

## METHUEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



### SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY REPORT

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**APRIL, 2014**

#### **UPCOMING EVENTS 2014**

##### **METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL RENOVATION UPDATE**

The building project continues to move forward in a positive manner. It still remains on time and on budget. The punch list for South House and the new addition (cafeteria, auditorium, adjacent classrooms and practice rooms) which is currently housing sophomore, juniors and seniors is being addressed so that all items will be taken care of prior to the opening of school in September. According to the architect and builder, the North House, which is now under construction, will be completed by mid summer and ready for the opening of school. Again, this has been a team effort.

##### **METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL CLUB AND ACTIVITY UPDATES**

*Submitted by Mr. James Giuca, Principal*

##### **SCIENCE DEPT**

By virtue of earning awards at both the Methuen High School Science Fair and the Region IV Science Fair at Somerville High School, the following groups of students will proudly represent Methuen at the Massachusetts State Science Fair on Friday, May 2nd at MIT.

- Jacob Thibodeau and Scott Wojtowicz - Characteristic Changes to Wind Turbine Output Voltage Due to Varying Speeds.
- Joseph Wakim and Michael Wakim - Pace Pal
- Shane Godek and William McGrath - How Green are Green Cleaning Products
- After raising \$1,000 dollars for children's leukemia, the **History Honor Society** will be focusing on its last volunteer endeavor for the school year, a donation drive for soldiers returning home from Afghanistan. For the entire month of April, members of the History Honor Society will be collecting items to create care packages for military veterans. At the end of the month, members will team up with the "Pease Greeters" at Pease Airport to greet returning veterans and give them their care packages.

**JROTC** celebrated its 18<sup>th</sup> Annual Military Ball on March 14<sup>th</sup>, 2014. Over 140 personnel were in attendance. Every year, the JROTC senior cadets nominate a teacher of the year. This year's recipient was science teacher Matthew Wortmann.

**Adopt-A-Grandparent** had successful month of March, meeting at the senior center each Wednesday afternoon. A few former members of the program who are now in college returned to visit during their spring break and the senior citizens thoroughly enjoyed catching up with them. The annual "Senior" Prom is coming up on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014. The theme is "Diamonds in the Sky" and students are looking forward to bedazzling their formal wear to showcase the fanciest prom yet.

**The Senior Class** is hard at work planning Mr. Methuen 2014 & the newly added Mr. Methuen *Old School*. The event is taking place Tuesday, April 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at The Tenney Grammar School Auditorium. The event will feature questions, fashion and talent categories. Some faculty members will be competing in the Old School portion of the competition. A student master of ceremonies and faculty judges will help bring out the fun in this event. Senior calendars listing important dates and field trip pricing have been distributed to all members of the senior class. This distribution is to help students and families plan for a successful end to senior year.

**Best Buddies** had an extremely busy March! The club is winding down fundraising events and is pleased to share that thanks to students and staff, all were a huge success. On April 13<sup>th</sup>, members have agreed to support Methuen's SEPAC by participating in their annual Recreation and Resource Fair. Members will participate in set-up, games, face painting, and more. On April 14<sup>th</sup> members join the **Green Club** to plant seeds that once sprouted, will be planted in honor of former students.

**The Gay Straight Alliance** has been promoting the Day of Silence which is April 11<sup>th</sup>. This day is a national program that calls attention to the harassment, bullying and isolation experienced by many students who are gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender. To show support staff and students will wear red on April 11<sup>th</sup>.

**The Media Center** this past month celebrated Irish American Heritage Month. On display were biographies of famous Irish and Irish Americans, fiction stories and memoirs, and historical materials regarding the Irish experience in America. The Steampunk genre was also spotlighted in the Media Center. Steampunk is “subgenre of speculative fiction, usually set in an anachronistic Victorian or quasi-Victorian alternate history setting”.

**The Guidance Department** is hosting a presentation on April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014 entitled "After the Acceptance" run by the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority. The goal of the presentation is to assist students, and their parents, with better understanding the financial aid packages they have received so that they can make a more informed decision when choosing between the schools that have accepted them for admission. On April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2014 a field trip to Northern Essex Community College is being organized by guidance counselors to assist students interested in learning information about the programs and opportunities available through the school. Students will attend classes, tour the Haverhill campus, and attend information sessions designed to assist students with understanding how to find success at NECC.

#### **MHS APRIL EVENTS**

- MEFA Seminar April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6:30 p.m.  
Methuen High School Media Center
- Junior Prom April 4<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.  
DiBurro's Function Facility
- Foreign Language National Honor Society Induction April 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.  
Timony Grammar School
- Band Jamboree April 10<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.  
Methuen High Field House
- MHS Musical "Nostalgia to Now" April 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.  
Timony Grammar School

- Mr. Methuen April 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.  
Tenney Grammar School
- Collaborative Visual Arts Awards Exhibit April 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.  
Lawrence Heritage State Park Visitors'  
Center Gallery
- Adopt-A-Grandparent "Senior Prom" April 30<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m.  
Methuen Senior Activity Center

### **METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL VISITS NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY**

A group of Methuen High School students was recently invited to attend the NEU Splash program at Northeastern University by former MHS valedictorian Kristian Teichert. The primary goal of the program is to introduce high school students to fascinating topics that they may not otherwise be exposed to by having them visit campus for a day and take as many as five classes. Students were given the fantastic opportunity to connect with Northeastern faculty and students, including a handful of MHS alumni who are currently attending Northeastern University. The program was a huge success and our students were thrilled to have the opportunity to take classes on campus at an active and highly regarded university.

### **COMPREHENSIVE GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES**

*Submitted by Mr. Christopher Reeve, Principal*

#### **Lower School**

~ Did you know March Madness was happening at the CGS? As a school, in conjunction with the PE staff, we created brackets for the NCAA finals. This information was posted so that students could follow their favorite team's journey. Teachers used team information in classes for prediction, statistics, geography and other related concepts. The students and staff were quite engaged in the process!

~ Benchmark assessments were conducted for pre and post assessments. Our students used the Chromebooks within their classrooms to complete the assessment. There were fewer interruptions for the students, and teachers were able to get testing results within a quicker timeframe. Using the Chromebooks has made the process much better.

~ The PAARC math assessment was administered to students of Mrs. Farnkoff and Ms. Ringland. These third graders worked hard to complete the assessment. We are really proud of their perseverance.

~ Students involved in the CGS play performance, The Little Mermaid, have been working diligently to make this year's performance a hit! Our first grade students are performing in the play with the Upper school students. We have an abundance of talented singers, dancers and actors!

#### **Upper School**

~Yearbook Clubs and Activities Picture Day – March 5<sup>th</sup>

~Continental League Match – March 13

~Student of the Month Assembly per grade level to celebrate Apple Sauce Literacy Magazine –

~Winter Edition Awards, Students of the Month Honor Roll and Character Awards

## **MARSH GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES**

*Submitted by Mr. Stephen Sierpina, Principal*

### **Lower School**

- Grade 2 students visited the Boston Aquarium as a culminating activity of their Penguin Unit. The Grade 2 teaching team has enhanced this instructional unit over the last couple of years to address all areas of the curriculum, resulting in an innovative and interesting unit for all students! The penguin models and dioramas were on display in the hallways for a week or two, and the children were very proud of their work.
- Kindergarten classes will be having a Spring Egg Hunt on Thursday, April 17 in the Lower School Playground. The teachers have developed curriculum activities in language arts and math related to the egg hunt.
- PTO is having an Ice Cream Social on Thursday, April 17, from 6:00 to 8:00 in the Marsh cafeteria.
- Teaching & Learning Alliance (TLA) will be modeling guided reading for grade 2 teachers and coaching kindergarten teachers on a variety of Reader's Workshop questions and clarifications that they have raised.
- Tufts University will be back for their spring data collection for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders who enrolled in the ASAP Physical Activity in Schools study. The students received accelerometers to wear for a week which tracks their daily activity and the researchers will use this information along with standardized test results to study possible relationships between physical activity and school achievement.

## **TENNEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES**

*Submitted by Mr. Ian Gosselin, Principal*

- MCAS Bootcamp, a Tenney tradition, helped our Upper School students prepare for testing. SRO Michael Farelli led students in calisthenics, stretching and positive thinking each morning before testing.
- Our Peer Leaders are hosting a food drive to benefit the Northeast Veterans Association.
- Fifth grade students made a commitment to never smoke during National Kick Butt Day. They spent an hour learning how to kickbox, a sport that requires plenty of lung power. Health teacher Liz Fulks and her students displayed information about the dangers of smoking in the middle school hallways.
- Ralph Fletcher, the author of best-selling novels like *Flying Solo* and *Spiderboy*, met with every upper school grade to talk about the power of reading and what inspires writers. To prepare for his visits, students and teachers read his books and poetry.
- Students got a good look at the world from the inside during the Earth View exhibit.
- Tenney's staff-led positive behavior program expanded to include the adults. Staff members are recognizing each other's efforts and commitment with a "Pat on the Back." The peer praise was read aloud at the monthly staff meeting. Meanwhile, the positive behavior initiative for students, called Tenney R.O.C.K.S. continues to grow, with students being recognized for their respect, ownership, cooperation, kindness and safety.

## **TIMONY GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES**

*Submitted by Mr. Timothy Miller, Principal*

April at the Timony began with Light It Up Blue Day to help raise awareness of Autism. In addition, for Autism Awareness Month we have displayed many puzzle pieces with student comments around hidden disabilities written on them.

During March and April we have been lucky to welcome future teachers from the University of Massachusetts-Lowell into our classrooms to observe and participate in the educational process. We have also welcomed a number of MHS students who have completed some of their volunteer service by working with our children.

PBIS continues to move forward with the second reward for those students who earned it coming just prior to vacation. It is great to watch the staff and students buy in to this positive reinforcement system and therefore contribute to its success.

During the coming weeks we will be hosting a Ziti Supper, always a well attended event, a second grade 8 basketball exhibition game against the Marsh, go Dragons, and, sadly, a retirement breakfast for one of our beloved custodians, Jim Gugliuzza. With these events, spring vacation, continued work with the new teacher evaluation system and, most importantly, our teachers' extraordinary efforts moving on through the curriculum, April promises to be another busy month.

### **SADD UDATE**

#### **CGS:**

Students created their very own relay team and are working on raising money for the event. In addition, they will attend a dinner and a movie night, separate from the high school group. They are also participating in the basketball tournament in May.

#### **Marsh:**

Students have been working with the high school to plan the basketball tournament. They met this month to discuss and plan. They had open gym time during the last meeting so that students could listen to music, play volleyball and basketball and socialize in a safe, healthy setting.

#### **Tenney:**

Students were in the paper for their work on "kick butts" day. Their meeting this month was to discuss mental health awareness day and prepare for co-hosting a Zumba night. They are hosting a teacher appreciation breakfast with an oatmeal bar and energizing breakfast foods. They are hoping to obtain and decorate water bottles to distribute to students taking the MCAS.

#### **Timony:**

The group met on the 23 and 27. They had a table set up in the cafe during "kick butts" day and asked students to give quotes about tobacco, came up with a logo for the day and placed it on t shirts which decorated the school. It was "airing tobacco's dirty laundry." They met at the end of the month to brainstorm ideas for the end of the year and increasing involvement next year.

#### **High School:**

Students have been working hard to promote and prepare for the basketball tournament fundraiser at the high school field house from 12-4 on May 24 to benefit Relay for Life. In addition, students will attend a "dinner and a movie" evening this month. The SADD Relay for Life team is continuing to raise money.