

# The Raymond Road Runner

ECRWSS

A Jordan-Small School & Town of Raymond Publication

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FEBRUARY, 2000

## A Preview to the March 18th Town Meeting

By: Nathan Poore, Town Manager

It's difficult to believe that it's finally starting to feel like winter and it's also hard to believe another March Town Meeting is approaching. In addition to my office being busy in preparation for the big event, the Board of Selectmen and several other boards and committees have been working diligently. I am writing this article to provide the voters with a preview of some of the issues that will probably be on the Town Meeting warrant. The meeting has been scheduled for March 18, 2000 at 10:00 AM in the Jordan Small School gymnasium. Local Elections will be held March 17, 2000 from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM in the Jordan Small School gymnasium.

**Municipal Budget:** The Board of Selectmen and Budget - Finance Committee will have nearly finished their work on the proposed Fiscal Year 2000 Budget by the time this paper is published. As of January 24, 2000, the proposed budget includes both an increase in expenditures and an esti-

imated increase in non-property taxes such as excise taxes and state revenue sharing. The FY00/01 proposed municipal expenditure budget (not including school and county appropriations) includes an increase of 10%. Gross expenditures are up \$212,662 while non-property tax revenues are projected to increase by \$309,000 (including the use of \$150,000 from current fund balance) which is a 30% increase. The net decrease of \$96,338 is the difference in gains from the expenditures and the gain in revenues. Net municipal expenditures are remaining fairly level because of the significant increases in non-property tax revenues over the past few years. The projected increase in gross municipal expenditures is spread somewhat evenly among various service delivery areas with the exception of one significant proposal that includes spending \$115,000 to continue the design efforts for a new fire station to replace District One Station located on Main Street.

**Fire Station Design Proposal:** At the 1999 March Town Meeting, voters agreed to spend \$5,500 on a feasibility analysis of the existing District 1 station to see if it could be renovated and expanded or to see if there was a need to build a new station. The Board of Selectmen established a citizen committee to conduct the study with the help of a professional architect. The final analysis recommends building a new station to meet the modern demands and safety mandates of the Fire Department. It is anticipated that a proposal for funding construction may be ready for a vote at the 2001 Annual Town Meeting. Also in the works, the Town has been talking with a property owner who is interested in donating land to the Town for a new fire station.

**Jones' Beach a/k/a Raymond Beach Proposal:** It has been several years since the Town has considered taking any action on this property located along Route 302 and Jordan Bay. The Town is working with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife (DIFW), Maine Department of Transportation

(MDOT) and several other entities including the owner of the property, St. Joseph's College. The proposal calls for DIFW to purchase the property and make substantial improvements to provide for a safer facility that can also be managed and controlled. Under the proposal, the Town will be required to manage and maintain the facility. In the past the Town has not agreed to take any responsibility of this facility. The difference with this year's proposal is that there are resources available to make improvements to the facility so that it can be efficiently managed. Without improving the facility it is not safe nor is it manageable, so it's understandable why the Town opposed past proposals.

**Route 302 Development and Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District:** The citizen committee overseeing this effort has had great success during the past year. They managed to hire an experienced consulting team, which includes civil engineers and landscape architects. The committee and consulting team convinced the Maine Department of *Continued on page 3*

### RoadRunner Articles Due

Articles for the next edition of the RoadRunner newsletter are due by February 15th. Please provide them by any of the following methods:

**E-Mail; Diskette; Paper**  
Articles should be saved in Rich Text Format (RTF)

**Send School Related Articles To:**  
n.richard@raymondmaine.org  
or drop at Principal's Office

**Send Town related articles To:**  
nathan.poore@raymondmaine.org  
or drop at Town Hall

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<http://www.raymondmaine.org>

Look under Events & News



## Principal's Corner

By: Norma Richard

In today's Roadrunner we are outlining the first fund-raising campaign for the Raymond Elementary School Playground. The anticipated costs for the playground equipment are \$25,000. We are looking to our community for assistance in raising these funds. The first campaign is the CENTURY CAMPAIGN. Our goal is to have 250 donations of \$100 to purchase the equipment and have it installed on the school site. We would like to recognize our first generous contributors, Mr. and Mrs. Donald Ritter and the Raymond PTA. The PTA will be designated the distinction of being MILLENNIUM contributors with their \$1,000 donation. On behalf of our students and staff I want to thank all community members and

friends in advance for their support of the CENTURY CAMPAIGN.

We are currently researching the feasibility of initiating a full-day kindergarten program next fall as we move into the Raymond Elementary School. A full-day program would have the kindergarten children attending school from 8:30 - 3:15 each day, following the half-day schedule on Wednesday. Parents who prefer to have their child attend for a half-day only would be given the option of picking up their child at school at midday. Due to current space restrictions we are unable to offer a full-day program at Jordan-Small. The new elementary school has wonderful classrooms for a kindergarten program and the space to extend the program to full-day. In our research we are discovering some very positive benefits of a full-day program. These benefits include more time for

instruction, more opportunities for creative play and exploration, more time for language and math activities, and increased opportunities for socialization. Kindergarten students would have a more consistent schedule, and there would be fewer transitions due to the child care issues with a half-day program. Parent input is valuable to us as we research this issue. We will be surveying kindergarten and preschool parents, as well as inviting them to meet with the kindergarten staff to discuss this issue. Please do not hesitate to call me directly if you have questions concerning a full-day kindergarten program.

We would like to remind parents and visitors to Jordan-Small that the exit doors leading into the cafeteria/gym area will be locked between the hours of 8:45 and 3:00. Please check in with the office when visiting the school.

## Raymond Recycling Committee Makes Recommendation

### Curbside:

The current curbside recycling program is working quite well. Because materials are monitored by the collection workers, we are able to successfully unload quality recyclable materials to the Lewiston recycling facility. With the extra materials that Lewiston accepts, we have increased our recycling tonnage within this program.

Compared to 5.3 tons per month in 1998, we are currently averaging 12.7 tons/month.

### Drop-offs:

On the other hand, we must recognize that the drop-off recycling program is not functioning acceptably in its current state. Rejection of drop-off loads was

always a potential problem, but now that problem has become even more acute. Some loads are immediately rejected because of contamination, and because of

changed. The long term solution appears to be to gain a contract with the RWS facility in Portland, where recycling loads are dumped, spread, and decontaminated. Nathan Poore has negotiated with them, and has taken a typical load down to their facility. Decontamination was possible with this load, so it appears that this facility will be able to accept our drop-off bins. However, it will probably be another three months before a contract can be established.

The Recycling Committee recommended the Board of Selectmen remove the drop-off bins until a contract with RWS can be established. On January 18th the Board of Selectmen agreed with the recommendation.

### DROP OFF RECYCLING TO STOP

Because of constant problems with contamination in the drop-off recycling containers at Sheri Gagnon Park and the District 2 Fire Station, the containers will be removed as of February 4th. Curbside recycling will continue on the current schedule of every other week. Drop-off service will be continued at a later date if a recycling vendor can be found.

some problems with loads that were accepted, our rate of rejection is now 100%.

The committee has looked into various options, and decided that education through articles and signs was the most feasible plan of action. However, after several months of this, very little has

## Raymond Village Library

### Storytime

Storytime for toddlers and pre-school children is on Thursday mornings at 9:30. February's theme is Friendship and Family. There will be no Storytime during February school vacation.

If you are interested in helping with Storytime, please contact Lori Rand at 655-4277.

### Writing/Bookmaking Workshop for Children

The library would like to offer a writing/bookmaking workshop for young school-aged children during February vacation. Elizabeth Roundy, a published author, will lead the group in a one-hour bookmaking project tailored to age and ability level. Children will brainstorm, write, edit, draw and bind the book, according to their ability. The age groups targeted for this workshop are Kindergarten and grade 1, and grades 2 and 3. If there is sufficient interest, other age groups are possible.

The workshop will be offered Wednesday, February 23 in the early afternoon (a specific time will depend on sign-up numbers). Please call or sign up at the library if your child is interested in attending. There is no fee, but donations are welcome. For more information call Lori at 655-4277.

### Reading Group

There will be no reading group in February. The next meeting will be March 2 at 7 pm at the library. The book being discussed at this time is "Irons in the Fire", by John McPhee.

### Other Items of Interest

The library will be closed on February 21, in honor of President's Day. There will be no Storytime on February 24, due to school vacation. Remember the library is closing at 7 PM on Monday and Wednesday during January and February.

### CMP Handbook Explained

Did you receive your Power Handbook in the mail, telling you everything you need to know about the changes in Maine's electric industry? And are you just as confused as before? There will be a meeting for the public at the Raymond Village Library on Wednesday, February 9 at 7 PM with Mark Kreider, Energy Services Engineer, from CMP to talk about electricity and choosing a supplier. So mark your calendars and plan to attend. For more information call the library at 655-4283.

## American Legion Winter Fest

The Ladies Auxiliary Group of the American Legion Post 155 in Naples, Maine, along with the cooperation of the Son's of the Legion and the American Legion itself, are having a Winter Carnival 2000. This is to celebrate the new millennium and also to show appreciation for the people who live in surrounding communities. This is an event for people of all ages, and it is being especially geared to the youth of our communities.

The Winter Carnival will start with a dance for adults on February 19th from 8:00 PM to midnight. The main events for the carnival will be starting at 10:00 AM on February 20th and include broom hockey, snowmobile poker rally, snowman contest, and face painting. There will also be a dance on the 20th from 5:00 - 7:00 PM for kids ages 8 and up. The American Legion will be creating a non-profit youth fund, and all money donations will be set aside for this fund and will be spent on the many different youth events in the community. Any and all donations, no matter what they are, will be accepted and appreciated immensely.

For further information regarding this event, please contact Julie Michaud at the American Legion @ 693-6285 or at home 655-3564 before 2:00 PM; Marty Driscoll at home @ 693-5013 after 7:00 PM; or Randy Shane at 647-3646.

## Kindergarten Screening

Screening for children who will be entering Kindergarten in September (five years old on or before October 15) will be held Wednesday afternoons on March 8 and 22 from 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Please call Chrystal at the school (655-4743) to set up an appointment for one of the two dates.

An Informational Parent's Night for Screening will be held on Tuesday, February 29 at 7:00 p.m. in the school cafeteria.

## NYA Athletic Recognition

Two Raymond students were recognized for their contributions to the fall sports teams at North Yarmouth Academy at the recent Athletic Recognition Evening.

Senior Amy Stone was named a Western Maine Class C All Star in Field Hockey.

Freshman Abby Hutchinson received the Coach's Award for JV Field Hockey.

## To All Contributors to Raymond's Holiday Helpers Program:

The Holiday Helpers Thanksgiving and Christmas Food and Gift Baskets volunteers would like to thank the many individuals, organizations and local businesses that helped make the holidays better for some of Raymond's families. The list of supporters is so overwhelming that it is far too long to acknowledge publicly (over 50 families and groups!), but we are grateful to all who participated in the effort. Many children, young adults, and parents now have food and some holiday treats to get them through some of our most challenging months.

The outpouring of support from fellow Raymond citizens and surrounding communities confirms our belief that we live in a great region filled with caring people. We have learned a great deal about the Christmas spirit from them and from everyone involved. Thank you again for your participation, and best wishes for a happy and healthy New Year.

Sincerely,  
Lisa and Laurie

## Hebron Academy

### Fall Trimester Honors

The Hebron Academy Upper School Director of Studies, Silver Moore-Leamon, announces the honor roll for the Fall Trimester of the 1999-2000 academic year. Raymond students achieving honor roll status include: Highest Honors - Jamie Fey, Giselle Pomerleau and Timothy Curtis; High Honors - Erica Sanchez and Kevin DeSorbo; Honors - Benjamin Krauter and Seth Conger.

The Director of the Hebron Academy Middle School, Leslie A Guenther, announces the following Raymond students achieving honor roll status: High Honors - Katrina Draper; Honors - Bethaney Cayer.

## Raymond PTA

### February Meeting

The Raymond PTA will meet on Thursday, February 10 at 7 PM in the JSS library. Child care will be available. We hope that you can attend.

# February 2000

## Events and Meeting Schedule

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<b>1</b> 6:30-7:30AM JS Walk for Health 7:00PM TH Selectmen	<b>2</b> 7:00PM JS School Committee	<b>3</b> 6:30-7:30AM JS Walk for Health 9:30AM VL Story Time 6:30PM KC Lions Club	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>6</b> 6:00PM TH Republican Caucus	<b>7</b> 7:00PM TH Budget/Finance Committee 7:00PM VL Historical Society	<b>8</b> Recycling Pickup 6:30-7:30AM JS Walk for Health	<b>9</b> Recycling Pickup	<b>10</b> 6:30-7:30AM JS Walk for Health 9:30AM VL Story Time 7:00PM JS PTA	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 7:00PM TH Planning Board Public Hearing	<b>15</b> 6:30-7:30AM JS Walk for Health 7:00PM TH Selectmen	<b>16</b> 5:30PM JS Senior Citizens Supper 7:00PM JS School Committee 7:30PM FB Ladies Auxiliary	<b>17</b> 6:30-7:30AM JS Walk for Health 9:30AM VL Story Time 6:30PM KC Lions Club	<b>18</b> 8:45AM JS Good News	<b>19</b> TOWN OFFICE CLOSED
<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>  NO SCHOOL February Vacation	<b>22</b> Recycling Pickup 6:30-7:30AM JS Walk for Health 7:00PM VL Library Board Meeting  NO SCHOOL February Vacation	<b>23</b> Recycling Pickup  NO SCHOOL February Vacation	<b>24</b> 6:30-7:30AM JS Walk for Health 7:00PM TH Cemetery Committee 7:00PM VL Reading Group NO SCHOOL February Vacation	<b>25</b>  Appeals Board Deadline for December Meeting  NO SCHOOL February Vacation	<b>26</b>
<b>27</b>	<b>28</b> 7:00PM TH Appeals Board	<b>29</b> 7:00PM JS Conservation Commission 7:00PM JS Kindergarten Screening Parents Night			TH=Town Hall JS=Jordan-Small KC=Kokatosi Campgnd TG=Town Garage RT85 FB=Fire Barn VL=Village Library	<b>To Be Announced</b> 7:00PM TH Diabetes Meeting 6:30PM JS Middle School Dev Com 7:00PM TH Recycling Committee

## Dog Licensing

Beginning February 1st and until April 1st there will be an additional \$3.00 charge for licensing your dogs. If you are renewing a license in Raymond and the Rabies Certificate is current in the year 2000 or later, you do not need proof of your Rabies vaccination. If your dog has not been licensed in Raymond before, you will need a current Maine Rabies Certificate and if neutered, a Maine Neutering Certificate. The fee for neutered dogs is \$5.00 each and non-neutered dogs \$8.50 each plus the \$3.00 late fee. After April 1st the late fee will be \$10.00.

Please remember that the licensing fees are used by the Town's Animal Control Officer to take care of the animals which are found as strays. The State's share of the money is used to fund the Animal Welfare Office and the Maine State Veterinary, his office and laboratory.

## Town Hall Drop Off Mail Box

The Town Office is still looking for responses from people who would like a drop off mail box at the Town Office. So far we have received only eight requests and feel that would not be enough to impress the Post Office. If you feel this would be an advantageous addition to the Town, please let the Town Office know by phone (655-4742), in person, or by mail (401 Webbs Mills Road).

## Direct Care Position

Progressive people wanted to work part time or per diem with a 19-year-old woman with autism and mental retardation.

An idyllic setting in Raymond on a 200 year old, 3 acre farm with gardening, animal care, baking, recycling, and arts and crafts as some of the highlights.

We are looking for people who believe we all have a right to choices and that every one of us has a gift within ourselves to offer others.

Come join us as we assist this young woman and others like her to reach her full potential in a natural home-like setting and with an educated holistic approach to their well being.

When interested, please call 655-3196 any day 6a.m.-10p.m. for an interview. Please ask for Donna Thibodeau or Jane Gagnier.

### SENIOR CITIZEN DINNER FOR FEBRUARY 16, 2000

Baked Lasagna - Meat or Vegetable  
Tossed Salad  
Hot Yeast Rolls and Italian Breadsticks  
Cherry Crisp with topping

## Town Meeting

### *Continued from page 1*

Transportation to grant a request for increased support and commitment toward improvements to Route 302. The reasons for the State's promise to increase its commitment was driven mostly by the Town's commitment to share responsibility in the overall effort. The following represents a brief description of the committee's vision:

#### **Goals of the Project:**

To improve safety for vehicles and pedestrians  
To control the speed of vehicles  
To improve the ease and safety of ingress and egress for businesses.  
To improve the visual character of the corridor

#### **Progress to date:**

The Town completed a Route 302 Business District Study Traffic and Access Management Plan in March 1999. This plan contained specific recommendations to meet the goals of the project.

## Raymond's Food Pantry

**By: Diane Goosetrey**

The Raymond Food Pantry is now well stalked because of so many donations by Raymond residents. Bright Beginnings Daycare on Roosevelt Trail, Jordan Small School students and teachers, as well as Chris Lum have been so generous with their food donations. Also Joyce and Norman Heald have donated their time and effort in sorting and storing the food in the Pantry.

If you know anyone who needs assistance, please let them know that this Pantry is available. Food can be received during regular office hours at the Town Office. Anyone can also meet with the Pantry manager by appointment who will pack bags of food to their choosing which can include meat, bread, fruit and fresh items when available. Recipients of Pantry food will be held in confidence and they can get their food at a time convenient for the recipient and the Pantry manager.

Coats for Kids has given a bag of cleaned children's winter coats to keep them warm during the cold weather. These coats are available to any child who needs one. The food and coats are available by calling 428-3206, or the Town Office at 655-4742.

## Jordan-Small Teachers Awarded Seed Grants

The Maine Center for Excellence has awarded a Project SEED Grant for the proposal "ASK+" to Ann Marie Malnati, Judy Tounge and Norman Hjort. This year's SEED grants focused on innovative uses of technology in Maine's schools. ASK+ is a newly expanded version of last year's ASK - Accessing Scientists to Kids. Students have the opportunity to pose questions to a variety of professionals, including scientists, politicians, economists and educators, via the Internet. These professionals respond to the students' questions and return their responses via email. ASK+ provides students with a first-hand opportunity to practice writing skills through their correspondence. ASK+ also provides students with a wide variety of professional role models who take a unique interest in their learning. This program has been endorsed by Maine's Commissioner of Education and is a wonderful example of the use of technology in expanding and enhancing learning at Jordan-Small. We would like to congratulate Mrs. Malnati, Mrs. Tounge and Mr. Hjort on the grant award and on this fine program.

## Presidential Primary Election

**By: Louise Lester, Deputy Town Clerk**

On March 7th there will be a Presidential Preference Primary from 7:00 am to 8:00 pm at the Jordan Small School gymnasium.

The Town staff has met with the MDOT who has agreed to upgrade their overlay project to include a full survey and limited drainage improvements. This resulted in savings to Raymond in excess of \$20,000 and improved coordination with MDOT.

A consulting Team has been retained to develop construction plans implementing the recommendations contained in the Traffic and Access Management Plan. This team will work closely with the Town and the MDOT to develop plans.

#### **"The Vision"**

The plan will articulate the Town's vision of a uniform theme throughout the corridor. Some of the improvement which are being designed include various changes to driveways to improve safety, crosswalks at appropriate locations, additional signalization at certain locations, sidewalks in selected locations, and drainage improvements. In addition to these improvements, a major focus of the plan will be to develop landscaping and signage changes to improve the visual character of the corridor.

This will be the second year voters will be asked to fund

### P.R.O.P. REPRESENTATIVE NEEDED

The Board of Selectmen are asking for a volunteer to be Raymond's delegate to the People's Regional Opportunity Program (P.R.O.P.). This person would sit on P.R.O.P.'s Board of Directors which oversees the goals of the agency in caring for low-income citizens in the Greater Portland area which includes Raymond. The meeting commitment would be every second Tuesday of the month from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm in the Portland office. If you are interested, please call Nathan Poore at 655-4742.

## Raymond Fire/Rescue Honor Night

The Raymond Fire/Rescue Honor Night took place on November 6, 1999 at Ryan's Seafood in Raymond. The night consisted of a wonderful Buffet put on by Ryan's Seafood. We would like to honor the following members who received the awards:

Most Improved Firefighter: Shawn Hebert  
Most Improved Rescue Member: Tina Whitney  
Rescue Member of The Year: Theresa Skillings  
Firefighter of The Year: Lloyd Thompson  
Can do Attitude: Cheryl Bailey  
EMS Officer of The Year: Bob Yates  
Fire Officer of The Year: Chris Champagne  
Dispatcher of The Year: Sandy Salmonson  
Support Services of The Year: Bill Parker and Sign Co.  
Community Service Award: Bennett Electric

The members of the Raymond Fire and Rescue Department would like to thank Ryan's Seafood for a wonderful evening of food, and dancing; Action Music, owner Dave Biron for the excellent job as a DJ; and All Star Trophy and Awards, owner Don Ferry for the beautiful awards.

## NYA Winter Honor Roll

The following Raymond residents were recognized at the recent Honors Assembly for their academic achievement in the First Trimester.

#### **Highest Honors:**

Amanda Dodson, Renee Fortin, Ben White, William Yates

#### **High Honors:**

Colin Bumby, Lizzie Crockett, Matt Fortin, Bridget Gagne

#### **Honors:**

Zachary Fey, Ben Hutchinson, Amy Stone

a budget under the Tax Increment Financing District. As with last year, voters will be asked to fund the program that will enable the Town to continue to move forward with the Route 302 effort, now in partnership with the State of Maine. Funding through this program is different than other budgetary items because all the money in the TIF program is sheltered from formulas the State uses when determining revenues to the Town through the Municipal Revenue Sharing Program and General Purpose Aid to Education. The TIF budget is also sheltered from County Taxation.

There will be other issues at Town Meeting such as the standard articles that are voted on each year. The Planning Board will be presenting several proposals to make changes to the Land Use Ordinance and the Town will be asked to vote on the School Department Budget.

As is always the case, I welcome anyone and everyone to contact me if you would like more information on any of the issues discussed in this article. The Town Report will contain additional information and will be mailed in early March. The final warrant for Town Meeting will be available no later than March 11, 2000. For more information contact Nathan Poore at 655-4742.



**RAYMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
CENTURY CAMPAIGN  
To Raise Funds for our Playground**

The construction funds for the Raymond Elementary School do not include playground equipment. We are currently fund-raising to purchase and install a playground at the new elementary school. The playground is an essential part of our elementary program, providing the opportunity for social play and physical activity during the school day. With the assistance of Marturano Recreation Co., and with input from many children and staff, we have designed a playground that will include slides, climbing walls, climbers, bridges, and other components to encourage physical and imaginative play. The anticipated cost for the playground is approximately \$25,000.

From February 1 to April 1 we are initiating our first fund-raising effort for the playground. This is the **CENTURY CAMPAIGN**. During this campaign we are soliciting donations of \$100 from Raymond families, individuals, businesses, alumni, or friends. Our goal in the **CENTURY CAMPAIGN** is 250 donations.

Your \$100 contribution to the **CENTURY CAMPAIGN** will accomplish the following:

- \* It is a tax-deductible contribution.
- \* You will receive a personal thank you and letter to confirm your donation.
- \* All contributions will be used to purchase and install the playground equipment.
- \* The playground will be used by hundreds of students each year.
- \* The playground will benefit thousands of Raymond children during the coming years.
- \* You will be recognized as a member of the playground **CENTURY CAMPAIGN**.
- \* Consider asking your business or employer to match your donation of \$100.



We want to thank you in advance for your generous contributions. All donations can be made payable to "Jordan-Small School" and earmarked for the "Playground Fund". **Please return the following information with your donation.**

**RAYMOND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
CENTURY CAMPAIGN  
To Raise Funds for our Playground**

**YES, I/We will contribute \$100 to the Raymond Elementary School Playground's CENTURY CAMPAIGN.**

**Name(s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Town** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**This donation is in memory of:** \_\_\_\_\_

**YES, My business/employer will match this donation.**

**Business Name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mailing Address** \_\_\_\_\_

**Town** \_\_\_\_\_ **State** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip Code** \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to:**  
**Jordan-Small School**  
**423 Webb's Mills Road**  
**Raymond, ME 04071**

## Poland Middle School Committee Update

Our first meeting was canceled so this update centers on the 1/10/00 meeting. In attendance were Principal Soycek, Dean of Faculty Pierce, many of the 7th and 8th grade staff and 5 parents (including myself). The group began by setting an agenda and planning the time needed for each item of which there were five. I began by giving a brief discussion of the current challenges faced by the Raymond community in terms of our future middle school and the desire by some to start the middle school one year early.

Next we discussed the Poland Middle School scheduling issues. Due to the influx of students into the school the "specials" such as music and gym do not have enough options yet to provide as rounded a program as desired. My son is one of those affected in that he cannot fit his schedule into any specials unless he was to quit his participation in band. Poland will hire the staff necessary to open up the schedules for next year. Also in this discussion we looked at world languages. With teacher shortages in Maine, language opportunities are tight. The plan is to offer French, German, Latin, Spanish and possibly American Sign Language next year to 8th grade students. The following year this will include 7th grade students. As in Raymond, Poland already is looking at much more limited space for programming.

To their credit, they are starting to plan now.

The third item looked at the work done by a sub committee over the holidays to create a process and policy for involvement of all the community in the school decision process. I was a part of that committee as well as another parent, two teachers and two students from the student government. We created a statement that guides the abilities and empowerment of all community members. A flow chart also demonstrates relationships of the parties: Parents, students, teachers and administrators. The idea of this work was to define what decisions each group can and cannot make. The committee I serve on oversees all groups and is the step prior to the School Committee in Middle School issues. After discussion and "tweaking" this process was approved. It will be shared with the student body and hopefully will guide them as they create a culture and rules.

The final item concerned the reporting process from the school to parents/children. The school is providing two progress reports prior to grades in January and then two more reports before the grades again go out at the close of the year. In other words there are two graded report periods per school year. The progress reports are written

assessments and there is also an opportunity to attend student led conferences twice a year. This grading process is stressful to some and at best, new practice to others. The reports also are not traditional A, B, C's but use defined words like Exemplary, Accomplished, Competent, Novice and Unacceptable. Students are given a chart that defines each and thus students know how to get to an Exemplary level or what Unacceptable is. It really challenges all of us to be a part of our kids education. I understand that colleges do not have issue with these scores as they can be converted if needed to more traditional ratings. At this meeting two parents were quite upset that the Middle School and High School use different ratings. The Educators felt that this reflected the unique differences in the schools. This discussion grew heated at times but was tabled as time ran down. All seemed to be aiming toward making the reporting process as strong and informative as possible.

The next meeting will be on January 24th at 2:20 and I plan to attend. In a sense I am representing Raymond at this point. Feel free to let me know any problems or positives you would like to convey to this committee.

Mike McClellan