



the Andover Beacon

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AE/MS faculty took a break from planning the new year to pose for this group portrait on the new gym floor. The light floor, white walls, and uncovered windows make it seem like a whole new space. Staff photo: Charlie Darling

There's A Lot New At AE/MS This Year!

By Jane Slayton
Principal, AE/MS

Summer vacation came to an end as students arrived on August 25 for their first day of school. Eager and enthusiastic students piled out of the school buses, reuniting with friends and anticipating new teachers and classrooms. One of the wonderful things about school is that sense of starting over every year. Everything is new at the start of a school year!

There are many changes that come with a new school year. The sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students have a new vocabulary program. We know that explicit vocabulary instruction has a direct effect on reading success. Reading comprehension and vocabulary knowledge are intricately linked. Activities will tie reading and vocabulary together so that students build both skills concurrently.

The first through fifth grade students will also see some changes within their literacy block. We will have a new vocabulary and spelling component that will provide some consistency from grade to grade. It complements the phonics program in kindergarten and then transitions nicely into the middle school literacy structure.

Online Learning

Another new addition to our school year is that AE/MS has partnered with the Virtual Learning Academy Charter School (VLACS). This provides AE/MS with options to expand our curriculum. We have an elementary student who will be able to take advanced math courses while staying with his peer group in the classroom. We will also be offering the opportunity for seventh and eighth grade students to take Spanish.

VLACS is an approved New Hampshire public school. Courses available are at the middle school, high school, and college level. Classes are taught online by certified teachers. There is no cost to the Andover School District for this partnership.

We are able to access rigorous, personalized instruction anytime, anywhere. Instructors communicate with the students through VLACS' Web-based course management system. The system enables instructors to upload and share materials, hold online discussions and chats, give quizzes, gather and review assignments, and post grades. The system is password-protected and meets stringent privacy and security standards.

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Watch Out For School Buses!

AE/MS Bus Driver Teri Lee asks everyone to remember these important safety rules:

Stop For School Buses!

School bus yellow caution lights come on at least 100 feet before a planned stop. Watch out for students who may cross the street before the red lights start flashing.

School bus red lights mean *traffic in both directions must stop!*

Never pass a stopped school bus on the right!

Violations Can Be Costly

Being convicted of ignoring a school bus' flashing red lights can mean up to \$1,000 in fines and suspension of your license for 30 days.

Being convicted of passing a stopped school bus on the right can cost you up to \$1,200 and up to a 120-day suspension.

And who knows how much it will cost you in increased auto insurance premiums, and for how long!

Blue Storm Sports Programs Welcome Andover Athletes

By Donna Newcomb

Blue Storm Sports

Blue Storm Sports provides the youth of Merrimack Valley and the greater Concord area with the opportunity to participate in football, lacrosse, indoor soccer, and cheerleading for football.

Our football program includes three teams consisting of children grades two through seven. Our two lacrosse teams play in the spring and consist of children ages seven through 13. During the

winter, Blue Storm has many indoor soccer teams made up of both boys and girls ages seven through 16.

We have had participants from Loudon, Penacook, Boscawen, Salisbury, Webster, and Concord, and during the indoor soccer season we have had players from as far away as the Plymouth area.

Andover children are welcome, and Blue Storm will accept players See Blue Storm on page 45



To bring the Burden Trail at Blackwater Ski Area up to official ski racing standards, a crew dynamited "The Waterfall" (a granite ledge) last month.

Photo: Lynn George

Proctor Academy Begins School Year With 352 Students

By Chuck Will
Proctor Academy

Proctor opened the 2009-10 school year with the largest student population in history. Three hundred and fifty-two students come from 29 states and 12 countries. The number of day students has grown to 93, of which 13 are Andover residents.

Over the summer, the faculty residence on Lawrence Street previously known as Blue Manor was renamed

Cangiano House in honor of long-time trustee Mark Cangiano. That facility's three apartments were also improved.

In other news, the Burden Trail at the Blackwater Ski Area has been "homologated," or brought up to official USSA and FIS racing code. The trail at the top of the T-bar lift is wider, enabling races to start near the top of the hill, and a granite ledge known as The Waterfall was blasted and removed.