



# Rock Talk

News you can use from the Glen Rock Board of Education

## Rock Talk

is a publication of the  
Glen Rock Board of Education  
620 Harristown Road  
Glen Rock, NJ 07452  
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*Reprinted from the Back to School 2014 edition*

# A 'Journey to Somewhere'

In May of 2013, the BOE sponsored a viewing of "Race to Nowhere, the Dark Side of America's Achievement Culture." The event featured the film's producer and co-director Vicki Abeles who is leading a national grassroots movement to rethink how students are preparing for life after high school. Over 150 parents (and some students) attended the event, which included an open discussion of the many stressors students face in pursuit of academic success.

District administrators also viewed the film and under the direction of Superintendent Dr. Paula Valenti reviewed existing programs and practices with regards to reducing stress factors for all student populations.

Since then, all schools in the district continue to identify, refine and initiate efforts to assist students in

learning to manage stress and bring more balance into their lives. Highlights for this school year include:

time management and organizational skills. Students also receive information on who they can speak with

tary students feel pressure and can become anxious or feel overwhelmed. Programs in the elementary schools are more focused on development of a sense of community and acceptance of others, which helps to create a calmer, more caring atmosphere conducive to an effective learning environment.

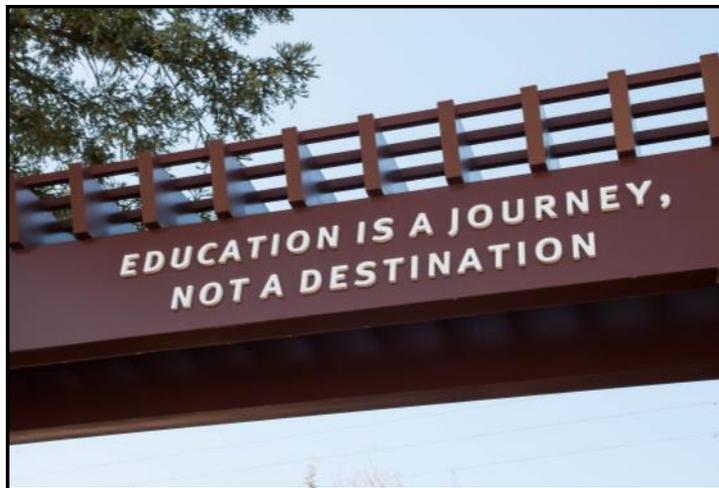
Character Education programs are ongoing at each school – the theme this year is Bully Proof Your School – The Magic of Character.

There is a wide variety of philanthropic and volunteer opportunities for the students, including Soles for Souls (a shoe collection), food drives, book donations, etc.

Each school has its own "culture," which students can help to develop through School Spirit Days, Field Day, a variety of family nights, talent shows and festivals.

In addition, the Comprehensive Guidance Program K-12 includes concepts of wellness and counseling for all students.

Through these collective efforts, the BOE and administration are optimistic that students in Glen Rock will experience a healthier, more balanced approach on what the district prefers to think of as their 'Journey to Somewhere.'



### High School/Middle School

The themes of stress reduction and management are being woven into the curriculum.

The RTN film has been shown to high school students via health classes, followed by guided discussion.

The new rotating/drop schedule at the high school was implemented with the start of the 2014-15 school year, providing longer periods, variations in class sequence and rotating days, all of which provide more balance to the students' work

At the middle school, guidance counselors infuse topics including but not limited to wellness, stress reduction, positive health tips,

when feeling stressed or overwhelmed

Administrators and teachers in both buildings have viewed the homework webinar provided by the district and continue to evaluate and refine approaches to homework.

Homework-free nights are planned several times throughout the year.

Parent forums are being planned to address various topics related to the film, including the Admissions Game on Oct. 21 and a film on prescription drug abuse on Oct. 6.

### Elementary schools:

While academic stress is more prevalent at the secondary level, even elemen-

