



ARHS Parent Center Newsletter



Volume 8 Issue 1

October / November 2007



Welcome Parents to a new school year at the ARHS Parent Center

We began making plans for this 2007-2008 school year at meetings in June and August, and then got off to an energetic start with our first meeting of the new school year on September 19, at which 25 people were present, including a number of parents of 9th grade students who were joining us for the first time. Our second meeting was held the week after the Open House, On October 10.

At our September meeting, we had an overall review of last year's activities and accomplishments and we provided an opportunity for those present to put questions to Principal Mark Jackson, including the way in which the curriculum is applied across departments, and the status of the survey on whether to maintain or revise the present trimester schedule. We also discussed the role of the Parent Center and the ways in which it differs from a traditional PTO. In terms of ongoing activities, we gave an overview of the various abuse prevention activities initiated last year, and an introduction to the Safe Homes Program. Finally, we introduced the new student representative to the Parent Center Board, Nathan Mondschein

At our October meeting, we outlined the initiatives to be given priority this year, including the regular visit by representatives from academic departments to offer parents an overview of how that particular department functions with respect to the curriculum and to student-teacher and parent-teacher interaction. We also reiterated the commitment to following through with the abuse prevention and intervention activities and educational materials, continuing to offer awareness of the Safe Homes initiative, and highlighting the past and continuing efforts at bridging the gap between

Next Parent Center Meeting November 14, 2007

The next meeting of the Amherst Regional High School Parent Center will be on Wednesday, November 14, 2007 in Room 13 at the High School from 7:00 to 8:30pm.

Next RaDAR Group Meeting November 28, 2007

The next meeting of the RaDAR Group will be on Wednesday, November 23, 2007 in Room 13 at the High School from 7:00 to 8:30pm. See more about RaDAR on page 2.

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in-school and after-school tutorial services for students in need of additional work outside the classroom.

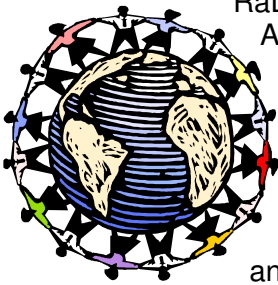
In addition, we introduced the work of the RaDaR (Race and Discipline, Action Rights) committee, which was created within the Parent Center to address issues of inequity in the application of discipline to students of color. The work of the committee over the past two years was briefly summarized. A separate brief article on RaDAR appears elsewhere in the newsletter.

The mission of the Parent Center is primarily to be a helpful link between parents and ARHS.

Please contact us with your questions or concerns:

www.arhsparentcenter.org/contact

RaDAR (Race and Discipline, Action, Rights)



RaDAR is a joint project of the ARHS PARENT CENTER and STUDY CIRCLES. It was organized in the spring, 2005 to address concerns raised by ALANA (African, African-American, Latino, Asian and Asian-American and

Native American) parents/guardians regarding issues of discipline, social justice and equity in education at ARHS.

The Mission of RaDAR is to identify and eliminate racism, prejudice and discrimination from the activities, attitudes, policies and procedures affecting the application of disciplinary measures within the Amherst Regional school system.

RaDAR endeavors to promote activities, attitudes, policies and procedures that are without racism, prejudice and discrimination and that involve the Amherst Regional school system's application of disciplinary measures.

RaDAR is an independent advocacy resource for parents/guardians and students. It consists of ARHS parents, guardians, staff, administrators, teachers, students, and community residents. RaDAR meets once a month in the evening at the High School. Members of the ARHS school community are encouraged to come forward with issues of concern having to do with race, discipline, social justice and equity in education at ARHS.

On-going Projects

RaDAR has made recommendations for policies in the ARHS Student Handbook to better ensure respectful, fair and equitable treatment regarding discipline and related matters. RaDAR has supported students and their parents who sought remedies for unequal treatment in selection to Honor Society, in staffing for cheer leading squads, and in offenses meted out for discipline. RaDAR is launching a dialogue focused on the data compiled by the school staff regarding internal and external suspensions. RaDAR has also created the Norma Jean

Anderson Civil Rights and Academic Achievement Award to honor and applaud a current ARHS teacher, administrator or staff member who promotes the ideals of a just and respectful community built on compassionate relationships.

In all of these efforts, the VISION of RaDAR is to work in a collaborative effort of students, teachers, staff and administrators toward a school free of racism, prejudice and discrimination that promotes personal safety, personal growth and academic achievement. We envision learning communities that nurture the ideals of a just and a respectful community where students in Amherst can obtain excellent education and achieve the highest academic success in an environment free of systematic privilege based on race.

Contacts

RaDAR welcomes new participants who share the Mission and Vision (as stated above). For further information about meeting date, time and place, contact Annie Leonard, Asst Principle, ARHS; Kathleen Anderson, School Committee Member; or Jackie Wolf, Community Member (549-2958).

Norma Jean Anderson Civil Rights and Academic Achievement Award

The Norma Jean Anderson Civil Rights and Academic Achievement Award is presented by the Amherst Regional High School in an effort to encourage excellence in education for all students in an environment free of systemic privilege based on race and class. A school free of racism, classism, prejudice and discrimination promotes safety, personal growth and academic achievement for ALL students. For more see: www.arhsparentcenter.org/Civil-Rights-Academic-Achievement-Award

Nominations are due by the end of February and should be addressed to: The Norma Jean Anderson Civil Rights and Academic Achievement Award, ARHS Parent Center, ARHS, 21 Mattoon Street, Amherst, MA 01002. Nominations may also be placed in the mail box of the ARHS Parent Center at ARHS.

Annual Community Thanksgiving Celebration



The Community Thanksgiving Celebration, sponsored by the International Students Club festive potluck with entertainment by school groups

will be held on Friday, November 16, 6:00 to 8:30 pm in the ARHS cafeteria.

The Parent Center is called upon to assist in the preparation of the event. If several people take on tasks, it will be easy to make the event a successful one! Families of ARHS students and the Amherst community at large are invited to enjoy the wide display of ethnic food and entertainment.

How can you help?

First of all, mark this event on your calendar (6:00 – 8:30 P.M., Friday, November 16th) and come with your family and/or friends to enjoy a festive meal and entertainment with our community.

Second, please sign up as generously as you can to help in the event. We need donations of everything from roast turkeys to paper cups, and help in setting up, keeping organized and cleaning up

We need donations of everything from plastic forks to roast turkeys, and also help during the event itself.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact:

Lila Feingold, Advisor
International Students Club
feingoll@arps.org
413/665-2111 (home)

2008 Senior Party

Interested in joining the committee to plan the Senior '08 graduation party? Please contact Linda Mondschein at Lshine5@comcast.net so we can arrange a date/time to meet that is convenient for all.

Substance Abuse Prevention and Internet Education

The continuation of Substance Abuse Prevention and Internet Education was set as a priority at the first 2007-2008 Parent Center meeting.

At this point, Internet Safety specialist Cindy Doyle is set to focus on the ARHS 11th Graders in the spring and we are looking at other possibilities. In addition, we are working on several other speakers for parents. Communication within the family is a key area of prevention.

SAFE HOMES Program

SAFE HOMES DEADLINE - OCT 30TH!

Many high school parents and guardians have signed up to participate in the SAFE HOMES Program and their families will be included in the SAFE HOMES Directory. If you would like to participate, send in your signed agreement form (to high school office or address on form) by OCTOBER 30TH. For more information, or if you would like a copy of the SAFE HOMES agreement form, go to :

www.arhsparentcenter.org/Safe-Homes-Program

click on the attachment at the bottom of the page.

Should you have any questions, please contact: Adrienne Levine at aclevine@comcast.net or 549-9988

Amherst Education Foundation

The Amherst Education Foundation, Inc. is an independent, non-profit education fund, whose purpose is to stimulate excellence, promote equity, enhance diversity, and mobilize broad community support for the public schools of Amherst, Leverett, Pelham, and Shutesbury.

To learn more:

www.amhersteducationfoundation.org

FAQ



Where can I find a document explaining the school's discipline policies?

At the beginning of the year, all students receive a copy of the Student Handbook. This booklet includes the school's discipline code. The discipline code is also posted online at:

<http://www.arps.org/hs/Policies/CodeOfConduct.pdf>

Dean of Students Mary Custard is in charge of discipline for 9th and 11th graders at ARHS. Dean of Students Nakaia Smith is in charge of discipline for 10th and 12th graders at ARHS.

For more FAQ:

<http://www.arps.org/hs/FAQ/>

ARHS Information

Don't forget to check the ARHS school web site, which has lots of information on it, including announcements, directory and calendar:

www.arps.org/hs/

Link to daily announcements:

www.arps.org/hs/News/announcements.html

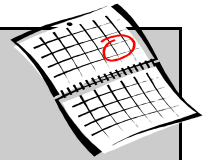
Amherst Regional High School
21 Mattoon Street
Amherst, MA 01002

Main: (413) 362-1700
Fax: (413) 549-9704
CEEB/ACT Code: 220-015
School Cancellation Line: 362-1898
Athletic Events Cancellation Line: 362-1798

Amherst Regional School System:

www.arps.org/

Mark Your Calendar



Class of 2009 Spaghetti Dinner
Friday, November 2

Late Arrival Day
Thursday, November 8

Parent Center Meeting
Wednesday, November 14

No School – Veterans Day
Monday, November 12

Community Thanksgiving Celebration
Friday, November 16

Chorale Concert
Tuesday, November 20

Half Day of School
Wednesday, November 21

No School – Thanksgiving Break
Thursday, November 22
Friday, November 23

Exam Period
November 26 to 29

RaDAR Group Meeting
Wednesday, November 28

No School
Friday, November 30

Second trimester begins
Monday, December 3

Please check the ARHS online calendar for the latest information.

Link to the ARHS online calendar:

<http://www.arps.org/HS/Calendar/>