Dear Rivendell Families,

It continues to be a busy and engaging year at the Academy. The 28 students visiting from Saverne, France arrived on October 15th. The host parents and Ms. Keefer deserve applause for all the work that they put into this very special Rivendell program. Our exchange program benefits greatly from Ms. Keefer’s commitment to building long-term relationships between the kids, families, and teachers. In less than two years, the students spend approximately four weeks with each other. Ms. Rizos is busy with fundraising for the spring trip to Peru. She was recently awarded a large staff-development scholarship from Dartmouth which she intends to use to do a preliminary visit to Peru over the February break. The international experiences of the Academy faculty add a unique and important dimension to our school.

Our soccer and cross-country athletes had great seasons. Both boys and girls teams were competitive through the quarter and semi-finals. Liam Fleming placed 8th in Division III. Rivendell also had five students on Oxbow football teams. The Athletic Leadership Council ran a successful Red Cross Blood Drive in October. A big thanks to our coaches, parents, and Athletic Director, Bob Thatcher, for keeping everything running smoothly during the fall sports season.

Student government officers, Josh Marshal and Megan Perkins, presented a plan to address the Thursday lunch-time traffic jam caused by a combined all-school lunch. By working with Mr. Galli and talking to teachers, they presented a very slight change to the faculty that extends the lunch by shaving two minutes off several blocks. Their plan was simple, well-researched, and maintained all the important elements of our current schedule. It received a unanimous vote of approval from faculty.

Our three-way conferences ran smoothly. As we continue to develop our electronic portfolios, the conferences will become more valuable as a place for students, advisors and parents to discuss students’ accomplishments and goals for the future.

This trimester we changed the format of the academic concern notices by mailing out the grade reports from teachers’ electronic gradebooks. All parents of students with failing grades received reports showing grades and missing assignments, and these reports have also been extremely useful to me in working with individual students. We will send these out twice next trimester.

Congratulations to Doc Browne and the robotics team for receiving a $15,000 grant from the Byrne Foundation. The team has set up the “field” in the new “workshop” space in the west wing. Their first tournament is November 23 in Conway, NH.

Each year, I have been tracking the number of failing grades and number of students with failing grades at the midpoint and end of each trimester. I have also converted the raw numbers into percentages to account for changes in enrollment. The chart below shows that the number of students with F’s, which is particularly disappointing at mid-trimester this year:
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<td>116</td>
<td>118</td>
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<td><strong>% classes failed out of possible classes</strong></td>
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<td>78</td>
<td>64</td>
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<td><strong>% of students failing 1 or more classes</strong></td>
<td>31.08%</td>
<td>28.57%</td>
<td>29.82%</td>
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To better understand the high numbers, I went through 50% of the grade book reports of students who receive one or more F’s. From looking at the reports, the primary cause of low grades was a lack of follow-through on assignments and opportunities given by teachers to improve grades. There were very, very few students with a failing grade that had done all assignments, had taken opportunities to do extra credit assignments, or had retaken tests. In other words, students were not failing because they couldn’t do the work. On the contrary, these students had high grades on the work that they had turned in. Some students are not good test takers; this was clear from examining the grades of several students. Yet, the pattern for this particular sub-group was that they had not done test preparation work that counted as extra-credit or allowed them to retake a test if they did poorly on it. (The idea with the test prep approach is that students who try to prepare for a test but do poorly deserve a second chance.) My general conclusion is that too many students are not following through on enough of their work. If they did all their work and took advantage of opportunities to retake tests, their grades could easily be in the 80’s in all classes.

There were 147 students who did not receive a failing grade. I did not look at their grades. My hunch would be that the major difference between most of these students and those that receive F’s would be that they did nearly all the assignments and their test scores were slightly higher (as a result of doing all their assignments).

Teachers and parents can’t do the work for students. Students have to find their own reasons for success. I asked one senior who had struggled with grades in 9th grade why he had so dramatically improved his performance in 10th grade. His answer was simple: “I wanted to get good grades so I could go to a good college.” The point here isn’t that he wanted to go to college. The point is that he made up his own mind to improve, and he did. Academic support, Visions homework help, working in the library with Mr. Reichert after school—none of these supports has really made an impact in reducing failures. Change starts with a decision to see the future and take a step, however small, to make it so.

Parents and guardians that receive report cards with failed classes should assume that the pattern of not doing work will persist during the second trimester. If you want more contact with teachers, call or email and use the grade portal. I will ask teachers to send out emails or call more frequently, but they cannot be burdened with the task of monitoring daily work for every student.

Sincerely,
Keri Gelenian

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**It’s time for Eligibility Cards!**

Students who are participating in any extra-curricular activities during Trimester 2 need to stop by the office December 4 or after and get an Eligibility Card.
Art Skills Trip to the Hood Museum

On November 5th, the Art Skills class took a field trip to the Hood Museum of Art in Hanover. We went to see a show on Picasso and the legacy of Cubism. Our students recently learned about Picasso in class, and were able to engage in the conversation with the docent and make some interesting observations about the work. While on the trip, the students also enjoyed looking at pieces from Picasso's *Vollard Suit* and a photography exhibit, exploring the Hood's permanent collection, checking out a student show at the Black Family Arts Center at Dartmouth and having lunch at the Hopkins Center!

Rivendell in the pink again!

On October 25th, staff & students marked the end of our Breast Cancer Awareness week by gathering for our annual pink portrait.

Operation Santa Claus provides Christmas gifts to the children of families in need. To get an application, please call Kim Merrill (802-866-5019 or Bruce Bishop (802-222-5214 x138). Application deadline is November 22.
Sophomores had a presentation from a representative from The Mountain School this month. Richard Otis (RA Senior) who attended last year, spoke about his experience. Interested students are encouraged to apply by the deadline of Feb. 12th.

Juniors interested in applying to the St. Paul’s Advanced Studies Program, the deadline is December 10th. See Ms. Hall for more information.

Juniors and Seniors interested in taking a Dartmouth College Class this winter trimester, please see Ms. Hall for application materials or visit the Rivendell Academy Guidance website under Academic/Enrichment. Deadline to have all forms to Dartmouth is December 13th.

SENIOORS!!

FAFSA Forms Night
When: Monday, January 6th
Time: 4:00 p.m. or 6:00 p.m.
Where: RA Library

Representatives from VSAC and the Dartmouth College Financial Aid Office will be here to assist families & students with filing their FAFSA form.

Safe Workers

Upper Valley Business Education Partnership (UVBEP) will meet with Seniors during Advisory on Tues. November 26th to review workplace safety, employee rights, employer responsibilities and employment laws in New Hampshire & Vermont.

VSAC Scholarship Books

Scholarship books have arrived and will be reviewed and passed out to seniors during Advisory on December 3rd. The booklet is also available electronically. See RA Guidance website under Financial Aid/Scholarships for link.
France Takes Rivendell by Storm!

On Monday, October 15, in the waning light of the day, 28 students from Saverne, France arrived by school bus at Rivendell Academy. There to greet them, with flags waving and cameras flashing, were our 17 student hosts, many of whom had travelled to France in the spring of last year. Thus began an amazing two weeks at the school and in the hearts of families across the district.

The French group’s impact on our community was swift and powerful. The very next day, the visiting students attended classes, learned about local traditions, and became the Rivendell soccer teams’ number one fans. Over the next two weeks, they attended games where they chanted, cheered, and encouraged our teams to 6 straight wins. Indeed, one of our coaches dubbed our French visitors, “my 12th player”. Our Rivendell students and families showed tremendous hospitality making for a memorable visit to the region. French students attended a Dartmouth football game, the pumpkin festival in Keene, a haunted house, a square dance, an American potluck, and a high school Halloween dance. They climbed Mount Cube, rode four wheelers, shot guns, baked cookies, and tasted marshmallow Fluff for the very first time. Most of all, these students, American and French, deepened their friendships and respect for each other. The French students’ departure for Boston on the 26th was awash in tears, for students and parents alike. Many thanks to all of you that made this exchange a huge success. The next trip to France will be in the spring of 2015. If you are interested in knowing more, contact Gail Keefer at gkeefer@rivendellschool.org.

What’s New in Visions

Visions has started its second session of the year. We offer an hour of academic support, with help available from paraprofessionals and teachers. Mr. Reichert is in the library every Monday through Wednesday to help support students as well. The workshops offered on Mondays include Holiday Wreath Making and Raptor Retail. On Tuesdays, students can join Raptor Retail, Dungeons and Dragons, or help with community service. Again this year, Visions will be supporting Barbara’s Red Stocking by collecting cereal from area residences. In addition, we will be asking the community, as well as students and staff, to donate non-perishable food items which will be given to the local food shelves. We have started up a school magazine that meets on Wednesdays and Mr. Newsted also leads students in organized games in the gym on Wednesdays. For more information, please visit the school website to view the flyer for the current session. You may also contact me at lwheeler@rivendellschool.org. We hope to see new faces joining us.

-Laura Wheeler, RA Visions Site Coordinator
Eight Rivendell Academy students recently travelled to Québec City, Canada. The students were part of a Canadian Studies class and a French III class. While there, they met with the new U.S. Consulate General, Hale VanKoughnett and learned about his path to Foreign Service work and the role of the consulate in Québec. Mr. VanKoughnett also fielded questions on U.S. policy concerning Québec sovereignty, trade with NH and VT, and recent agreements between the states and Hydro-Québec. Other highlights of the trip were visits to the Morrin Center (Quebec’s first jail and college), the Citadel, several art and history museums, and just wandering the streets and stairs of Vieux Québec.
New DVDs were purchased this year and support a variety of areas of Rivendell’s curriculum. A DVD can be a great tool to reinforce a novel or to introduce new material.

**Our Town**
Thorton Wilder’s 1938 three-act play set in the fictional New Hampshire town of Grover’s Corners remains a cornerstone of great American theater. It tells the story of an average town’s citizens in the early twentieth century, as depicted through their everyday lives. Paul Newman returns to Broadway after 38 years, bringing this enduring story of life, love, and mortality to the stage.

**I’m Still Here: Real Diaries of Young People Who Lived During the Holocaust**
This DVD brings the viewer a first-hand view of the horrors of the Holocaust through the eyes of children. The stories of the young Holocaust victims come to life by talented young actors depicting this group of brave, young writers who refused to quietly disappear. This moving documentary skillfully weaves together personal photos, handwritten pages and drawings from diaries and archival film footage. Nominated for two Emmy Awards.

**The Sign of the Beaver**
Elizabeth Speare’s classic coming-of-age novel set in the uncharted Maine wilderness in the 1760s. Thirteen-year-old Matt is put to the test when his father leaves for Quincy, Massachusetts to retrieve the remaining family and Matt is forced to protect their frontier claim alone. After weeks of loneliness, the threat of hostile Indians, a menacing frontiersman and harsh conditions, Matt befriends a Penobscot Indian who in turn offers Matt survival skills and shelter as winter approaches.

**Ulysses**
Based on Homer’s epic tale The Odyssey, this movie stars Kirk Douglas as the hero Ulysses. After victory in the Trojan War, Ulysses and his men embark on a ten-year journey home. Before he can reunite with his beloved wife, Ulysses must deal with the wrath of the gods. He must defeat the Cyclops, escape the spell of Circe and outwit the Sirens. And then, once home, must deal harshly with the suitors who wish to steal his wife and his entire kingdom.
Honors Reception
December 4, 6:00 p.m.
Potluck dinner with dessert provided by the National Honor Society
Recognition program to follow
Invitations will be mailed next week

CONGRATULATIONS TO ANDREW PATON!

Andrew was chosen to represent New Hampshire (along with 3 others from the state) in the USA Games (for Special Olympics) in June 2014 in Princeton, New Jersey. He will be representing New Hampshire on the bowling team.

WINTER SKIING & SKATING PROGRAM

The program begins Thursday, January 2, 2014 - February 6, 2014. February 13th and 20th will be saved for make-up dates if needed. Rivendell Academy students who attend the Winter Program will be released at 12:00 p.m. Winter Program students will be responsible for class time missed, as dismissal at the Academy will remain at 1:45pm.

Registrations are available on our website: www.cso-rivendell.org. Additionally, two sign-up dates will be held at Westshire Elementary and Samuel Morey Elementary on November 20, 2013 5:30-7:00 p.m. and December 4, 2013 5:30-7:00 p.m. All information regarding the programs are available in the Registration Forms. If you have additional questions, please contact Leslie Thomson: (603)353-9735.
Harvest of the Month provides resources for the cafeteria, classroom, and community to promote the use of local, seasonal foods.

**Tidbit**
Kale leaves grow on a thick broccoli-like stock, but are picked off individually and sold in bunches. Kale is very cold-tolerant; it can survive frosts and snowfall. Use raw, massaged kale as the base of a salad or toss it into a soup!

**Cooking Tips**
- Boil or steam kale for 20-30 minutes.
- Removing the stem is ideal for many dishes; rip the leaf from the stem by holding the base of the stem upward and pulling down.

**Recipes**

**Kale Parmesan Salad**

**Yield:** 50 1/2 cup servings of dark green leafy vegetable

**Ingredients:**
- 8 1/2 lbs fresh kale
- 3 cups grape tomatoes
- 1 1/2 cups olive oil (or vegetable oil)
- 2 cups parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup fresh lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste
- garlic powder to taste (optional)

**Directions:**
1. De-stem kale leaves and chop into bite-sized pieces.
2. Cook kale leaves in boiling water until tender, about 3-5 minutes.
3. Drain kale and squeeze dry. Fluff up leaves and transfer to a large bowl. Cool immediately.
4. In a small bowl, combine the oil, lemon juice, parmesan, black pepper and salt.
5. Cut tomatoes in half or quarters; add to small bowl.
6. Add oil mixture to kale, mix to coat, serve chilled.

**Kale Pesto**

**Yield:** 1 1/2 cups or 50 1 tsp, taste test servings

**Ingredients:**
- 4 garlic cloves
- 1 bunch of kale
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 cup parmesan
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- salt and pepper, to taste

**Directions:**
1. Blanch stemmed kale for 30 seconds and drain.
2. Purée garlic and kale in a food processor; gradually adding oil, parmesan, lemon juice, salt and pepper.
Kale

Cafeteria | VermontHarvestoftheMonth.org

Kid-Friendly Eating Tips

- Add raw, thinly-sliced kale to a pasta dish.
- Use kale as the base for a salad; you can mix it in with lettuce leaves. Massaging the kale leaves first makes them softer and therefore easier to chew.
- Make pesto by blending kale like you would basil! Add it to pasta or use it as a sandwich spread.
- Toss kale leaves, stem removed, with olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper; bake in the oven at 350° F.

Selection

Choose leaves that are not wilted and have firm stems.

Storage Tips

- Store in the refrigerator in a perforated plastic bag for 5-10 days.
- To freeze: blanch for 2-3 minutes or until the leaves are soft, then place in a labeled and dated freezer-grade bag.

Benefits

- Kale is an excellent source of vitamins A and C and of potassium. It is a good source of B6 and copper.

Mini Activities

- Have three bags with a different vegetable hidden in each. Have students guess the vegetable by touch. Example: a bunch of kale, a winter squash and beets. Post the results in the school’s cafeteria space!
- Taste test kale with a variety of dressings, such as, maple balsamic vinaigrette, ranch and sesame soy.

Varieties of Kale

- Lacinato (Dinosaur)
- Red Russian
- Ripbor
- White Russian
- Siberian
- Vates

Sources: The Visual Food Encyclopedia, The Encyclopedia of Healing Foods, GMFTS
### ~ November 2013 ~

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December Recess