

The **Pride** of Biddeford

Spring 2009

Renovation Plans for Biddeford High School

The Biddeford School Committee and Biddeford City Council have given their approval to a concept plan to present to the City's voters regarding a major overhaul of the existing Biddeford High School. In this article is a general overview of the project. For more information on the BHS building project, please refer to the school district website: www.biddschools.org and go to the "Biddeford High School Renovation Plan" link.

The existing Biddeford High School currently serves about 960 students in grades 9 through 12. The school is located on an 8.5+ acre site just to the west of downtown Biddeford. The original building was constructed in 1961 with the major addition constructed in 1971. The total gross area of the building is approximately 194,300 sf. On the same site as the high school, operating independently is the Biddeford Regional Center of Technology (BRCOT) which was built about 1969. It is a two-story building of approximately 49,500 sf. that serves Biddeford students and students from the surrounding communities as well. Across Maplewood Avenue from the high school is an additional 8+ acre site that is utilized for an athletic field and student parking. This property was acquired in 1977.

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*Rendering by Harriman
Architects & Engineers*



Renovation Plans for Biddeford High School cont'd

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The original 1961 building is three stories high; ground floor. The three-story wing parallel with Maplewood Avenue is predominately classrooms with science labs on the ground floor and general classrooms on the first and second floors. The ground floor also includes industrial arts rooms and locker rooms. The administrative offices, cafeteria, kitchen and Steve White Gym are located on the first floor.

The 1971 addition is also three stories high with a partial basement that houses the Adult Ed Offices. Like the original building, the three-story classroom wing parallel to Maplewood Avenue is primarily general classrooms. Science labs again occupy the ground floor while the library occupies part of the first floor. Art classrooms are located on the second floor. The 1971 addition also included the new Tiger Gym and locker rooms on the ground floor. The Little Theater and band room are located above the locker rooms and are about a half-flight above the first floor level. (See tab 6 for plans of the existing building).

Prior to the construction of the 1971 addition, the student population had steadily increased to around 1,200 students. The addition did relieve overcrowded conditions and provided needed space for the programs offered at the time. However, specialized education programs have changed considerably over the past twenty years putting increased demand on limited space. While the high school population has seen a modest decline in recent years, the space needs for the ever-changing programs and required special services have increased tremendously.

Many of the programming deficiencies that have been identified through the work of this study were highlighted in the 2006 NEASC report. NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) is the regional accrediting association which establishes standards for all levels of education. Failure to correct the deficiencies could result in loss of accreditation for the high school. (See Tab 6 for a copy of the pertinent portions of the report related to the noted deficiencies.)



The Pride of Biddeford

Published by the Biddeford School Committee as a public service to the citizens of Biddeford.

- Joane Twomey, *Chair and Mayor,*
City of Biddeford
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Renovation Plans for Biddeford High School cont'd

The building codes, and in particular the life safety codes, have changed significantly since the original building was built and even more so since the addition was built. Furthermore, ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) was implemented in the early 1970's that required all buildings be made fully accessible by the handicapped and disabled. The original building did not have an elevator, but when the 1971 addition was constructed an elevator was added, making the three original and three new main floors accessible. However, because of the multiple levels on the ground floor, there are still many parts of the building that are not fully accessible to all students. In addition, the building lacks an automatic sprinkler system and current alarm and notification systems.

The heating, ventilating, plumbing and electrical systems are out of date by today's standards and are in need of substantial upgrading. The 1961 building included baseboard heating but lacked proper ventilation. The 1971 addition included unit ventilators in each room which have become noisy and obsolete. Instructional technology, which was virtually non-existent when the building was constructed, has been minimally added throughout the building over the years. And the electrical systems to support today's technology systems and educational needs are inadequate.

"The renovation of Biddeford High School has my full support. It's just needed-we need to do this. We're trying to find money to help with this project. I don't sleep at night trying to figure this out and make it a reality. The kids deserve a renovated high school." - Mayor Joanne Twomey

"BHS renovation project is very high on the district list of priorities. Despite the fact that a great deal of money has been put into the building over the past few years, the building is showing its age. This is the time to make major renovations or it will get more expensive over time. It may reach a time when renovations are not possible and new construction is the only option. Citizens are talking positively about this project and desire the opportunity to vote. Hopefully the renovation project will go to referendum in Fall 2009." - Superintendent Sarah-Jane Poli

From an energy standpoint, the building as it exists today is inefficient; due in part to the older systems; more importantly, the building envelope is unable to keep the building tight. Heat escapes during the winter while cold air seeps in. During the warmer months, the build-up of heat inside the building can be intolerable. With inadequate ventilation and no air conditioning, the building is uncomfortable and reduces overall productivity of the staff and the students.

The existing building was designed in an era when security was not a major consideration. Students, staff and visitors could come and go with little concern for safety. Unfortunately, times have changed in the last 10 to 15 years and providing a safe and secure environment for both staff and

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Renovation Plans for Biddeford High School cont'd

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students is of utmost importance. The current configuration of the high school building combined with the shared campus with BRCOT has raised major concerns about controlling access to and from both buildings. Students can access either building at any number of exterior door locations with little or no control. Of greater concern is that the original design of the high school located the main administrative offices in a remote location, so there is no means of monitoring people upon entering or exiting the building. The existing doors and hardware are in poor condition and do not close properly, therefore jeopardizing the security of the building's occupants.

To address the numerous issues facing the high school, the Biddeford School Committee authorized the creation of an ad-hoc building committee in the summer of 2007 to evaluate the high school and determine what possible solutions might exist to upgrade the overall building and systems and to improve the educational programming needed to properly educate the students now and in the foreseeable future. The high school is in desperate need of updating. Students moving through the school system are said to have to "take a step down" when they move on from the new middle school to the high school.

Members of the building Committee included: Joanne Twomey, Mayor; Dan Boucher, Chair; Howard Hanson, co-chair; Sarah-Jane Poli, Superintendent; Phil Radding, Facilities Manager; Bob Mills, City Council; Britt Wolfe, BHS Principal; Jeff Larmar, Harriman Associates; Joe Fairfield, Maintenance Supervisor; Tony Michaud, School Committee; Brian Denger, Parent; Sue Regis, Parent; Shelley Kane, Parent; Ron Gagnon, Director BRCOT; Peg Levasseur, BRCOT; and Jeff Porter, Assistant Superintendent.

To assist the committee in exploring the various options and solutions for the high school, the school department engaged the services of Harriman – Architects and Engineers, of Auburn, Maine. From day one, it was established that the goal of the committee was to be thorough and to explore all options. The committee also felt it was important to take the time needed to gather the required data, meticulously review the different options, evaluate the various costs, and finally present a solution to the school committee, the city council and finally the residents of Biddeford, with the ultimate goal of achieving a passing a referendum in support of the project.

The building committee looked at the three different options:

- Option 1: Basic renovation
- Option 2: Renovations with upgrades
- Option 3: Replace building



Renovation Plans for Biddeford High School cont'd

The second option would include all the code and systems upgrades plus new additions of about 21,000 sf and renovations throughout the building to address educational programming needs and additional access control issues. This option maintains an existing structure while improving its usage for the next 20+ years.

- Provides a new secure and accessible entrance and administrative office area to better control access.
- Upgrades hardware and security on all exterior doors.
- Provides a new library that is easily accessed by the public after hours.
- Creates a fine arts wing that groups art, music and drama together.
- Renovates the “Little Theater” and provides a needed lecture hall space.
- Creates a larger cafeteria and kitchen.
- Provides handicap access to all levels including Industrial Arts.
- Installs new women’s lockers on the same level as the White Gym.
- Renovate completely all the science classrooms.
- Maintains current relationship with BRCOT.

Advantages

- Reuses an existing building on an existing site – avoids sprawl.
- Less costly than building a new facility.
- Updates the building systems to improve overall energy efficiency.
- Updates building to eliminate existing building and life safety code deficiencies.
- Replaces existing window wall system with new energy efficient windows and wall construction.
- Reorganizes educational spaces to improve efficiencies between departments.

Disadvantages

- Existing site is limited and does not allow for any future expansion.
- Construction work must be done in phases while building is in use.
- Still an older building.



News From Superintendent Sarah-Jane Poli

If you watch TV, you probably have seen a Biddeford School Committee Meeting on Channel 3. An important part of these meetings is the presentation by staff of positive events. These events are presented because they are informative, extremely successful and worthy of recognition.

Some of the events that have been presented to the Biddeford School Committee are as follows:

- The Biddeford High School Building Committee and the architect took one year to evaluate, design, develop and discuss the renovation project. Recently, this group concluded their work by presenting the concept design to the Biddeford School Committee. The Biddeford School Committee is now responsible for presenting the Concept Design to the Biddeford City Council and to the citizens of Biddeford. A referendum will be held in Fall 2009.
- Playground equipment has been purchased and installed at John F. Kennedy School and the Biddeford Intermediate School. Some of the funds for these two projects came from the school budget. The remainder of the money was secured from fund-raising, receiving donations and grant awards. Many positive comments have been made by the students, staff and parents in regard to the equipment.
- A part of the John F. Kennedy School is piloting and evaluating an all-day kindergarten program. The principal and the teachers are enthusiastic. The School Committee voted to implement all-day kindergarten for all incoming kindergarten students.
- All Biddeford Public Schools are piloting Infinite Campus for the Maine Department of Education. Infinite Campus is a data management program. It is a difficult program to learn; and it takes a long time to master. The program is extremely valuable for teachers, office staff, administrators, and support staff and eventually for parents.

Hopefully, the above information has given you a “birds-eye view” of only some of the positive happenings that are taking place in the Biddeford School System and many more events are happening. Throughout the system limited space makes it impossible to describe any of the other interesting positive happenings. However, mention should be made of the following: the collaboration of the eighth grade science department of Biddeford Middle School with University of New England; the collaboration of Biddeford with the Saco and Old Orchard Beach Schools; the accreditation update for Biddeford High School; the first all-athletic sports awards night at Biddeford High School; and, the recognition of outstanding educators in our system. Reporting positive events to the Biddeford School Committee is one of the most enjoyable items on the school committee’s meeting agenda.



by Sarah-Jane Poli, Superintendent of Schools

News from Biddeford Primary School

where everyone is someone special and learning is primary

TJ's Tuesday for BPS - An Overwhelming Success!

The first of three TJ's Pizza fundraisers for Biddeford Primary School was held on Tuesday October 21st. The school promoted "Office Lunches" during the day and "Family Night" from 5-7pm. Joan Warren, BPS Principal, dressed as a cheerleader, complete with pom-poms! Barbara Adriance, BPS Assistant Principal and a BPS student wore pizza costumes while teachers from the first and second grade BPS team offered free face painting at TJ's Pizza. Kelso, the *good choice* frog, made a guest appearance. Business was so good, TJ's ran out of selected size pizza dough! Next time, Mr. Chantigny promised that there will be more dough and more staff to handle the crowd of enthusiastic supporters! The Biddeford Primary School raised nearly \$900 for their field trip fund in one day - and had a whole lot of FUN! TJ's fundraisers were also held on January 20 and March 17.



New Assistant Principal, Barbara Adriance, brings a passion for children and learning to Biddeford Primary School!

Barbara Adriance, the new assistant principal at BPS, displays enthusiasm, empathy, and experience when dealing with children, parents, and staff. She hit the ground running in July, working to create a welcoming office climate and building positive relationships throughout the school. Having a strong background in special education, including a master's degree, Mrs. Adriance reaches out to the diverse needs of today's learner. She engages students with wit and warmth, demonstrating the BPS School Rules (Be kind, Be safe, Do your best) in all she does. She has quickly become a valuable member of the BPS family and looks forward to many years of supporting her principal, Joan Warren, at BPS!



Whatever It Takes!

This year everyone on the educational staff at Biddeford Primary School is participating in Professional Learning Communities (or PLC). Mrs. Warren is facilitating "Book Talks" with seven (7) different teams of educators using the book, Whatever It Takes. The staff at BPS is learning how professional learning communities can creatively and consistently respond when kids don't learn. The discussions are the starting point for creating a process for "Response To Intervention" (RTI) in the district. This is very important and exciting work!



Biddeford Schools Welcome New Administrators

Jennifer Vitiello

Ms. Vitiello has a BS from Saint Anselm College and a Master's Degree from USM. She was the Assistant Principal at South Portland High School for the past four years and an Assistant Principal at Westbrook High School for the previous five years.

Some of her duties include observation and evaluation of staff, managing student discipline, supervising students, professional scheduling of duties for staff, teacher mentoring/coaching and serving on the district drop-out prevention committee.

She enjoys working with students and watching them learn and grow. She mentioned that Mr. Lomonte and the staff at BMS have been very welcoming and supportive. The biggest challenge for her right now is getting to know as many students, parents, and staff as possible. She resides in Saco. – *by Linda Verville*



*Jennifer Vitiello
Assistant Principal
Biddeford Intermediate School*



*Barbara Adriance
Assistant Principal
Biddeford Primary School*

Barbara Adriance

Mrs. Adriance spends her day being proactive and reactive to behaviors that interfere with learning and/or others' sense of safety. She supports the needs and concerns of teachers, including staff trainings. Mrs. Adriance is the go-to person for standardized testing to better prepare their children for taking tests. She chairs or is a member of several committees, such as the Conduct Code Committee and Staff Council. Attending PTO meetings and all extra-curricular activities is also part of her day. She assists the principal with all assignments that come into her vision plan for the school. Whatever it takes – is put into action every day!

Before becoming the assistant principal at Biddeford Primary, Mrs. Adriance was a general and special education teacher in public and locked-door unit schools. She graduated from USM with a Master's in Special Education.

Currently, she lives in Gray with her husband, mother-in-law and cat named, Miss Kitty. She has 3 grown boys and 4 granddaughters. – *by Linda Verville*

Susan De Cesare

Sue graduate from Husson College in 1998 with a bachelor's degree in public accounting. She has been working with Biddeford Adult Ed since 2000. Becoming the Community Adult Education Leader has added more dimensions to her typical financial job responsibilities. She now Adminsters all the medical classes, as well as performing additional administrative duties.

Sue's biggest reward is helping students succeed and watching 3 C.N.A. classes graduate every semester. Her biggest challenge is keeping the budget balanced. There are many people who are trying to better themselves, but are struggling financially. Her goal is to benefit as many community members as she can by keeping the cost of registration fees and textbooks to a minimum.

Sue lives in South Portland with her husband of 18 years and her 3 teenage children.–

by Linda Verville



*Susan De Cesare
Community Education Leader
Biddeford Adult Education*



Biddeford Schools Welcome New Administrators



*Mary Capobianco
Program Assessment
Coordinator*

Mary Capobianco

Mary assists teachers with instruction, assessments, data analysis, Maine Learning Results and professional development. She is also working on a district-wide RTI plan.

Seeing all of the wonderful things that are happening in each of the buildings within the Biddeford school district is the best part of her job. She is continually impressed with the level of work and the teacher commitment to children.

Past experience includes being a classroom teacher grades 4-12, Adjunct Professor, Middle School Assistant Principal, and Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction of a large (7000) urban school in New York. She attended the State University of NY at Albany and earned the following degrees: Master's degree in English, a Master's in Reading, and a Master's certificate in Educational Administration.

Mary moved to Scarborough in July with her husband of 38 years. She has 4 children and 3 grandsons. She feels lucky to be employed in Biddeford where she can work with classroom teachers and enjoy the pleasures of Maine. – *by Linda Verville*

Janet Kalman

After many years of being the Community Adult Education Leader at Biddeford Adult Education, Janet is now the Director of Biddeford Adult Education. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science Degree from UMO and earned a Master's in Adult Education & Distance Learning from the University of Phoenix. Typical responsibilities include: adult education and English as a second language instruction, diploma testing, overseeing vocational training in welding, CNC, electricity, auto mechanics, office skills certificates, and enrichment courses, to name a few.

Janet notes that some of her favorite aspects of the job are being able to provide opportunities for students to meet their academic and vocational goals, interacting with students of various ages and backgrounds, and working together with dedicated, intelligent, and caring staff. The biggest challenge she faces is budget constraints.

Prior to working in Biddeford, Janet was the Basic Adult Education Coordinator in Sanford, Technical Advisor to the Union Cambodian Association, and a teacher at Sanford Adult Education and Sanford Junior High School. She resides in Springvale where she is surrounded by a loving family and dear friends. – *by Linda Verville*



*Janet Kalman
Director
Biddeford Adult Education*



“Kindness Crew” Takes on Mission at Biddeford Middle School

Biddeford Middle School has begun a year-long initiative under the guidance of Michael Chase, founder of the Kindness Center. Michael and his BMS “KindnessCrew” have made it their mission to make Biddeford Middle School the “kindest middle school in Maine.”

This year-long program began in September with a pre-assessment survey of the entire student body to establish a beginning “Kindness Index” for the school. This was followed, in early October, by grade-level presentations by Michael Chase on his “LivingKindness” philosophy. This philosophy emphasizes (1) kindness toward oneself, (2) kindness towards others, and (3) kindness toward the earth.

During the following nine weeks, students began learning nine specific elements for adopting a lifestyle of kindness. Each student was encouraged to develop a heart that was *attentive, authentic, charitable, compassionate, courageous, enthusiastic, grateful, inspirational, and patient*. Each week, advisory teachers focused on a specific element of kindness and challenge the students to practice that element. On Fridays, students were given a blank “link” to write a specific act of kindness that reflected that element. These links were then made into chain links that were displayed in each class.

In January, Michael returned to make a full-school presentation, and to invite the students to unite the individual classroom “chains of kindness” into a continuous chain throughout the school, as a concrete symbol of the growth of kindness throughout the year. In addition, every Biddeford Middle School student will be presented with an “Am I being kind?” wristband to wear as a reminder of their commitment to making Biddeford Middle School “the kindest middle school in Maine.”

This kindness initiative will culminate in the spring with grade-level “100 Acts of Kindness” days in both the school and in the community. In addition, a post-assessment of the “Kindness Index” will determine the rate of growth of kindness at BMS.

Coordinating these activities are more than a dozen Biddeford Middle School teachers and the “KindnessCrew” of more than 100 students.

Funding for this initiative was provided by a Maine Community Foundation Fast Track Grant, co-written by BMS teachers Tom Sferes and Diana Mullins, by the BMS PTO, and by the BMS Chapter of “Youth Organizing for Better Opportunities.” Additional benefactors include Dave and Sandy Perloff and William Macomber.

Earlier, on August 26th, Michael Chase received a standing ovation for his opening day keynote address on “LivingKindness” to the entire Biddeford School District staff.

by Tom Sferes



Biddeford Middle School Staff Honored

Mr. Chuck Lomonte, Principal of Biddeford Middle School, was selected by the Maine Principals' Association as the 2009-2010 Middle Level Principal of the year for all of Maine.

At a special school assembly held on March 11, representatives of the Principals' Association honored Mr. Lomonte for his "tireless energy" and ability to create a "positive school climate". As principal of BMS for the past 3 years, Mr. Lomonte has provided positive leadership and is popular with students, staff, and parents alike. Congratulations to Mr. Lomonte!

Ms. Barbara Sullivan, Family Living teacher at BMS, was also honored on March 11 as Biddeford's nominee to be Maine Teacher of the Year. Ms. Sullivan represented the city a ceremony for all nominees at the State Capital building. Ms. Sullivan is honored due to her commitment to students and love of learning and teaching. Congratulations, Ms. Sullivan!



*Charles Lomonte
Principal
Biddeford Middle School*



*Barbara Sullivan
Teacher
Biddeford Middle School*

Credit Recovery

The Biddeford School Committee voted to implement a "credit recovery" plan for Biddeford High School (BHS) recently. This plan provides students who have failed either a whole (or a part) of a high school class the opportunity to "recover" the credit through an alternative path. This plan helps students to get back on track for graduation so they don't fall too far behind. In the past, students who have failed more than one class have been in danger of dropping out of school.

Credit Recovery encompasses both direct teaching of the content failed and on-line work in the content area. For the first time in decades, the district is sponsoring a summer school program at BHS based on a credit recovery model. During the 2009-2010 school year, credit recovery will be offered in the areas of reading and math. Many thanks to Dropout Prevention Coordinator Jackie Adams for working on this plan. Assistant Superintendent Jeff Porter recently told the School Committee that the district has a responsibility to provide "educational options for all students." Credit Recovery is one of those options needed for student success.



Maine Student Book Awards

The Maine Student Book Awards program was developed by Librarians in Maine to get feedback from students on what books they enjoy reading. Every year a committee puts together a list of new books that were all published the previous year. Students are asked to read at least three of the books on the list and then vote for their favorite. All the votes from around Maine are tallied and then the award is presented.

At Biddeford Intermediate School (BIS), we have had lots of fun participating in this program. This will be our fifth year. The librarian buys as many copies of the books as she can for our library. Many teachers also have copies of some of the books in their classroom libraries. Students may read the books themselves, listen to them on tape, or have someone read a book aloud to them. Lots of the teachers read some of the books aloud to their classes.

After a student has read or listened to a book they come to the library and rate how much they liked each book. We have a huge chart on Mrs. Pierson's office door.



In April we have a big voting day. Students come to the library and cast their vote for their favorite book. Then we have to wait to see which book wins the honor of being this year's Maine Student Book Award book!

This year we held a school wide assembly sponsored by the BIS Literacy team to kick off our program. We held it in the Performing Arts Center at BMS and all BIS students and staff attended. While the audience was being seated, a power point presentation showed covers of all the books in the program and Mr. Litchfield played his guitar. After a quick introduction, literacy team members did book talks on some of the featured books. Then students came on stage with posters of books they had read and helped lead a cheer to encourage everyone to read. An air of excitement about reading filled the hall. The assembly was well received by students and staff.

Another wonderful benefit of this program is our collaboration with McArthur Public Library. The children's librarian is working with us by displaying the MSBA titles and encouraging student reading.

Everyone is reading these books (the special shelf is empty and the reserve list is long). Many staff members have been enjoying sharing their opinions of books they have read with students. Our chart is so full of stars used to keep track of books read it looks like the Milky Way!

by Kirby Pierson



Biddeford High School Hosts First All-Sports Awards Ceremony in High School Tiger Gym



On Wednesday, November 12th, Biddeford High School hosted its first ever all-sports awards ceremony to honor 225 student-athletes who participated in one of eight athletic programs at BHS. The ceremony was held in the Tiger Gym and was very well attended by family and friends. The ceremony, which lasted one hour, included presentations by Athletic Director Dennis Walton and Biddeford Athletic Association President James Butler. The evening also included the recognition of several students, including the BHS All-Academic Team, as well as thirty-two other awards for many different student athlete accomplishments. A Volunteer Appreciation Award was presented to Mr. Rene Gagne for all of his hard work and dedication to the athletic programs at BHS. The highlight of the evening came when BHS senior Alyssa Grigware, who was given a standing ovation at the conclusion of her speech, spoke to the capacity crowd on what high school athletics has meant to her over the past four years. Following a slide show, which highlighted action photographs of athletes from all fall sports, teams broke into private ceremonies. A winter athletics ceremony was held on Wednesday, March 18. Congratulations all athletes at BHS!



COT Classroom Connections

Biddeford Saco Savings Bank executives offered their expertise to business and marketing students from the Biddeford Regional Center of Technology on November 7th. Topics discussed included the current economic climate compared with the great depression in 1929, credit bailout issues, an explanation for the increase of foreclosures, and advice on how to be fiscally responsible.

by Linda Verville



Pictured from left to right Ken Crepeau- Business and Financial Management Instructor, Phil Fearon- VP Commercial Lending, Marc Gagnon- VP- Credit Risk, Tyler Laverriere- Student, Kevin Savage- President and CEO, Alyssa Grigware- student



All Day Kindergarten at JFK

The Biddeford School Committee voted to implement full-day kindergarten permanently, beginning in the Fall of 2009. The vote on March 10, 2009 was unanimous. Currently, the 2009-2010 budget has an adjusted decrease to implement full-day kindergarten due to the elimination of the noontime bus runs, which amount to a savings of \$43,500. An additional ed. tech. was added at a cost of \$23,600 with a total savings of \$19,900. This is based on a projected 2009-2010 kindergarten enrollment of 176 students.

The staff at Kennedy School is very excited about a new initiative that we have begun this year. We are piloting all day kindergarten. We have 72 students participating in four of our classrooms; Mrs. Reehl, Mrs. Lyford, Ms. Newman and Ms. Butterfield are all reporting favorable results and very positive experiences. All of these teachers have experience teaching half day sessions. When I ask them how it is going, they all consistently respond, "It's great. I love it." Some of the aspects that they appreciate about teaching all day kindergarten are the following: classroom environment is more relaxed (the curriculum does not need to be jammed in 2.5 hours), inclusion of more activities to reinforce the core curriculum, more time for guided student independent learning and exploration, more time to reinforce socialization skills, and more time to individualize or schedule small skill reinforcement groups.

We are continuing to assess all day kindergarten programming and curriculum as well as our half day programming. Core instructional time is equivalent between our half day and all day programming. All our students were assessed before the start of school and ongoing assessment continues throughout the year. Data will be compared between the types of programming. We will take into account many variables that affect student learning and progress regardless of whether they are in all day or half day program. All students have exit goals to also meet. We have had success with our half day programming historically, so we are confident that those students will be as successful as those participating in all day programming.

We must never lose sight of the developmental needs of our children regardless of whether they are all day or half day students. Children enter kindergarten with different readiness skills which require our kindergarten teachers to tailor their instruction to meet the diverse needs of our students. We continue to emphasize that it is not the length of day, but the quality of instruction and the quality of time a student spends in school that makes a difference.

by Paulette Bonneau



Congratulations Biddeford Middle School

Biddeford Middle School was informed that it had been released from the School Improvement list in the Fall of 2008, due to improved scores on the Maine Educational Assessment (MEA) for the last two years.

Removal from the Needs Improvement list is rare – and difficult to achieve. BMS has undergone years of focused professional development for staff so that improvements in learning can take place. The hard work paid off. Congratulations to the students, staff, parents, and Principal Chuck Lomonte!

Infinite Campus

Just before the beginning of the 08-09 school year, following months of preparation and training, Biddeford School Department went live with Infinite Campus, the new state-adopted SIS (student information system).

Biddeford is one of five districts in the state to pilot the new District Edition. This fall, the state began transitioning to the State Edition of Infinite Campus. They hope to convert as many districts as possible to Infinite Campus to create a state-wide student information system, making the transfer of students data transparent and seamless.

For Biddeford, Infinite Campus replaces an old, outdated system that was used only by administrators and offices. Each school had its own database, server, and teacher gradebook. The new system is a single database, includes a gradebook, and is available to all district employees. We are looking forward to opening the parent portal beginning fall 2009.



Thank you, Big Lots!!

Many thanks to Big Lots of Biddeford for their generous donation of \$2,500 to the Biddeford School Department when they opened their doors in the fall of 2008. The funds are being used to help students who need personal items, such as clothing, shoes, etc.



Art Show Success!!

