

Message from the Principal
December 2008

Happy Holidays from everyone at John Dickinson High School. Somehow every year, I keep thinking that I have plenty of time to get any early start on holiday shopping and other preparations, and then suddenly it's December. School is very much the same. Every year educators work diligently to prepare students for those big moments (SATs, Mid-term exams, DSTP) and yet, they still seem to arrive suddenly. So, it is critical to make the most of every day we have to work with students - especially the weeks between Thanksgiving and Christmas when it can be tempting to back off just a little.

The teachers here will maintain high standards and expectations for students and to make the most of every instructional minute. In addition, JDHS is now offering after school tutoring in reading every Monday and Thursday. A similar program in mathematics will follow soon.

Also, I met with the faculty in November as well as each class individually. In each meeting I shared the observation that when I'm classrooms I generally see quality instruction delivered to bright students. What I also see are too many students who are not actively engaged in their own education. I challenged the faculty to concentrate on delivering lessons that focus on critically important content and that minimize the opportunity for students to disengage. I challenged the students to make the most of the opportunities that they have here and to be more attentive to the choices that they make.

It's About Choices

This phrase was offered to staff and students as a motto for our work for the rest of this year. Our work as educators is about making sure that students have choices when they leave high school. And the number and quality of the choices that students have are largely determined by the small choices that they make every day. Our teachers strive to help students make the every-day choices in ways that help them to maximize opportunities later.

On behalf of the entire JDHS family, I would like to wish you and your family a happy and peaceful Holiday Season