents Diane Sestito (DianeSestito@aol.com) or Kathy Quirk (kathq@comcast.net). Students, for Drama Society contact Co-presidents Taylor Leaming (lleaming@comcast.net) or Courtney Giovinazzo (prettyinpink1991@comcast.net).

NRHS Endowment Fund--Board Members Needed!

The NRHS Endowment Fund is looking for new members. All are welcome to our next meeting on Thursday, September 10 at 7:00 p.m. in the NRHS Academic Support Center.

The NRHS Endowment Fund is a 501(3)c, non-profit organization, established in 1999 to fund enrichment activities. We raise funds and fulfill various grant requests submitted by faculty members for enrichment programs and pilot programs as well as for equipment and materials that are outside the regular school budget. This past spring we funded the purchase of a new greenhouse for the Science Department as well as supported the summer reading program. We also sponsor the Mary Ann Sessions Educator of the Year award to recognize an outstanding faculty member.

Being a member of the Endowment Fund Board is an excellent and easy way to become involved at Nashoba. The time commitment is modest; however, the returns to the students and teachers are great.

Please contact Christel Conlin at christelc@comcast.net for more information.

SPED PAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council) Launches Year

The **SPED PAC (Special Education Parent Advisory Council)** will meet at 7:15 p.m. on Tuesday, September 29th at Nashoba Regional High School. The evening's discussion will center on inclusion and acceptance of special needs students at all levels throughout the district.

(Continued on page 5)

Join us for a presentation and discussion about the special education program and ways to help our students in the school and community at large.

The evening will also include the annual election of Nashoba SPED PAC officers. Though housed at Nashoba Regional High School, the SPED PAC is a district wide group, and all those interested in the topic are welcome.

Fall SPED PAC meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, September 29, Wednesday, October 21, and Wednesday, November 18. Meetings include presentations on a variety of subjects and provide a forum for interaction with other parents, professionals and community members who have experience with children with special needs. The group posts information from other organizations at <http://nashobaspedpac.googlepages.com> and on the NRSD Special Education NEWS page. Check this site and the <http://nrzd.net> SPED PAC page for more information as it's available.

To be added to the monthly email distribution, please contact Joan Finger at zootergroup@rcn.com or (978) 337 5132 or (978) 779-6046.

Register NOW for Soccer Program Pairing Special Athletes with Typical Age-Mates

Nashoba Unified Sports (the same group that ran the basketball program last winter) is launching a fall **soccer program** on Sunday afternoons beginning in September and continuing weekly through November 8th. Practices will be in Stow, though exact locations for all events are yet to be finalized. Join us for the meet and greet on September 6th at 2:30 and the first official practice on September 13th. Time 2:30 – 4 p.m. If you/your child might be interested (even if it's only a "maybe"), please let us know now. For more information or to express interest, please contact either Joan Finger at zootergroup@rcn.com or Bob Moalli bmoalli@comcast.net. We'll let you know the exact location of practices when that is known. The basketball program will resume in January.

Equipment: soccer socks, shin guards and cleats are recommended, but *not* required. If you have old equipment to donate or are in need of equipment, please let us know.

Kids are welcome to come to some or all of the sessions. Those who are unsure may simply come to one session to check it out. Elementary, middle school and high school athletes interested in helping coach or play as part of the team with the special needs students should also contact Bob Moalli or Joan Finger.



NASHOBA REGIONAL HIGH SCHOOL
FRIENDS OF THE ARTS
2009-2010

Our talented and enthusiastic young actors and musicians strive each year to enhance their knowledge and abilities in the Performing Arts while providing award-winning performances for the greater community. Through participation in the Friends of the Arts annual Ad Campaign as a Family or Business Sponsor, you can support their efforts *and* obtain publicity for your business. Your family sponsorship (\$25) or business advertisement (\$50 for business card) will appear in the program for each of the following performances:

Fall Play – Nov. 20-22

Holiday Choral Concert - Dec. 17

Winter Band Concert - Feb. 5*

Winter Choral Concert – Mar. 31*

Band Pops Concert - May 14

Jazz Concert - Dec. 4*

Class Play Competition - Jan. 22*

Spring Musical - Mar. 20, 21, & 22

MICCA Preview Band Concert-April 6

Choral Pops Concert – May 20

Your donation assists Nashoba in maintaining the high quality of its music and drama programs. Funds raised benefit the students *directly*, providing items that the school budget cannot support. These include musical instruments, travel for students taking part in district and state music competitions, drama sets and costumes, royalties for scripts, and scholarships for graduating seniors.

Please detach and complete the form below and send it along with your check (made out to Friends of the Arts) to:
NRHS Friends of the Arts, P.O. Box 492, Bolton, MA 01740.

If you are purchasing a business ad, either e-mail artwork to Maria Pappas: mpappasdesign@comcast.net
Subject line: Nashoba FOA, or send a clean, black and white business card (newspaper ads not acceptable). If you wish to make a change on the business card do so on a separate piece of paper. We can adjust the size. If you have no artwork, tell us what you want and we will create it for you. **Deadline is Wednesday, Oct. 7th, 2009.**
Please call Diane Sestito at (978) 562-8577 for more information.

We appreciate your support for these talented students and hope to see you at their plays and concerts! Please visit our web sites: www.NashobaDrama.com.

Name of Family/Sponsor(\$25) _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Business Ad: (Business Card \$50; 1/4Page \$75; 1/2Page \$100; Full Page \$150; Inside Cover: \$200; Back Cover \$250)

Name of Advertiser _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Contact Name _____ Fax Number _____