

GAEEL FORCE

Newsletter of the Roxbury Superintendent
Michael A. Rossi, Jr., Ph.D.



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Return of the Late Buses *All Aboard!*

We are very pleased to announce the district will be able to provide late busing for our Lincoln/Roosevelt, Middle School, and Roxbury High School students. We feel this is a critical piece of affording our students every possible opportunity to engage in academic, athletic, and co-curricular endeavors. Late buses will run five days per week, at two separate times, 3:35 and 5:00 at the high school and middle school, respectively. They will run three days per week at Lincoln/Roosevelt

with one departure at 4:00 p.m. The drop-offs for those buses are listed on the website for EMS and RHS. Students were given information to take home from Lincoln/Roosevelt as that relates to the stops there.

We encourage every parent to speak with their child about safety when being dropped off and should you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions about the ongoing features of providing late busing, please give us a call.

Newsletter Articles:

- ~ *Return of Late Buses*
- ~ *After Schools BSI*
- ~ *Turf-Field Coming to RHS*
- ~ *Parent Series*
- ~ *Digitizing the District*
- ~ *Benchmarking*

After-School Basic Skills Instruction



Beginning sometime in October at Lincoln/Roosevelt, Eisenhower Middle School, and the High School, we will be providing students with opportunities to supplement their core instruction through remedial basic skills help. Those students who have been identified will be invited to participate and will work with Roxbury faculty in the areas of reading, writing, and arithmetic. It is very critical that we make every attempt to get all students on grade level in reading, writing, and

mathematics.

The after-school program will target specific skill instruction

and we will seek to assess students both pre and during their after-school interventions. If your child is invited to participate, please seriously consider having him or her become a member of this after school activity and also keep in mind that we can provide late busing to accommodate transportation needs.



Upcoming Issues:

- *Winter 2010*

Turf-Field Coming to the High School

We are very pleased to announce the Roxbury Board of Education has entered into a long term agreement with the Roxbury Town Council to install a synthetic field at the high school varsity football field beginning with the spring season. Both governing bodies worked very diligently at creating an inter-local agreement that would be fair and appropriate to meet our needs for the students and community at large.

The field will be installed at the conclusion of this year's football season and construction should be completed for the spring season. The field will be a shared use



facility in which the high schools athletic participants, along with our band will use it 50% of the time and the township vis-à-vis the recreation department will use it 50% of the time. The Vice Principal for Athletics and the township Recreation Director will collaborate on an on-going basis to create a fair

and equitable usage plan that will take into consideration special events, particular times during the year when one side or the other may need it a little bit more, and third party requests for use. We feel that the agreement

not only is appropriate and in the best interest of our community and student athletes but represents a wonderful collaboration between



the two major governing bodies of our township and speaks very well at future shared services.

This particular field is a function of ongoing shared services projects between the Board of Education and the Township. It is one of many projects that we are either engaged in or seeking to create. We thank everyone for their support and look forward to a brand new state of the art turf field at Roxbury High School.

Family Education Night – Parent Series



In our ongoing effort to connect our stakeholders to the educational vision that we have for our students, we have created a series of parent workshops designed to engage mom and dad in the philosophical and practical implementation components of our program of studies. We plan to

have these programs wrap around key educational issues and connect with the critical facets of childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood. Towards that, the programs will include assessments, grading, literacy, mathematics, English as a second language, distance learning, child safety, the Internet, World Wide Web, and will also feature an alumni panel in which we invite recent graduates back to speak about their Roxbury experience and to help both parents and current

high school students prepare for the rigors of current higher academics. We are very proud that we are able to put this parent series forth and hope that you will find the time to come out to one or more sessions. You can find information about the parent series on the Roxbury website and once you have reviewed them, should you have any questions, feel free to contact us for more information.

Digitizing the District

Our number one area of focus for the 2009/2010 academic term is to bring the district to a much higher digital platform. We began that process last year by way of our transformation of the school district website and the result we feel is a much improved main portal of information at www.roxbury.org.

If you look at the website, you will notice a lot of features in terms of current news, forms that are necessary for parents, individualized school and department pages, several features for community, parents, and teachers with an eye for much greater future development of the website.

This year, our focus is on implementing a student information system (SIS) that will house all of our data and much more. Known as Genesis, this SIS will contain everything you can possibly imagine about a student's career profile for the Roxbury Township School District. Some bits of this information include: report cards, standardized assessment results,

health information, attendance information, discipline records, and so on and so forth.

Beyond that, Genesis will ultimately house a digital student portfolio that will contain samples of student work, relevant and



current achievement profiles, and ultimately will follow the student throughout his or her academic career and become part of a digital transmission for a college application. Moreover, Genesis will enable parents to have access to online gradebooks on a regular basis. Through a log-in

and password, parents will be able to access their child's academic progress at Lincoln/Roosevelt, Eisenhower Middle School, and Roxbury High School. From there, we seek to create a link for parents to connect with their child's teacher by way of current daily assignments. The homework link component will afford parents and students the opportunity to make sure they haven't missed

an assignment and they know what is expected of them from day to day. We believe Genesis will greatly enhance and improve the experience of all of our students and our parents with the school district. Most importantly,

we believe it will improve academic performance because the more parents are connected to what is going on during the day in school, the more they can reinforce that process and help their children achieve. We ask that you please be patient with us as we roll out this program and iron out which what will in evidently be glitches with such a comprehensive and sophisticated application.

“People will forget what you said, forget what you did but never forget how you made them feel.”

~ Maya Angelou

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For more district information,
please visit our website at

www.roxbury.org

Roxbury's Mission Statement:

“Provide a fundamental base of knowledge and educational challenge for all students; strive for individual excellence by promoting high expectations within the community consistent with financial resources. Provide a supportive environment to encourage the achievement of excellence and success in all aspects of student life; develop an appreciation of diverse values and ethics necessary for productive, independent adults to function within a multi-cultural world.”

Benchmarking for Student Achievement

Benchmark assessments are tests aligned to state standards administered throughout the school year. They provide teachers with formative feedback on how students are progressing toward achieving proficiency as defined by those standards. Benchmark tests are designed to advance teaching and learning and are supplemental to classroom assessments. Each benchmark assessment contains items that target subsets of the standards. These assessments promote growth in both content and assessment expertise.

During parent conferences, teachers will share areas of strengths and areas in need of improvement as demonstrated on benchmark assessments, as they do all areas of the student's progress, but not the benchmark assessments themselves. The primary purpose of using benchmark assessments is to provide teachers with information regarding individual student skill development. They are not grades and should not be construed as such for summative functions. Importantly, results



are not to be used to compare students, groups or teacher performance. Benchmarks are designed to guide and inform the teaching and learning process, intended toward individualized instruction.