

Middle school students toughen up alcohol policy

By Michaela Kennedy

Students often groan when given an extended assignment to complete. Yet this year, three eighth grade girls not only reported their research, but used the newly-gained knowledge to strengthen Jamestown Schools' alcohol and substance abuse policy.

Maia White presented an updated alcohol policy proposal to the School Committee at its June 18 business meeting. White explained how she, together with partners Nicole Perez and Jessica Rudman, discovered the outdated code and decided to analyze it for their health class project. They soon discovered the policy, last updated in the 1990s, was in serious need of an overhaul. "One hundred percent of the students surveyed agreed it was too vague," White said.

Earlier in the school semester, the eighth grade health class was directed to choose a topic relating to alcohol or drug abuse. After considering suggestions from their teacher, they brainstormed an idea to reform Jamestown Schools' alcohol code. "We were actually quite excited about it," Perez said in an interview later. "We like making a difference."

The students found a copy of the alcohol policy and read it aloud to each other. They decided the policy raised more questions than solutions. The girls surveyed fellow students, staff and parents to find out how many people were aware of the policy and what their opinions were about the code.



Maia White, Jessica Rudman and Nicole Perez display the backboard they used to present their alcohol policy research to the School Committee. The girls recommended stiffer penalties and more specific language to a vague policy. Photo by Michaela Kennedy

"The survey showed not a lot of people knew about the policy," Rudman said. "When we read it to them, they agreed it was not effective."

Some adults asked the girls why a policy was important since substance abuse was illegal and laws were in place already. The girls responded that kids were too young to be punished seriously in the legal system. "Kids get scared if they know what the consequences will be if they do something," Perez explained. "The policy helps them."

The proposal included ramifications such as suspension for a week, banishment from sports teams, and mandatory Alcoholics Anonymous meetings to be attended with parents. Children worry about what others think, according to the girls. "All the kids on the sports teams will get upset if someone gets kicked off," Rudman said.

When asked if they got help from adults in coming up with the revisions, the three students shook their heads. "We thought about what is fair," White said,

and used suspension as an example. "One day of suspension is just a day off. But kids will get bored and realize the work they miss after a week."

The three students not only received top grades for their group project, but seized the opportunity to implement their ideas at the administrative level. Their approach to the school board elevated a class project to practical use. "We never thought it would go this far," they said.

At the end of the presentation before the school board, school committee member William "Bucky" Brennan asked the other

panel members if there was a substance abuse policy for teachers, saying, "It's something we ought to think about."

School committee member Cathy Kaiser praised the students' review of the alcohol policy and agreed with their dismissal of the 1990s language as "too vague." She said the committee would put the policy on their "must do" list. "While we will look to the administration to guide us in that discussion, I expect the eighth graders' suggestions to serve as a valuable springboard for the policy revision," she added.

Recycling audit offered to island businesses

The town hosted a recycling workshop June 12 for the purpose of educating and improving the recycling efforts of three major components of the community.

Mary Ann Remolador, the assistant director of the Northeast Recycling Council, with the assistance of Mike Mesoletta, the recycling coordinator of the Rhode Island Resource Recovery Corporation, conducted this workshop for the town offices, businesses and the Jamestown School system.

The Jamestown Chamber of Commerce was instrumental in notifying the business community of this valuable workshop.

About 25 members of the community attended the session. The schools were well represented as was the municipal operation, business and interested private citizens. Representatives from Island Rubbish were also in attendance and reaffirmed their commitment to work with the town and the community to improve recycling island wide.

An important outcome of the workshop was the offer by Mike Mesoletta of the RIRRC to visit local business to conduct a waste audit for the purpose of reducing the amount of garbage going to the landfill and in turn increasing the materials going into the town's recycling program.

Any business that would like to take advantage of this opportunity to conduct a waste audit can contact Councilman Bill Kelly at 423-0385.

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STUNNING WATERFRONT GEM



Sweeping water views mesmerize you from this graceful, 4,857 sq. ft. custom home. On .70 acres, with 106 ft. of beach frontage, a dock and moorings, the three-bedroom, six-bathroom home has dramatic living spaces, a fabulous curved window wall, chef's kitchen, library, gorgeous master suite with his and her bathrooms and, a downstairs media/game room that opens to the water. \$3,399,000

BAYFRONT BEAUTY



A sandy beach, panoramic water and Newport Bridge views, a 117 foot dock with two floating docks and a mooring and guest apartment are only part of the delights at this charming 2,077 sq. ft. home sited on about .68 acres with 248 ft. of beach frontage on the East Passage of Narragansett Bay. \$1,999,000

GORGEOUS HIGHLAND MEADOW MANOR



Close to town and Mackerel Cove, this handsome 4,500 sq. ft. shingle - style home has lovely exterior detail, beautiful interior finishes, a fabulous kitchen, wonderful sun room, three fireplaces and, a master bedroom suite with a deck. A lower level living area has a bedroom, bath and media room. A detached two-car garage has a separate office. \$1,795,000

EAST PASSAGE WATERFRONT LOT



Gorgeous sunrises, moonrises and Newport Bridge views are yours from this .57 acre waterfront lot with about 65 ft. of beach frontage on the East Passage. The vacant land has a free-standing garage, new well and approved 4-bedroom ISDS. Unique chance to build your dream house. \$1,195,000

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This delightful 2,068 sq. ft. one-level home blends the beauty of custom, contemporary features with the charm of the original 'cottage'. The three-bedroom, two-bath home has an open floor plan, fabulous 600 sq. ft. sun-filled family room with a Brazilian pecan floor and a great kitchen. \$899,500

SUNSET FARM VICTORIAN



Great sunset and seasonal water views from spacious 4,312 sq. ft. four-bedroom home on 1.84 acres with a separate guest suite above the garage, a chef's kitchen, living room with fireplace, family room and a pool. \$899,500

CAPTIVATING SHORES CHIC



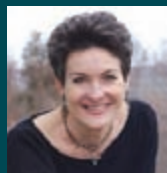
This beautifully renovated, three-bedroom home on .39 landscaped acre close to the beach has a dramatic living room with cathedral ceilings, granite-faced fireplace, tastefully finished custom kitchen with granite counters and new first floor master suite. \$699,500

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On almost .50 acre, this, 2,152 sq. ft. home has a fenced back-yard and 2-car garage. The unique investment opportunity has a two-bedroom, two-bath front unit and a one-bedroom rear unit with cathedral ceilings and skylights. \$650,000

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