

Jostens Renaissance Review #1
The Welcome Back Issue
September 6, 2007

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"Rock Star Treatment Rules!"

Grand Prize Winners

2007 JRR Idea of the Year
Ann Schmidt and Ruthie Wolfe
Conrad Weiser High School
Robesonia, PA

Welcome back!

On behalf of Jostens Renaissance, we are thrilled to welcome everyone back to the start of a new school year! We hope that you have settled back into school and that you're off to a great start of what we know will be a very exciting and rewarding school year.

If you are new to the Jostens Renaissance Review (JRR), we'd like to introduce you to this e-publication. The JRR is a bi-weekly electronic publication with a very simple goal – to gather and disseminate Jostens Renaissance ideas from across North America, thereby providing a networking vehicle for Renaissance students and educators. It features Jostens Renaissance statistics and news articles submitted by schools; keeps you updated with the latest Renaissance workshop information; provides tools for your program; and will feature informational updates about the 2008 Jostens Renaissance National Conference.

Like all issues of the JRR, this issue contains valuable information and ideas and we encourage you to read through it to get a feel for what the Jostens Renaissance Review is all about. It will be coming to you twice a month, so look for it in your e-mailbox!

Last year's JRR winning ideas

One of the most powerful aspects of Jostens Renaissance is the collection of great ideas that are shared by schools like yours. Here are the best ideas of 2007 as submitted by Jostens Renaissance schools. For more ideas like this and a wealth of other Jostens Renaissance resources, contact your Jostens representative or visit www.jostens.com/edserv.

Grand Prize Idea of the Year – Shifting of the Classes

Congratulations to Ann Schmidt and Ruthie Wolfe of Conrad Weiser High School in Robesonia, PA., for submitting the 2007 JRR Idea of the Year. For submitting the winning idea, Ann and Ruthie received Star Treatment at the 2007 Jostens Renaissance National Conference including round-trip airline tickets, limousine transportation to the Buena Vista Palace Hotel and Spa, three nights lodging, and two registrations for the 2007 Jostens Renaissance National Conference as well as the custom “tour” jacket seen at the top of this page.

The idea:

The Friday before Memorial Day we begin the day honoring the outgoing senior class with a senior breakfast to start the day. Following the breakfast we have an assembly in the morning and we begin the assembly with a speaker or presenter that communicates a positive and motivating message to our students. Once that is finished we begin the Shifting of the Classes. It begins with the staffulty (all in the same t-shirt provided by CW Renaissance) forming a long chute across the gym. We play the senior class song and ask all other students to stand and allow the seniors to progress out of the gym for the last time to a standing ovation from the staffulty and student body. They leave and go to a Renaissance function outside where they receive their yearbook, sign notes to thank their teachers and receive any giveaways we might have for them.

Back in the gym we then change the music and then allow the juniors to shift into the senior spot assuming their new rank of seniors, where they rip off the outgoing senior class year and reveal their graduation class. Again changing the music, it is the sophomores turn to walk across the gym through the staffulty chute and assume their new rank as juniors. We change the music again and the freshman then shift into the sophomore spot. Finally, with much pomp and circumstance, the 8th graders will have arrived from the Middle School and fill in the freshman spot in the gym. Once the new classes for the next school year are in their appropriate places we introduce our new club presidents and set expectations for the new school year.

We have found this to be an incredible way to honor our outgoing seniors and make them feel extremely honored on this day. The second positive result from this day is that we set the expectations for the following school year. Our high school administration is very supportive of this idea!

2nd Place Winner – Most Inspirational Teacher

Mike Goyne of Ashley High School in Wilmington, NC submitted the 2007 JRR runner-up idea of the year. For submitting this idea, Mike received one all expense paid trip to the 2007 Jostens

Renaissance National Conference including round trip airfare, three nights lodging at the Buena Vista Palace and Spa and registration for the 2007 Jostens Renaissance National Conference.

The idea:

At Ashley High School, we are in the early stages of our Jostens Renaissance journey. We knew that it was important to say thank you and recognize our teachers, so one of the first programs that we implemented was our "Most Inspirational Teacher" program. Initially, two teachers were selected by students in our Renaissance team as their "Most Inspirational Teachers" and were given a framed poster to hang in their classroom. The back of the poster is autographed by the teacher and the presenting student. Every two weeks the process is repeated as the teachers that were selected will choose two students and those two students will have the opportunity to present the posters to their "Most Inspirational Teacher!" After the posters are presented, the in-school announcements the following day provide details on why these teachers were chosen and what students selected them!

3rd Place Winner – Girls Only!

Chris Brown of Belhaven Middle School in Linwood, NJ, submitted this year's 3rd place JRR idea of the year. For submitting this idea, Chris received two free registrations to the 2007 Jostens Renaissance National Conference in Orlando (hotel and airfare are not included).

The idea:

Our school emphasizes the power of all students to realize their potential as leaders through the Jostens-Renaissance process. We noticed that many of our girls, upon reaching 7th grade, began to step back from their roles as leaders. Many middle school girls experience a drop in self-esteem, greater difficulty with schoolwork and problems with relationships. We wanted to find a way to connect the girls back to Renaissance and, more importantly, back to themselves.

The "Girls Only!" series addresses these issues and many more. The three components of Girls Only! are weekly meetings, bimonthly workshops and a final sleepover at the end of the year. Weekly meetings take place in the guidance office with a small group of identified girls. Issues of relational aggression (bullying) and self-esteem are addressed over lunch while girls work on group projects like planning a school dance or creating scrapbooks.

Bimonthly workshops combine serious topics with fun, "girly" activities that allow girls to connect with their classmates. Topics include, "How to Survive 7th Grade," "Friendship and a Manicure" and "Miss Manners." All seventh grade girls are invited. These workshops are a great opportunity for girls to interact on a level playing field. They are often surprised by how much they have in common with girls they hadn't really spoken with before.

The culminating activity is a sleepover in June in the school library. The weekend is filled with workshops, team-building activities and lots of fun. A local makeup artist visits to give the girls tips on "natural beauty," emphasizing the importance of positive self-esteem. A martial arts expert teaches the girls self-defense moves and allows them to break boards with their hands. On the boards are written barriers they need to break through to be healthy and happy: poor body image, family alcoholism, low self-esteem, etc. The girls also enjoy being served dinner by the staff

chaperones – the cafeteria is candlelit and tables are set with real china and linens. Every moment of the weekend is packed with activities all designed to foster positive self-esteem and to reinforce the principles of Renaissance. We even had a “Role Models Reception” the week after the sleepover to share a slide show and conversation with the girls’ mothers or guardians.

Since last year’s sleepover, the girls are achieving more A’s and fewer C’s, hold leadership positions in school clubs, and enthusiastically participate in Renaissance activities. More noticeable are the intangibles: girls that hold their heads high walking down the hallway, or say hello to kids they never would have spoken to. One of the girls said it best, “Even though we may be in different cliques we are a lot alike on the inside.” We’re proud of our girls for believing in themselves enough to break down walls and lead through positive example. Girls Only! has strengthened our school community as well as our Renaissance process.

It’s never too early to become a Rock Star!

Once again Jostens Renaissance will be running our annual “Idea of the Year” contest. If you submit the winning idea, you’ll receive ROCK STAR TREATMENT just like Anne and Ruthie at the 2008 Jostens Renaissance National.

How to submit your idea

Do you have an idea from your Jostens Renaissance program that has improved your school's environment? Submit your ideas to charley.nelson@jostens.com. We’ll select a “winning idea” for each issue and the individual submitting the published idea will receive a Jostens Renaissance Review sweatshirt and be eligible for the 2008 Idea of the Year Contest.

2007-2008 Jostens Renaissance Platinum Program coupon booklets – order yours today!

Available FREE to qualifying schools, the Jostens Renaissance Platinum Program coupon booklet contains over 40 coupons redeemable at nationwide retailers. Each coupon booklet contains well over \$300 in value. Also included in the booklet is a wallet-sized Platinum card. The Platinum Program is administered by each participating school’s Jostens Renaissance program coordinator. Criteria for ordering the Platinum Program coupon booklet are as follows:

- Must be a Jostens Renaissance School.
- The Platinum Program coupon booklets should be awarded for academic achievement only.
- High schools must purchase one of the following Jostens product lines: rings, yearbooks or announcements. A product order must be placed during current or past school year. Product purchase requirement does not apply to middle or elementary schools.
- While supply lasts, order up to 1,000 coupon books during a 30-day period. Additional orders after that period of time can be requested.
- About 750,000 of the coupon booklets are available.
- Online ordering only – link to the site listed below.

The Platinum Program is bigger and better than ever with more offerings from brand-name companies. If you have questions, please call 1-800-624-5534.

To order your Platinum Program coupon booklets, please go to:

http://www.jostens.com/edserv/renaissance/ren_500.asp

Please Note: The coupon booklets are distributed on a first come, first serve basis and they are going FAST, so order yours today!!

Statistic of the Issue – The High School Pipeline*

As we start new school year, graduation rates are again the topic of discussion at every high school workshop across the country. With that in mind, below are some very significant graduation rate numbers.

The Cumulative Promotion Index (CPI) method of calculating graduation rates can be used to examine the high school pipeline. That is, we can estimate the numbers of students who fall off track for earning a diploma at various points between the 9th grade and the expected time of graduation.

For every 100 students in 9th grade, 90 will remain in the education pipeline until their sophomore year. But only about 70 will make it until graduation 4 years later.

9th grade – 100 students
10th grade – 90 students
11th grade – 81 students
12 grade – 76 students
Graduation – 70 students

Where are the students lost? Nationally, more than one-third of the students lost from the high school pipeline fail to make the transition from 9th to 10th grade.

9th grade – 35% of losses in the High School pipeline occur
10th grade – 27% of losses in the High School pipeline occur
11th grade – 19% of losses in the High School pipeline occur
12th grade – 19% of losses in the High School pipeline occur

Males are consistently less likely to graduate from high school with a diploma. Nationally, the gender gap in graduation stands at nearly 8 percentage points. Females also earn diplomas at higher rates within every racial and ethnic group examined, with the largest disparity found among black students.

Graduation Percentages:

Male Students

- All Male – 66.0%
- American Indian – 44.6%
- Black – 46.2%
- Hispanic – 52.3%
- White – 72.3%
- Asian – 76.5%

Female Students

- All Female – 73.6%
- American Indian – 50.0%
- Black – 59.6%
- Hispanic – 62.8%
- White – 77.9%
- Asian – 82.1%

**Source – Education Week, Volume 26, #40, 6-12-2007.*

Reminders

Educator Services Website

Provides information about Jostens Renaissance. Register and get full access to all the program information. www.jostens.com/edserv

Renaissance Review Archive

Provided to you on our new website: http://www.jostens.com/edserv/renaissance/ren_400_20.asp

[Download the issue as a PDF](#)