Steve Desy, Athletic Director for the Acton-Boxborough Regional School District, shared his thoughts about the athletic program at a recent PTSO Forum. Mr. Desy affirmed that “Young people should learn the values associated with discipline, performing under stress, teamwork, sacrifice, commitment, effort, accountability, citizenship, sportsmanship, confidence, leadership, organization skills, physical well being, and striving towards excellence.” He pointed to a solid athletic program, offering students a variety of activities that include interscholastic, intramural, and fitness activities, as one path for students’ growth. “School activities are the other half of education,” he said, “and an extension of the classroom. Our young people are learning to win at life.”

The athletic program at AB sponsors 74 teams in grades 7 through 12, including 17 teams at the junior high and 57 teams at the high school. There are 35 teams which are primarily for male participants and 39 teams primarily for female participants. During the 2005–2006 season, 2,042 student-athletes competed in interscholastic athletics. Although not complete, the numbers for the current year are in the same range.

The program strives to offer a balance of interscholastic as well as intramural sports, but the size of the program is constrained by facilities and funding. Mr. Desy said there was a need for more intramural-type programs in our communities, and pointed to the success of the Community Education basketball program as evidence.

While the AB athletic program offers some intramural opportunities, they also try to balance the opportunities among the interscholastic programs as well. Some of the programs are very competitive, with many more students trying out than the number of positions on a team. Other programs have historically been “no-cut sports,” such as football, and the track and cross-country programs at both the junior high and high schools. This spring’s track program includes 250 students at the junior high and 190 high school students. While these programs offer opportunities to many youngsters to participate, there are other issues which relate to supervision, and the costs to transport so many student athletes to an event.

One of the new initiatives is a Coaches Advisory Committee, which has the following goals:

- Develop a mission statement for the athletic program
- Provide education for coaches, beginning with a certification course for sports medicine and first aid, offered this spring
- Develop a communiqué regarding parental issues
- Offer educational packages to athletes and parents on topics such as college recruiting, nutrition, etc.
- Develop a captains advisory committee
- Develop and implement a leadership course for student athletes

Finally Mr. Desy talked about the success of Leary Field, which resulted from the collaboration of funding from the regional schools, the town of Acton, and numerous community members, which resulted in the largest private donation made to the regional schools. The turf field has allowed dramatically increased use of the facility for games and practices. During the first fall season, the field hosted 78 athletic games, compared with 28 offered during the preceding fall with a grass field.

Our schools participate in the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA), and AB athletics is governed by many MIAA policies and participates in its tournaments. Some have asked about the benefit of hosting MIAA tournament

**CHAIRS CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

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From The Co-Chairs: Mary Ann Ashton (HS) & Jan Couch (JH)

AB Athletics with AD Steve Desy

**“Surviving the College Search”**

A Panel of ABRHS Seniors and Their Parents

Thursday, May 17th, 7:30 PM

RJG Junior High Auditorium

Are you worried about how you and your child will navigate the college search process successfully? Are there alternatives that you should consider? Does just thinking about it make you anxious? Come meet some of our current Seniors and their parents who have recently completed this process. Panel members, representing a range of experiences and decisions, will share their stories and answer questions from the audience. Students and parents/guardians are welcome.

Sponsored by the PTSO and ABRHS Counseling Department
From the Chairs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The athletics program is financed by $136,000 from the appropriated budget and $375,000 from the athletic revolving budget, which is funded by athletic fees, gate receipts, and gifts.

During the Q&A period, Mr. Desy said that gate receipts were received from any evening event on Leary Field, from basketball games, and from boys’ ice hockey games. A parent asked why the state would allow some extracurricular activities to count toward the 990 hours requirement, but not athletics. Mr. Desy said that he had understood that MIAA was talking with DOE about this issue, and he would provide information back to the parent community about that discussion.

Another parent asked about whether there was a list of which sports did not have cuts, and Mr. Desy said that there was no list, but that certain programs had typically not had cuts in the past. It was a question of balancing numbers. Several other parents asked about juniors or seniors that were cut from a team to make room for sophomores. While Mr. Desy empathized with students who had been cut, and how parents felt about their child being cut, Mr. Desy said that interscholastic competition was tough with many elite players at many different schools, and that other schools would put forward their best teams and AB needed to do the same. As with many other aspects of AB, Mr. Desy said that athletic teams strived to be the best, and that was what players and parents expected. He emphasized again the need for more intramural opportunities within the schools and within the community, and said he would continue trying to develop new programs and new opportunities. This fall, for example, AB would begin a boys’ volleyball team as a new fall sport.

The PTSO Board for 2007–2008

Members of the Nominating Committee are looking for people to fill several volunteer positions on the Board for next year. This is a great way to contribute to our schools! If you’re interested in finding out more about the available positions, please contact Nominating Chair, Dawn Gomez at 978-264-9686, or Mary Ann or Jan.

The slate will be voted on at the PTSO meeting on May 17th at 7:00 p.m. in the RJG Junior High Auditorium. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend and vote.

Proposed PTSO Board 2007–2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Co-Chair (HS)</td>
<td>Mary Ann Ashton</td>
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<td>Co-Chair (JH)</td>
<td>OPEN</td>
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<td>Secretary</td>
<td>Janet Chinitz</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Caroline Crosby</td>
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<td>Directors (HS)</td>
<td>Patti Babcock</td>
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<td>Directors (JH)</td>
<td>Pam Rogers</td>
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<td>Gardening</td>
<td>Subha Thiagarajan</td>
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<td>Interschool Council (JH&amp;HS)</td>
<td>Ellie Halsey (HS)</td>
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<td>Membership (HS)</td>
<td>Kavita Batra (JH)</td>
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<td>Debbie Clough</td>
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<td>Newcomer Welcome (HS)</td>
<td>Holly Ben Joseph</td>
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<td>Newsletter</td>
<td>David Gerratt</td>
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<td>Nominating</td>
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<td>Project Graduation</td>
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<td>Publicity</td>
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<td>Volunteer Coordinators (HS)</td>
<td>Bonnie Maserang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteer Coordinators (JH)</td>
<td>Elaina Kourepenos</td>
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PTSOS Newsletters are Changing

Following a recent PTSO Board meeting, changes are being planned for the PTSO Newsletter for next school year. The newsletter has been published nine times per year. Each edition is copied and stapled at the high school with PTSO funding, and then folded, sealed, and labeled by volunteers. A year ago we asked families to help us reduce the cost and labor by choosing to receive the newsletter electronically: about 600 families made that choice, but we are still mailing about 1,500 copies each month.

The primary mission of the PTSO is to communicate, and we believe it is essential to make publications available to all of our families. Because we no longer have the volunteers to process 1,500 newsletters nine times per year, and to better utilize the resources that we do have, the PTSO is proposing some new ways to help the high school and R. J. Grey communicate with our families.

Beginning in September 2007, we intend to premier a new publication which will be printed and mailed to all families four to five times per year. This new publication will focus on an issue or academic department in more depth, and will be a smaller, sleeker version. We will make use of the web resources we have, and include links for more information about our regional schools. On the alternative months, the PTSO Newsletter, as you currently know it, will be published and available electronically, but not mailed out.

A PTSO Newsletter Board position is open for next year for a parent/guardian from the Junior High or High School. If you would like more information about this, or if you would consider writing an occasional piece (300–500 words or so) for one of the issues, please contact Mary Ann or Jan (see below) or Beth Petr at BPetr@verizon.net. This is a great way to contribute to our schools and our families!

If you have comments about these plans, or suggestions about topics you’d like to see covered, please send them to Mary Ann Ashton (MABAshton@aol.com) or Jan Couch (jccouch@comcast.net). Thank you for your feedback!
When Your Teen Attends a Party

With spring finally here, end-of-year parties, proms, and other festivities will be common. The PTSO and CAFY have come together to offer some suggestions to consider when your teen attends a party. The teenage years are filled with memorable experiences, opportunities and choices, and as parents/guardians and members of the community, we hope to provide a safe atmosphere for our children.

These Guidelines are taken from a variety of web resources for you to consider with your teen.

1. Know where your teenager will be and for how long s/he will be there.
   - Obtain the address and phone number of the party-giver
   - Let your teen know that you expect a phone call if the location of the party changes.

2. Contact the parents of the party-giver about parental supervision and guidelines.
   This is not an issue of parent-teen trust, but recognition of the fact that there are unsupervised parties in the community.
   - Verify the occasion
   - Offer assistance
   - Make sure a parent will be present
   - Be certain that alcohol will not be permitted

3. Know how your teen will get home from the party.
   Coordinate transportation to and from the party with other parents.

4. Discuss with your teen the possible situation where alcohol or other drugs are available at a party.
   - Let your teen know what you expect.
   If your family has set firm guidelines against illegal drinking, make those guidelines clear.
   - Help your teen come up with ways to refuse either.

5. Make sure your teen knows what time s/he is expected to be home.
   Be awake or have your son or daughter awaken you when s/he gets home.

6. If your teenager stays overnight with a friend after a party, check with the parents of the friend to verify that they want your child to stay over and that they will be home.
   Spontaneous arrangements should always be confirmed with the host-parents.

7. Let your teen know if s/he wishes to leave a party for any reason, including the presence of alcohol or drugs, s/he can call you, or another designated adult.

8. For teens of driving age, know who will be driving your teenager to and from the party.
   Ask your teen to contact you if there is any change in transportation or if s/he is not coming home from the scheduled party.

9. Your family should establish firm clear rules against driving after using alcohol or other drugs or riding with drivers who have been drinking or using drugs.
   Take the time to talk with your teen about the dangers and legal problems that can result and suggest alternatives.

10. Discuss consequences should your teen decide to break any agreed upon rules.

Linda Minkoff and Clare Harlow,
Community Alliance for Youth (CAFY)

Mary Ann Ashton and Jan Couch, PTSO

For more information, see:
http://www.jtnn.org/partytips.asp

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Annual AB Special Education Parents Advisory Council Meeting

The Annual AB Special Education Parents Advisory Council Meeting, including election of officers for next year will take place on May 21 at 7:00 PM in the RJG Jr High Library. This meeting is open to all and includes families with children of all ages—preschool through age 21. For more information, see our website at http://www.absedpac.org/ or contact Nancy Sherburne at nsherburne@mindspring.com

http://abrptso.ab.mec.edu/
FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Steve Donovan

During April the department leaders and I have been busy interviewing candidates for the new teaching positions that have been authorized as well as to fill positions created by retirements and other departures. We look forward to welcoming many great new members to our faculty next year.

Our sophomores will be involved in two days of MCAS testing during the week of May 21, with additional testing in June. We appreciate the support and cooperation of students and parents during this activity which necessitates many changes in our routine.

We are looking forward to our traditional lineup of senior activities during the next few weeks leading up to graduation on June 8. Parents of seniors should have received a separate letter with important dates for seniors and their families. This and other information is also available on our web site. We invite anyone interested to join us for the Scholarship Ceremony for seniors on June 2 as well as for the graduation ceremony. These events are celebrations of our students, of their achievements and of the families and communities which support them.

— Steve Donovan

Reminder About Electronic Devices in School

The use of students’ personal electronic devices is not allowed in ABRHS classrooms. We ask parents to remind students to keep their cellphones, ipods, PDAs, and other electronics out of sight and turned off during class. They should not be on desks or anywhere either visible or audible in the classroom. We are aware that pictures or video can be taken with many kinds of cellphones, and given today’s technology, the photos/video can end up posted on the web without proper consent. We expect that students will not use these devices in classes or take pictures or video in or out of classes without prior consent. Our ABRHS Student Handbook clearly states that such devices used or visible in classrooms can be confiscated by the teacher. Further consequences are at the discretion of the assistant principals. We ask parents to remind students about this rule and about the seriousness of videotaping or taking photos at school without proper consent.

Final Examinations

The end of the year schedule, given the one snow day that we have taken, calls for June 14 to be the final day of classes for underclassmen and the last full day of school. Final examinations are scheduled for June 15 through June 20, all half days.

Examinations

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Examinations</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>June 13, 14</td>
<td>English (during English classes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 15</td>
<td>First &amp; Second Period Classes:</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 18</td>
<td>Third &amp; Fourth Period Classes:</td>
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<td>June 19</td>
<td>Fifth &amp; Sixth Period Classes:</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 20</td>
<td>Seventh &amp; Eighth Period Classes:</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

We request that you make every effort to avoid or resolve any conflicts with this schedule.

If an emergency situation exists, or a serious conflict that cannot be resolved, the parent/guardian may request permission for the student to take examinations early. This request should be addressed to JoAnn Campbell, Assistant Principal, and should clearly state the student’s name, grade, why the student is unable to take examinations as scheduled, the date of the student’s last day at school, and the final examinations (classes and teachers) that will be affected.

All requests for change in exam schedule must be received by May 27.

ABRHS School Council Openings

Nominations closed on May 1st for the three openings for parents/guardians on the ABRHS School Council for next year. Election ballots will be included in the June issue of the PTSO newsletter with a voting deadline of mid-June.

Daily announcements at the High School are posted on the website at http://ab.mec.edu/abrhs/. (Click on Announcements to the right of Quick Links.) They are not emailed out as they are at the Junior High School.
Registration Process

Our seventh grade students have begun to register for eighth grade courses this month. Team teachers have completed level recommendation forms, which were mailed to parents/guardians at the end of vacation week. Signed forms must be returned to homeroom teachers by Wednesday, April 25. Course override forms must be completed by Monday, May 7 for seventh grade students. The eighth graders have completed the registration process for ninth grade. Override forms for any High School courses must be returned to the Junior High Counseling Office by April 30. During the week of April 9, 7th and 8th grade students accompanied the administrators on visits to the elementary schools to talk to the sixth grade students and their teachers about the Junior High. Parents and guardians of sixth grade students are invited to attend a presentation about the Junior High on Wednesday, April 26, in the High School Auditorium.

Community Service Learning Projects

Seven Gold is going to visit two Massachusetts organizations as part of service learning field trips. During late April and early May, students will be spending a day at the Food Project in Lincoln and a day at Overlook Farm in Rutland. They will be learning about food production, sustainable agriculture, and world hunger. At the Food Project, students will learn about how local produce improves our economy, environment and health. The Food Project grows over 250,000 pounds of produce annually and donates over half to Greater Boston soup kitchens. Students will also help to cultivate and maintain the fields.

At Overlook Farm, part of Heifer International, students will learn about their mission to bring sustainable sources of food and income to regions of need around the world. Students will tour the farm, help with chores and participate in a peasant meal at one of the Global Village sites that they prepare, using methods and supplies traditionally available to people in that area of the world. We will be doing activities in the classrooms to reinforce students’ experience in the field.

Seven Red has been busy organizing two field trips. They will be going to work at a community garden that grows food for people who are hungry and visiting a farm that works in a different way to alleviate hunger in the United States and throughout the world. To prepare for this day, they will be reading about exploring the ways that other people have made a difference in a community. They will also explore their own actions as good citizens. Through these discussions and their service learning day, they will learn that they too can be heroes and that there are many ways “to make a difference.”

Spring Athletics

Our spring sports teams have begun their seasons with try-outs and practices. These sports include baseball, coached by Bill Maver; softball, coached by JD Head; and track and field, coached by Frank Calore, Ri Harrington, Dave Peterson and Kenny Priest. Over 200 students are participating in these sports.

For the tenth year the students at the Junior High School participated in Club 111. Twenty five students participated in this program, sponsored by the Boston Athletic Association, and coached by Scott Biron. Three 10-player relay teams were involved in this exciting opportunity, which introduces young people to the sport of running. After several weeks of training and learning about the Boston Marathon, the team traveled to Copley Square Park on Saturday, April 14, to participate in the Relay Challenge. At the conclusion of the races, all runners received medals and ate lunch at the BAA tent. We are fortunate to be one of the 30 schools participating in this program. 900 runners were involved this year as the event is the kick off to marathon weekend.

http://abrptso.ab.mec.edu/
Roche Bros. Fundraiser!
Roche Bros. is sponsoring the 7th Annual Receipt Collection Day on Friday, May 4th from 4-7p.m. Project Graduation will receive 5% of all grocery receipts (we do not take your credit card receipt – just your grocery receipt) collected by our volunteers. Roche Brothers now sells gift cards! Please consider buying gift cards that come in denominations of $10, $25, $50 and $100 for future shopping – this is where we benefit the most. They can be redeemed at any time. Questions can be directed to Debbie Clough at 978-266-0153 or Debbie_clough@verizon.net.

The Junior Trunk
Help us create “The Junior Trunk”, a trunk containing dorm room essentials-towel, sheets, bathroom carrier, gift cards, etc. With your help by purchasing store bought gift cards or items, we will be able to raffle off this trunk to a senior at Project Graduation. Interested in contributing items for the Junior Trunk? Please contact Mary Allard at Lmmc31@comcast.net.

Volunteers and Donations are still needed
Project Graduation 2007 is well underway, but we still need your support. Please consider volunteering your time with this wonderful and fun event. Contact Bitzy Wilson at BitsyW@comcast.net. If you have already volunteered (thank you!) and we haven’t gotten back to you yet, don’t worry, we will in a few weeks.

Donations and matching donations can be made using the form below: Please make checks payable to Project Graduation, c/o ABRPTSO, P.O. Box 912, Acton, MA 01720

For Project Graduation 2007 information, contact Project Grad Chair Patti Foye at pcfoye@verizon.net.

IMPORTANT FOR ALL VOLUNTEERS:
CORI forms are mandatory for all adults involved with Project Graduation.
A CORI FORM must be filled, processed and on file at ABRHS by May 4, 2007. This is mandatory for all adults volunteering their time at Project Graduation. Please complete a CORI form in the presence of Deb Trensch at the High School Main Office (photo id needed) 7:00am–3:30pm on weekdays! Anyone who was CORI’ed as of June 30, 2006 is good for three years.

For everything you need to know, and all the latest updates, check out our website at: http://abprojectgrad.org/
The Regional School Committee met on Thursday March 29 and then again briefly on April 9 before Acton Town Meeting. Though the House and Senate Ways and Means Committee increased by 10% the Governor’s proposed Chapter 70 funding, the A-B Regional School District should receive approximately $5.6M for FY ’08. That amount is nearly $1M more than what we received last year, though it is $330K less than what the Governor had proposed. The reduction means there will likely be no excess funds flowing to E&D (the Region’s version of Free Cash for the Town), however no other budget cuts were warranted.

At our March 29 meeting, the Committee agreed to form a sub-committee comprised of SC members, parents, students and staff to assess and improve upon the current 990 plan, and hopefully develop alternatives that will better meet the needs of our students. We will be looking to the public for ideas and feedback as this process unfolds.

Two new Acton School Committee members were voted in on March 9 at Acton Town elections, and sworn in following Acton Town Meeting. They are Heather Harer and Xuan Kong. They will fill the seats formerly held by Marie Altieri and Terry Lindgren, who were both valued, experienced members whose presence will be missed.

Boxborough Annual Town Meeting is at 7:00 PM on Monday, May 14 at Blanchard Memorial School.

All School Committee Members can be contacted at AB_School_Committee@mail.ab.mec.edu

Acton School Committee Members:
Jonathan Chinitz jchinitz@gmail.com
Michael Coppolino copp@verizon.net
Heather Harer bharer@verizon.net
Xuan Kong xkong2004@yahoo.com
Sharon Smith McManus ssmancus@rcn.net
John Ryder johnry92261@verizon.net

Boxborough School Committee Members:
Brigid Bieber tbbieber@comcast.net
Becky Neville neville317@juno.com
Bruce Sabot breswabot@comcast.net

PC Presents the CLASS PLAYS!
Wednesday, May 16, 6:30 PM

This annual night of short plays, directed by students, features a spirited competition among the classes with the winners announced by the judges at the end of the evening. Always fun and entertaining!

Freshmen – Hard Candy, directed by Stephen LaConte
Sophomores – The Seussification of Romeo and Juliet, directed by Matt Bauer and Jackie Berkley
Juniors – Courting 101, directed by Amanda Duggan
Seniors – Going to School, directed by Beth Gillispe and Amy Corron

Adults $8; Students / Seniors $6
Tickets sold only at the door!

For more information, contact PC Advisor Linda Potter x3584.
PTSO CALENDAR

Thursday, May 17
(Note: revised date)

7:00 PM
RJG Jr High Auditorium
Annual PTSO Business Meeting –
Open to all
(vote on PTSO Board and Budget)

7:30 PM
“SURVIVING THE COLLEGE SEARCH”
presentation
sponsored by the PTSO and Counseling
Department

Are you reading this newsletter online?
If not, check it out at http://abrptso.ab.mec.edu/newsletters.htm
From this site, you can also join the PTSO email list!

Submission DEADLINE for the June 1 Newsletter is May 14th.
Please contact Beth at BPetr@verizon.net or 978-263-7208.