

METHUEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY REPORT

APRIL, 2016

UPCOMING DISTRICT-WIDE DATES

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
<i>PLEASE SEE SCHOOL UPDATES BELOW FOR HAPPENINGS IN THEIR SCHOOLS</i>			
April 13	7:00 pm	District-wide Band Jamboree	MHS Fieldhouse
April 18		Patriot's Day--All School Buildings are Closed	
April 18-22		No School - Spring Recess	
April 29	5:30 pm	MHS, Searles HS & Tenney HS & Distinguished Alumni Hall of Fame Dinner & Induction Ceremony	Harris' Pelham Inn
April 30	8-12	MHS Grounds & Holy Family Hospital Trail Cleanup <i>(if not preregistered registration starts at 7:15am)</i>	Timony Café
May 20	9-1	JROTC Blood Drive	MHS Fieldhouse
May 21, 12pm -May 22, 8am		Merrimack Valley Relay for Life	Nicholson Track&Field

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL – SCHOOL, CLUB AND ACTIVITY UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Richard Barden, Principal

We made it through March and spring is upon us. Recently, our grade ten students completed the MCAS ELA test and we were pleased with their hard work throughout testing. Our faculty has worked diligently since September to prepare all students for a wide variety of assessments. Coming up in May, over six-hundred AP exams will be administered to students in grades ten through twelve. Also in May, grade ten students will take the MCAS mathematics test. As a school, we remain committed to delivering high-quality instruction to every student that ultimately leads to graduates who are college and career ready.

JROTC:

MAP: With the end of March coming, the Battalion finishes the last of the MAP competitions. The last competition was in New Bedford, where various schools were able to compete in person, as compared to the first competition which had to be held at each individual school due to weather. The Battalion is now preparing for next year, and hope to be able to do better.

Military Ball: At the beginning of the month the Battalion celebrated its yearly Ball. Around 100 cadets and other distinguished guests, such as Principal Barden and Mr. Delano, participated in the ceremonies where 38 senior cadets were honored. It was an emotional time when Mr. Delano was awarded Teacher of the Year by the JROTC Class of 2016. The JROTC Exhibition Team was able to perform for the first time in a year, consisting of five people, total. Overall, everyone at the Ball thoroughly enjoyed the event, and those who were not the seniors are eagerly awaiting the event to come around again, next March.

Mr. Nick's Wake and Funeral: Unfortunately despite the joyous events this month, the Battalion had to mourn the passing of Mr. Nick, one of the most influential people of the JROTC program, this being because he was the voice in creating the Ranger Battalion. On Friday March 11th, the wake for Mr. Nick was held where hundreds attended, including at least 50 JROTC cadets. Cadet Vallant, along with Cadet Pare and Cadet Wizboski worked together to delegate half-hour intervals where other cadets would have a presence at Mr. Nick's casket. In addition, there was an honor guard posted at all times until the last of those in line passed through around 7:30pm. The day after, a similar amount of cadets gathered along the road leading from the funeral service to the cemetery giving a final salute as the procession passed by.

The Battalion: Now that the MAP competitions are over, the Battalion has already begun preparing for the Raider Challenge competitions, which will occur at the High School (The Bean-Pot Competition), and then at Fort Devins. In addition to the Raider season starting, the Battalion is already planning for the 100 Year JROTC Anniversary, which will include cadets not only from the Ranger Battalion, but also those from surrounding programs. More information will be available about these happenings by next month.

GSA: This month the GSA will have its annual "Day of Silence" on Wednesday, April 13th. On the days leading up to the Day of Silence (April 7-8, 11-12) students can sign-up to take the pledge of silence at their lunches as well as purchase bracelets and buttons created by our group to promote awareness.

Adopt A Grandparent: Adopt-A-Grandparent "Senior" Prom on Wednesday, April 13 from 1:30 - 3:30 at the Methuen Senior Activity Center.

MHS Democrats and Republicans: The MHS Democrats and Republicans ran a successful voter registration clinic this past month. Another one will be planned in September before the general election. Also, the club met with the Ways and Means committee and representative Linda Dean Campbell and had a great experience learning the political process.

MHS SENIOR CLASS: The Senior Class had a very successful fundraiser with the 1st Annual MHS Lip Sync Battle. Seven teams performed with the winners coming from the Methuen Ranger Varsity Cheerleading Team. The fundraiser was a great success and helped raise money for the senior class.

The senior class is also getting ready for their end of the year activities with tickets on sale for a Boston Red Sox game, a trip to Six Flags New England, a trip to Loon Mountain, a senior cookout after graduation practice, along with Senior Prom and most importantly Graduation. Any questions about any of these trips should be directed to Mr. Symmes.

Video Club: Video Club is in its third year at MHS. Students are currently collaborating with Lindsay Knull's health class to produce News-style reports about the effects of stress, and strategies for treating the effects of stress on the body and mind. Several of Ms. Knull's students decided to begin attending video club to learn more about the editing process, and all involved have set a goal to enter several of the finished videos into the Merrimack Valley Film Festival. Club students continue to work on building media tech skills, video editing and special effects projects each week. Other projects in the works include: theatrical lighting; our own Superman skits, complete with a flying student; music videos, and much more. Club students also volunteered to help cover school committee

meetings, and were instrumental in assisting with broadcast coverage of the recent Dollars for Scholars Telethon.

DECA: Last week 10 members of the Methuen DECA club participated in the State Career Development Conference at the Copley Marriott Hotel in Boston. Although no members qualified for the International Career Development Conference, the trip was a huge success. The students were extremely well behaved and represented Methuen High School very well. The quiz bowl team of Nika Nyguen, Neil Patel, Andre Lopez and Jacob Thibault did a great job on their qualifying test but, lost a very close match against a strong Algonquin team. Keegan Lannon, Pryank Patel and Samuel Branchaud all competed individually with 2 role plays and a written test. They all did a great job. Ryan Hamilton and Haley Hamilton competed as a team in the 'Sports and Entertainment Team Decision Making' category. They were honored on stage Friday night for coming in third for one of the two role plays. Unfortunately, they did not make the top 10 on Saturday morning. The last participant was Allie Doyle who had great success at the SCDC. Allie had a top 10 finish in the Franchise Business Plan category and also received a \$1,000 DECA scholarship for all of her hard work. For the third year in a row, Allie also spoke at the mini awards session on Friday night on behalf of MDA and kicked off the 'Miracle Minute MDA Fundraiser' for that evening. Overall the trip was a great success.

Best Buddies: Best Buddies had a successful Yankee Candle Fundraiser and would like to thank all staff, family and friends for their continued support. These funds ensure the club is able to send a representative to the summer leadership conference. This conference offers the president-elect leadership skills and strategies to plan events, club activities, and interpersonal relations. The club will be paying conference fees, chapter dues, and plan an end of the year celebration.

Books and Bagels: The Books & Bagels group held a meeting on Thursday April 7th. Members discussed *The Princess Bride* by William Goldman. Members have submitted possible "reads" for next year and will be voting on the new B&B "reads" books for the 2016/17 school year. Our next "read" will be *Twelve Years a Slave*, by Solomon Northup. In conjunction with the book we are hoping to take a field trip to the Museum of African American History and a walking tour of the Black Heritage Trail. Our annual Holiday Fundraiser will help pay for the cost of the trip. In the media center...Everything is coming up Poetry!! April is National Poetry Month... In celebration, the MC has numerous displays on poetry and poets. There is even a table set up for students to do Blackout Poetry. Using pages from a book, students choose words on the page to make a poem and "blackout" all the words that are not to be included in their poem. You don't have to be a poet to have to enjoy it! Just have some fun.

National Honor Society: NHS did a group service activity on March 14. They worked with the Jumpstart organization to create literacy kits for pre-schools. They had about 25 NHS members attend and we were able to create materials for a whole classroom.

OTHER NEWS:

Young Women's Career Day - March 31, 2016: Women from a dozen career fields were on hand to speak to all female juniors about their education leading up to and experiences in their career. This event resulted from collaboration between MHS and Rep. Diana DiZoglio.

Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority (MEFA): Paying the College Bill Seminar - April 11, 2016: Parents and students will have the opportunity to speak to a representative from MEFA regarding the process of paying for the college bill. MEFA will provide helpful information

that will assist families with making the task of paying for college more feasible, such as accessing financial aid and identifying payment options.

On-the-spot Admissions Day-April 6, 2016: Six postsecondary institutions will be on site to hold admissions decision meetings with students. Students will receive a decision regarding their acceptance immediately following the meeting with the admissions representative.

Northern Essex Community College-College for a Day-April 13, 2016: Students will be attending a field trip to NECC to learn about the transition to college, including accessing support services on campus, selecting courses and a major, and navigating the first year of college. Students will meet with leaders from the college to ask questions and will be provided with the opportunity to attend multiple college classes during the day.

APRIL EVENTS:

- Student Government Day at the State House - Friday, April 1, 2016
- U.S. Attorney Carmen Ortiz Visit to MHS - Wednesday, April 6, 2016
- On The Spot College Admissions - Wednesday, April 6, 2016
- The Yellow Dress Play - Thursday, April 7, 2016
- Third Quarter Ends - Friday, April 8, 2016
- Junior Prom at DiBurro's in Haverhill - Friday, April 8, 2016
- Connections - Monday, April 11, 2016
- MEFA Seminar: Paying the College Bill - Monday, April 11, 2016
- College for a Day at NECC - Wednesday, April 13, 2016
- Adopt a Grandparent "Senior" Prom - Wednesday, April 13, 2016
- Connections - Friday, April 29, 2016
- MHS Spring Band Concert - Saturday, April 30, 2016

COMING IN MAY:

- AP Exams - Monday, May 2, 2016, through Thursday, May 12, 2016
- JROTC Pass and Review - Friday, May 13, 2016
- Senior Class Trip to Red Sox Game - Friday, May 13, 2016
- MHS Choir Coffee House Performance - Saturday, May 14, 2016
- MCAS Mathematics Grade 10 Test, Session 1 - Tuesday, May 17, 2016
- MCAS Mathematics Grade 10 Test, Session 2 - Wednesday, May 18, 2016
- Guest Speaker Jeff Allison - Monday, May 23, 2016
- Honors and Awards Night - Wednesday, May 25, 2016
- Senior Class Breakfast - Thursday, May 26, 2016
- Connections - Thursday, May 26, 2016
- Senior Prom - Thursday, May 26, 2016
- Early Release - Friday, May 27, 2016
- Memorial Day - Schools Closed - Monday, May 30, 2016
- Senior Class Trip to Six Flags - Tuesday, May 31, 2016

A complete list of MHS athletic events can be viewed by selecting the link [Athletics Calendar](#) on the MHS webpage.

COMPREHENSIVE GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Christopher Reeve, Principal

LOWER

- Our annual Ice Cream Social sponsored by the CGS PTO will take place on April 8th. We are hoping for another great showing from students and families! This is always a fun prek-8 event that brings the whole school together.
- Students are wrapping up ELA MCAS 2.0 testing. This year, we placed an emphasis on “If You Believe It, You Can Achieve It!” Students attended administrative presentations and shared in special “snack get togethers” each day of testing. Our students were motivated to show what they know!
- Grade 2 will be attending a “Frog and Toad” performance at Wheelock Family Theater in Boston on April 27th. This experience will complement the reading students are doing in class.
- Several CGS students have had literary work published in the most recent Appleseed publication. They will be attending the South Lawrence East School in Lawrence on April 28th, for the presentation of students’ work. We are so proud of their accomplishments!
- 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 for prediction, statistics, geography and other related concepts. The students and staff were quite engaged in the process!

UPPER

- **Dorothy in Wonderland**, our school play, April 1 and April 2
- Continental ELA League meets begin on Wednesday, April 6
- Signups for the new field hockey program
- Ice Cream Social, April 8
- Band Jamboree, April 13

Here's to a good and activity filled spring!

MARSH GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Stephen Sierpina, Principal

LOWER

- Grades 3 and 4 completed their scheduled ELA MCAS testing on March 31st. The students were well prepared and put forth great effort in the new and improved MCAS 2.0. We were also very pleased with the minimal number of absences (and subsequent make-ups) during the testing period, with only 8 students missing one or more sessions (one of those students being medically excused). Great job by teachers and students!!!
- Class pictures were taken on Wednesday, March 9th, and are already in the students’ hands.
- Representatives from the American Red Cross visited the 3rd grade classrooms for the Pillowcase Program on March 10th. This program teaches students about personal and family preparedness, local hazards and basic coping skills. The Red Cross had presented this program to the 4th grade several months ago.
- PBIS Assemblies were held on Monday, March 28th (grades 1, 2 and K) and Friday, April 1st (grades 3 and 4).
- Parents/guardians in Ms. Mace’s class were invited into the classroom on April 1st for Author’s Café, as the students shared their persuasive writing with their families. Several of our classrooms regularly invite parents in to share and celebrate students work when they complete a writing unit.

- Captain Buote from Methuen Fire Department will be visiting Ms. Kelley's 3rd grade classroom on April 6th to conduct a Student Awareness of Fire Education (SAFE) evaluation. This occurs annually in one 3rd grade class, and takes about ½ hour.
- PTO postponed the Jigsaw Jamboree from March 11th to April 29th due to the services for Arthur Nicholson. The Ice Cream Social will be April 7th.

UPPER

The Marsh Upper School is coming into April excited and ready to learn! Bowling Club started on Friday, April 1st. On April 6th, 7th graders are going on a field trip to the North Shore Music Theatre. On Thursday, April 7th, PTO is hosting an Ice Cream Social from 6 to 8pm at Jay Gees. Also on April 7th Academic Bowl students will attend the Youth Leadership Summit at the YMCA in Andover. On April 13th, Academic Bowl students will attend a field trip at Harvard University. Also on April 13th, there will be a Band Jamboree at the MHS Field House at 7pm. On April 27th and 28th, 5th grade students will attend a field trip to the Minute Man National park. And finally, on April 29th, the Upper School will host the annual Jigsaw Jamboree from 6-8pm.

Students worked hard during MCAS testing at the end of March. Teachers will present evidence for their evaluations at the beginning of April and they will receive their formative and summative evaluations by June. All upper school students will receive progress reports during the last week of April. Everyone in the Upper School will be ready for Math and Science MCAS to begin in May.

TENNEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Ms. Mary Beth Donovan, Principal

Spring has arrived at the Tenney and the school is blooming with activities. Here is a look at what is happening:

English Language Arts MCAS testing has gone smoothly. Our PTO worked to make sure that our students were ready for testing by providing breakfast for every student on testing days. We were very impressed with wonderful student attendance.

Parent Outreach efforts continues:

- Upper School principal Paula Simone and SRO Michael Farelli hosted a parent outreach seminar titled "A Parent's Guide to Internet Safety for Pre-teens and Middle Schoolers."
- Grade 8 hosted a "Museum Walk Evening" for parents. Student writing, featuring Lucy Calkins workshop writing and more was displayed in a gallery setting, offering parents the opportunity to enjoy student work.
- Our first grade team hosted a Family Literacy Day on April 8, bringing families into the classroom.
- Our media center will host a reading celebration on April 14, welcoming visitors into our school to read to students.

During and after school activities are keeping students healthy and busy.

- Two spring running programs for girls hosted by our staff engages 40 girls. Girls on the Run, for students in Grades 3-5 is coached by Sarah Hudon, Leah Beauchemin and Meaghan Piangitini. Upper school students, coached by Judy Flagg, Becky Devendorf and Liz Fulks participate in Heart & Sole. The programs are designed to create a positive, structured space for middle school girls to learn about themselves, explore new ideas, cultivate empathy, strengthen connections and develop life skills that will help them as they move through adolescence and beyond.
- Practice has started for the boys and girls intramural basketball teams. Kim Morin and Paula Simone are coaching the girls' team and John Sughrue is the boys' coach.

- Firefighter Phil taught our lower school students how to feel safe during special assemblies April 11.

Our students are supporting others:

- Our Peer Leaders, led by Joyce Wyman, have created a Wall of Heros. Students and staff have brought in pictures of family members who have been past or present members of the Armed Forces. The display is located outside our main office.
- Staff created a Backpack Project to provide food to Tenney families that need a bit of support.

Our staff is having fun:

- SEA Carrie Ingrassia and teacher Bob Connelly hosted a Zentangle seminar for staff to help them destress before MCAS.
- Our PBIS building team is hosting a Paint Night for staff. All proceeds will help support our efforts to reward students.

Coming up:

PTO Meeting April 14

TIMONY GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Timothy Miller, Principal

While the weather may not say spring, inside the Timony, spring is in the air! April marks the beginning of MCAS assessments for us which can be a very stressful time for many students. This year, we continued our tradition holding an MCAS pep rally for students in grades 3 - 8. At the pep rally, we bring students into the auditorium and present a skit and video montage to lighten the mood and encourage students to do their very best on the test! Our slogan is, "Rock the Test". We have covered our school with art work and positive messages on lockers, classroom doors and in huge hallway displays to motivate our students. Additionally, you will see colorful balloon archways as you enter both the upper and lower school again to create a positive atmosphere for students and staff alike. Finally, Timony's Peer Leaders wrote encouraging messages for each student in grades 5 - 8 that were delivered prior to the start of the assessments. Through all of these efforts, we are hopeful that our Timony students felt supported and encouraged through their assessments. We will continue with these initiatives when we head into the math assessments in May.

We are very excited for our Academic Bowl team and their adviser Bob Lyons who are co-champions for the second year in a row! This team competes against other Methuen and neighboring community schools. We are very proud of their accomplishments. The students are looking forward to an upcoming field trip to Harvard University where they will learn about the university and get a behind the scenes tour! Finally, they are being recognized at an awards assembly at North Andover High School on 4/14.

SADD UPDATE

CGS and High School: Students have been working on end of the year activities. CGS students would like to have an end of the year pizza party/outdoor celebration and high school students would also like to do something outside. Both groups are considering utilization of Forest Lake. We will also be participating in the Holy Family cleanup this month.

Marsh: Students attended a school dance as a group in March. There actually were a good number of kids that came back to school from 6-8 to attend. They were all very well behaved and had a fun time.

During the month of March, Tenney SADD planned a spirit week to help stop bullying. Due to snow and other conflicts, our spirit day has been postponed. The work SADD has been doing was shared at the recent PBIS assembly during their safety portion of the presentation. We will be working to reschedule the spirit week soon.

April will bring our annual planning of the Relay for Life event as well as continuing to work with Debbie's Treasure Chest to collect school supplies for students who may not be able to afford them.

The SADD members will also be invited to join in the path cleanup day at the end of April.

Timony:

March Meeting dates: **March 10, 24**

April meeting: **April 7**

March:

- Prepared white paper T-shirts to hang in glass corridor displaying quotes from 'Big Tobacco' to 'air out *Big Tobacco's* dirty laundry. Students hung clothesline along the inside windows and used clothespins to display the t-shirts.
- March 16 was Kick Butts day. SADD students distributed questionnaires to upper school students at lunch time with the following questions:

Massachusetts Cigarette facts – circle T or F

1. More than 39,000 Massachusetts high school students smoke. T F
2. Tobacco companies would never want young people to smoke. T F
3. Tobacco companies spend more than 145 million dollars each year on advertising. T F
4. Tobacco related health care costs are more than 4 billion dollars per year. T F
5. 3,900 Massachusetts kids under 18 become new smokers each day. T F
6. Second hand smoke is especially harmful in young children and causes thousands of children to become ill. T F
7. Tobacco 21 is a local law that raises the cigarette purchase age to 21 and is being adopted in many cities across the country. T F

The completed questionnaires were entered into a raffle for 2 Launch certificates.

April:

Agenda will include registration for Holy Family Hospital trail clean up

Superintendent's Inclement Weather Letter

The following letter went home with all students AND is posted on the website:

Now that October is upon us, winter storms are common New England occurrences. Snow, ice, and extreme cold pose special problems for the school system and our goal of getting seven thousand youngsters to school safely. The decision to close school is a great responsibility and rests with the superintendent. Conversely, the decision to send a youngster to school is a grave responsibility that rests with parents and guardians. As in all matters concerning the schooling of your children, we remain partners and are mutually supportive of each other's efforts.

During severe weather conditions, I monitor the situation beginning in the early morning hours. I am in contact with state police, public works, superintendents in neighboring communities, and the Methuen Public Schools facilities manager who organizes sanding and much of our plowing.

Based upon all the information that is collected, a decision is made to close school, delay the opening or remain open. This is done no later than 5:00 a.m. All cancellations are carried on the major Boston television and radio stations as well as WCCM and the School System's Cable Station, Channel 99 for Comcast and Channel 31, Verizon and on the Methuen Public Schools Website www.methuen.k12.ma.us.

We understand that a "delay or a no school" day is a challenge for working families. Many parents have a predetermined plan they put into place on snow days to lessen confusion when school is actually cancelled. We also understand that some parents are anxious about sending their youngsters to school when the weather is not good and there is school. We ask that you call and notify the school if you choose to keep your child at home when school is in session.

I hope that this information is useful and I urge you to inform your schools of any special procedures your family may have in place and to be aware of possible delays or cancellations when winter storms are forecast.

Let's all work together to remain informed and have a safe and healthy winter season.