 **To Parents, Guardians and Town of Barnstead.  We hear you!**

Through calls, emails, meetings and social media we’ve heard the feedback of the community (especially parents) about several aspects of BAZ.  The common themes are:  **how BAZ program came about in our community; what exactly is BAZ; the enrollment process; what’s next for the program and what does this all mean for me and my family?**

This communication is a small step to demonstrate **our promise to you** to provide frequent updates and include your feedback into future program improvements.  In addition to the summary below, we have attached **two resources for you**:  Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) and a Who’s Who Contact List.  We hope you share this information with others.  Keep the conversations going and that feedback coming!  All feedback is meaningful and can be used to make things better.

**What Has Happened?**In January, a survey was given to the community to identify if an after school education program was wanted.   Due to the strong response, the 21st Century Community Learners grant was written and submitted to the NH Department of Education. In May, the NH DOE awarded a grant to the Barnstead community in the amount of $135,000 annually over the course of 5 years (with year 4 funded at 85% and year 5 funded at 65%). In June, the hiring process began, and in early August, the Program Director was hired.  Also in August, a School Messenger alert was sent informing parents that enrollment would begin the next day, and a “first come first serve” approach would be used.  Understandably, the program was a hot topic during the school board meeting held on August 26, 2014. Many people from the community voiced concerns about the enrollment process.  And many people involved in the development of the grant were present at the school board meeting as well, to articulate the intended purpose and goals of the grant.  The school board reinforced the comments by issuing a directive to have a strong focus on program expansion.   The Advisory Board met on September 10, 2014.

**What’s Happening Now?**Enrollment remains open, with enrollment decisions in the future being discretionary in nature vs “first come first serve,” in order to best support the goals within the project.  Two Skills Development Leader positions remain open.  The Advisory Board met on Sept 10th to formulate ideas on how to improve and expand the program, including how to recruit volunteers.  The next Advisory Board meeting is scheduled for October 23.  Director has a strong focus on volunteer recruitment and programming.  The BAZ Handbook is under development

**What’s Next?**The Advisory Board will support the director in overseeing the development of the program handbook and establish a timeline for program improvement, including the recruitment of volunteers and increased enrichment opportunities through the support of local artisans, businesses, senior citizens, and high school and college student programs.  More volunteers mean more children can enroll and the quality of the program gets better.

***We are all in this together!***Inspire our little citizens.  Share ideas.  Donate time.  Impact the future.

***Come join the adventure!***