

SAVE THE DATE!

Parent Advisory Committee Meeting

Tuesday., April 6th, beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Dr. Anthony Joseph
Cardinal Cushing School's Consulting
Psychiatrist will be presenting!

Director's Letter

Larry Sauer



Spring has finally arrived in Hanover and if it ever stops raining, the students will have plenty of opportunities to enjoy the outdoors on our beautiful campus. Change seems to be our ongoing

theme for this year. We have had a number of staffing changes this past month that I want to make you aware of. As a part of continued right sizing, we eliminated four positions including Deb Lunetta, the Vice President for Quality Assurance and Program Development; Peg Collins, Assistant Director for Quality Assurance; Mary Bettley, Director of Clinical and Student Services; and Claire MacDonald, Student Services Coordinator; as well as two of our maintenance staff. We also have Cindy Erbe, vocational teacher, who is retiring and Amy Bulger, Behavior Specialist, who is moving on to a position in a different organization. These staff members served Cushing and our students from 18 months to as many as 34 years. Each of them made important contributions to educating and caring for our students and each will be missed in their own way.

We are hoping to fill some of these positions in the near future and we are doing some internal restructuring to make sure that the services that these staff provided to students are still available. I will keep all of you informed as changes are made or new staff are hired.

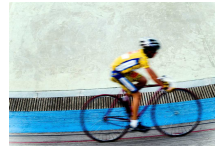
Recreation Update for April

**Tom McElman, Anne Matheson
Terri Keenan**

- Congratulations to our basketball teams for another outstanding season. All four of our teams attended the 2010 Special Olympic Winter Games held in Worcester. Here are our results: Varsity-gold medal, Jr. Varsity-bronze medal, Cushing Champions-silver medal and the Cushing Celtics-fourth place all in their appropriate divisions. Thank you to all the family members who came out to cheer us on.



- April is our Bicycle Safety Month; all bikes on campus are required to be brought to the recreation hall on April 12th for safety inspections. Any bike brought on campus following April 12th must have documentation of being serviced at a bicycle shop. Any questions please contact the recreation department. The Hanover Safety Officer will be by for their annual bicycle safety talk and demonstration.



- With the arrival of spring our department begins to think about our spring dances. This year we have renamed the Jr. Prom, the Spring Semi Formal that will be held on Friday May 21st. We will be meeting with our students each week to help prepare for the big event. We will be focusing on good, safe behavior, along with planning the menu, colors, theme, and more.



- The Senior Prom will be held on Wednesday June 2nd at St. Mary's of Hanover. We will be traveling by limos to the prom. We will be meeting with our graduates and our students over the age of 18 to go over behavioral expectations and prom etiquette. In

conjunction with other departments we will create guidelines to help our students understand the importance of showing respect to themselves and others as well as participating in their programs.

- Save the date for our Sr. Prom Carwash and Cushing Yard Sale; **Saturday May 15th.**
- Just a reminder that we will starting up our spring and summer sports and activities, please remind your Cardinal Cushing student and their staff to sign them up.
- If you have any questions or suggestions please contact the recreation department.

Residential Department

Chris Pike

I am writing this month to share some of the recent changes within the residential department. We recently identified a need to develop a more natural manner in which to group our residential students. As you are all aware unlike a public school we have a rolling discharge and admissions process. Having students leave on their 22nd birthdates in many cases, while others arrive randomly based on referrals. This creates a lot of change in student groupings. In the past we generally brought new students in based on the available space and although we gave consideration to the ages of students as well as ability level, we never formalized this process.

About 6 months ago with the assistance of various departments including Student Services, Clinical, and others we set out to identify a way to best assign students to houses on campus. We loosely identified four groupings or tracks. This is based on the students' needs, cognitive level, age, gender, behavior, staffing level, and other characteristics that factor in when discussing human behavior. We did not set out to create perfect groupings as this would never be realistic, but rather creating a system and procedure for which we can all agree has commonality and rationale. As a result we then met several times as a team and made decisions together regarding changes that would need to be made in order to create these new groups. After months of meetings and deliberation we implemented these changes.

We recognize that changes this large and involving many students, families, staff members, and others that there would be some bumps along the way. We finally carried out these changes in February and many students are now in new groups.

As a result students have new housemates, in some cases new roommates, and new staff. We believe that after we progress through the initial changes that we will be able to better serve both our students, families, and staff.

Along with these changes we also identified new assignments for our House Managers. We decreased the size of the caseloads and are developing better communication systems to improve contact with families, staff, and students.

In addition we have identified a Positive Communication Liaison for each student so that we can share progress and accomplishments with families on a weekly basis. We recognize that with any change of this size there are mistakes and oversights, however we are working to minimize this occurrence for any future changes. We believe that with these new groups we will be able to be able to better focus our programming for students and identify best training practices for staff. We believe that teamwork and communication will improve.

In the coming weeks you will be hearing directly from your son/daughter's house manager to ensure that you are familiar with this individual and how to contact them for any questions regarding the house. In addition we will be sending out correspondence to families identifying the house team members both day and overnight, including staff names so that you are aware of all of the staff that care for your children.

We would like to thank you for your understanding during these times of change and welcome any feedback that you may have so we can improve the care to our students. Please feel free to contact me at any time with comments my telephone number is 781 829-1297 and my email address is cpike@coletta.org.

Education Department

Hi Everyone,

Well, I have just signed the document to mail out the first box of MCAS Portfolios, so that means that Spring is officially here at Cushing. At any rate, that's how we measure it!



Everyone has worked so hard and it was great to see those of you who were able to visit and view. We also had quite a few visitors from

different departments come to see the students' work. We love to see and hear the reactions.

We continue to have the Shriver/UMass Medical staff here conducting their studies; we have had a visit from a group of graduate students from the Boston University School of Public Health to learn more about our students and their challenges and needs; the intern from the Boston University School of Nutrition, who, along with our staff and twelve students are moving right along with their good nutrition program. The intern, Caitlyn, is even coming in at 7:30 AM to do a presentation to staff about the new curriculum she is using in this program.

The Student Council is having a book/DVD drive for our new library. They will write all about it in the next newsletter.

Roberta and staff

Health Center Happenings

Healthy Eating

By Danielle Nicholson, RN



Healthy eating starts every morning with breakfast. Eating breakfast helps to jump start your metabolism. Be sure you are eating a variety of foods in order to get the nutrients needed, which include protein, healthy carbs, healthy fats, vitamins, and minerals. Protein is essential for growth, energy, and maintaining cells and tissue organs. Protein sources include chicken, fish, beans, nuts, and soy products. Healthy carbs include whole grains, fruits and veggies. These help you feel full longer and keep blood sugar and insulin levels stable as they are digested slowly. Eat healthy fats, like avocados, almonds, and pecans to nourish the brain, heart and cells, as well as hair, skin, and nails. Fiber is also essential to a healthy diet as it helps maintain a healthy digestive system and helps you feel full faster. Fiber can be found in fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Include dairy in your diet as the calcium and vitamin D help keep our bones be strong and healthy.

Eating a wide variety of foods boosts your energy, sharpens your memory, and stabilizes your mood. Add color to your diet by making fruits and veggies a part of every meal as they are low in calories and are packed with vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and

fiber. Drink plenty of water to help flush your system of waste products and toxins. Reduce portion sizes and listen to your body so you know when you are full. Moderation is key.

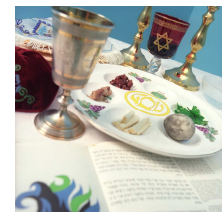
Here are some healthy tips to remember: cut saturated fats like fried foods, drink plenty of water, reduce salt and sugar amounts, increase fresh fruits and vegetables and whole grains.

A special thank you to Michelle Picard for the fabulous nutrition bulletin board she put together outside the Health Center. Staff and students have already found it to be informative and helpful.

Vocational Education Department

Doug Frazier

The department would like to wish a Happy Easter and Passover to everyone. Spring is in the air and all of the vocational education department is busily getting ready. The greenhouse is getting all the



seedlings and plants ready to plant. We are hoping for a little drier spring and summer. The Trader is creating new products and merchandise for the warmer weather. The Bass Cafe is making all these wonderful temptations that they always do. Culinary Arts continue to do their extraordinary job they do each day, feeding us all (150) each day. The Voc Prep and Voc Skills are working hard and always trying to find new tasks for our students to try, learn and succeed. Central Supply is searching for the best buys and providing the goods with a smile! Health Career, as always, providing quality services to the elders. Recycling is helping our planet stay healthy.

Bottle Redemption is recycling those items that we collect every day. The Thrift Store is always offering great merchandise at discount prices - check us out!

Cindy Erbe will be leaving Cardinal Cushing as of 4/1/10. Cindy has worked for the organization for 30 years. Cindy has been an outstanding employee no matter what role she has had in the school. In the vocational education I have to personally recognize for her caring, devotion and educational experience. Thank you, Cindy! Cindy will be returning to be a substitute in the department.