

METHUEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY REPORT

JANUARY, 2015

<u>MHS UPCOMING DATES</u>			
<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
January 22	7:00 p.m.	District Wide Choral Festival	MHS Auditorium
January 23 & 24	7:00 p.m.	Technical Theater Production	MHS Auditorium
January 23	12:00 p.m.	Mock Trial Field Trip	Harvard University Law School Cambridge, Ma
January 24	7:00 a.m.	SAT and Subject Test	MHS Auditorium
January 26	6:15 p.m.	Science Fair	MHS Cafeteria
January 28	9:00 a.m.	Vocational/Technical School Fair	MHS Cafeteria
January 28	7:00 p.m.	MHS Winter Band Concert	MHS Auditorium
January 28	12:00 p.m.	Mock Trial Competition	Lawrence Housing Court Lawrence, Ma

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL – SCHOOL, CLUB AND ACTIVITY UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. James Giuca, Principal

Methuen High School **staff and students** participated in the annual Arlington Neighborhood Adopt-A-Family program. Through the generosity of many we were able to provide gifts for 27 children this holiday season.

The **DECA** organization competed in the District Conference and Competition on Wednesday December 17th. Over thirty students participated in the competition and all represented Methuen High School very well. One student advanced in the Business Finance Category and another advanced after writing a community service paper. A two person team also advanced in the Sports and Entertainment Category. These students along with a four person quiz bowl team will participate in the State Conference and Competition in Boston on March 12th-14th. The club will now focus on prepping these students to represent Methuen DECA with hopes of advancing to the National Conference in April.

Six students from the **band and chorus** have been selected by audition, to perform at the Massachusetts Music Educators Northeast Senior Festival at Lowell High School January 10, 2014

at 2:00 in the afternoon. The following students have been selected: Ben Crowninshield, Michael Hajjar, Scarlet Yeung, Melanie Conner-Myers, David Raucci and Alison Wohler.

Best Buddies is off to a great start for the New Year as officers will meet after school on January 12 to make plans for the annual fashion and talent show to be held in February. Loyal sponsors for formal attire are Mr. Tux and David's Bridal.

The **senior class** is holding a raffle for four Red Sox tickets to the May 4th game against Tampa Bay to raise money for the senior class. The winners will be announced at the intermission of the senior class play "Faust". The next senior field trip is an evening ski trip to Pat's Peak.

The **Health, Wellness and Physical Education Department** brought in a program called Distractology to the high school. It was a nineteen foot trailer that contains two driving simulators inside. The students who signed up for this program took part in a forty-five minute driving simulation that included eight driving scenarios. During the last two scenarios, the instructor inside the trailer will asked the students to take out their cell phones and try to send text messages. What happens from there is an experience that hopefully the students will not forget when they get behind the wheel of a real car and have the urge to send a text.

Members of the MHS **Media Club** (aka Video Club) have decided to create a news magazine television program called "Unicorn," which will be available online via our Vimeo channel, and broadcast over the Methuen Education Channel on Comcast and Verizon. The program will be made up of several segments, each produced by a different group of club members. Topics will include popular music, politics, local and world news, and school culture. Our outstanding student and club member, John Hayes, recently featured in a Sunday edition of the Eagle Tribune, has agreed to serve as the show host. The host will provide context for the program, including a show introduction, transitional comments between segments, a program summary, and a preview of upcoming segment topics. Club members are also refining specialized software functions (Adobe Premier and Adobe After Effects) related to media editing.

In **Photo Club** this month, the shooting themes were: 'Student's Choice' and 'Holiday Lights'. Students used both their own cameras and the photography department equipment to shoot a variety of images examples related to their interpretation of these themes.

The **National Honor Society** participated in two volunteer activities for the holidays. They collected gifts for two children for the Adopt-A-Family program and the group went caroling twice at a nursing home in Andover, Atria at Marland Place.

COMPREHENSIVE GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Christopher Reeve, Principal

- CGS Grade 8 – Celebration Week Calendar Fundraiser – November 24 – January 23th
- Report Card meetings with students – Grades 7 – 8
- Science Tournament Presentation – Grades 5 & 6 on January 8th
- Grade 8 Spanish native –speaker placement exams – January 14
- Grade 8 Scheduling Meeting – January 21st

- The Continental Math League meet for grades 2-4 is on January 8th. Students have been working hard to problem solve and practice their skills. This will be the initial meet for students in grades 2 and 3.
- Grades 3 and 4 will participate in an enrichment program titled, Tournament of Science on Thursday, January 8th. We are pleased to bring this great opportunity to the CGS.
- Our annual New Year's Day Ice Skating fundraiser for the Kids' Cancer club was a great success. Many CGS families and staff members took part in the festive event.
- Students of the CGS 100 Mile club have been logging their miles each week. The goal is to get to 100 miles! The students are learning great ways to live healthy lifestyles.
- Benchmark testing for math and DRA reading assessments will occur this month. Teachers will analyze class results and use that data to inform their lessons.

MARSH GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Stephen Sierpina, Principal

Lower School

Kindergarten students built gingerbread houses in the cafeteria on various mornings in December. The children brought in the materials and invited a parent or other adult to help. The teachers have developed different curriculum - linked language arts and math activities to support this project.

The annual PTO Holiday Store on Friday, December 5th from 6:00pm – 8:30pm was very successful. There were a number of staff volunteers that assisted the parents with wrapping the gifts that students had selected.

Report card conferences were held December 11 and 12. Many teachers also provided a number of alternatives morning/afternoon times during the week to accommodate the parents' schedules, which contributed to the high percentage of parent participation.

The Lower School Holiday Sing-A-Long was held on Tuesday, December 23rd in the auditorium (two sessions). Mrs. Mace and Mrs. Ireson coordinated the program, with assistance from the IT folks and Mrs. Gangi was the emcee. This was also the first year that the staff and students combined this tradition with a food drive for Lazarus House. We were very proud to deliver more than 1,000 food items that afternoon and hope to increase this number next year! Thanks to our parent volunteers for loading up their vehicles and bringing boxes of food to Lazarus House!

Upper School

- Late December event—Honor Roll assemblies held on December 22 to distribute certificates and acknowledge students' accomplishments.
- Academic Bowl meets on January 7th and January 13th
- Progress Reports for 2nd Trimester will be January 16th
- Access Testing for ELL students will be January 12th through 23rd
- NAEP test for grade 8 will be February 12th

TENNEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Ms. Mary Beth Donovan, Interim Principal

Tenney staff and student were busy and successful as 2014 came to a close and 2015 opened. Here is a sampling:

- The entire seventh grade toured the Boston Museum of Fine Arts Egyptian Art exhibit on Jan. 7 thanks to a grant awarded by the museum to the Tenney. All admission fees and a significant portion of bus fees were covered. Thanks to art teacher Marcia Mucci who coordinated the application process with high school teacher Christine Castle.
- Saturday detentions have started. The leadership team, working to support teachers in creating classrooms free of distraction and disruption, while also realizing the importance of keeping students in the classroom, hosts the morning gatherings. A detention period was also held over school vacation. Students who have violated the behavior policy or who have a series of tardies are included in the detentions. The initial response from parents and staff has been positive and we have already seen an improvement in some chronic tardy cases. We are collecting data to determine the impact of initiative.
- The leadership team conducted six home visits in December to check on students who have been chronically tardy or absent.
- The Giving Tree, a Tenney holiday tradition, provided more than 50 of our students with something to put beneath the Christmas tree and/or a holiday meal for their families. Second grade teacher Dawn Patterson again organized the project.
- Our Tenney Peer Leaders, led by advisor Joyce Wyman, collected 200 coats for the Coats for Kids program and helped stuff 175 holiday stockings for area veterans.
- The Upper School band and chorus concerts were a great success, well-attended. We look forward to the concerts in the spring and more great work from teachers Holly Gray, Brian Fulks and our talented students.
- Our initiative to get parents more involved in the academic life of their children continues. This month, Grade 7 teachers Judy Flagg and Margaret McCarthy of Grade 7 hosted a technology seminar for parents.
- The Play and Read program led by local author Jay Atkinson and the Nevins Memorial Library ended another successful run. Twenty one middle school students spent after-school time to learn about the rules of floor hockey, good sportsmanship, and the power of reading.
- The Tenney 5th grade Girls on the Run team participated in their first 5k road race on Dec. 15. The goal of the program, organized mom Andrea Finn is to help girls develop self-esteem and discipline while learning about the importance of health and fitness. The girls did not run alone: Tenney staff Diana Blanchette and Christine Crocker also ran the course.

TIMONY GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Timothy Miller, Principal

The Timony Grammar School has been a busy place. The PBIS team planned and implemented An Evening with Santa as a fundraiser in order to sponsor the rewards provided as part of the program. Over two hundred students and their families attended. Each student made an ornament to take home, had either a picture with Santa or one in the photo booth, and attended a reading of *The Night Before Christmas* with a few songs from the chorus. The night was a wonderful community event.

The National Junior Honor Society held an induction with students in 7th and 8th grades becoming members. The ceremony included the reading of the oath and signing into registry. It is always inspirational to hear what each new member's former teacher has written about them.

The Holiday Store was open for a week so that students in grades ps-4 could purchase trinkets for family members as gifts. The PTO sponsored the event as a fund raiser for the many field trips and school events that they provide throughout the school year.

The media center held a book fair that took place during the week leading up to parent conferences. Many students purchased items during both opportunities. It is a great way to encourage a love of reading for students and their families.

The kindergarten teachers and program assistants planned a Frozen Dance that was held in the cafeteria. There were many princesses in attendance with their parents. One staff member's daughter and friend came dressed as Elsa and Anna, so there were many happy kindergartners singing and dancing the night away.

The Timony Grammar School began a backpack program for families who need a little extra help. Kate Vachon, a Special Education teacher, got approval to reach out to families that may be struggling with their food budget. Referrals are made by teachers or guidance counselors to Ms. Vachon who then contacts the parents. Parents can self-refer as well. Participation is voluntary by the families and they determine the frequency of the food deliveries. Students are given the backpacks on Fridays to take home and they return the backpack when they need more food. At this time, we have 38 families (52 students) that we are helping. The food is provided through a pantry set up at the Timony that is supplied by staff and families. It has been a concerted effort by many staff members that has made this program a success.

SADD UPDATE

DISTRICT WIDE- All advisors are currently in the planning stages of an anti-bullying day in schools on January 23. Schools will encourage all students to coordinate spirit days with specific dress and colors to bring awareness to this problem. SADD will work in conjunction with health departments.

All schools will attend a trip to Skateland in Haverhill on January 30th. The SADD program has rented the facility exclusively and will open up to "friends of SADD" members to encourage participation and new members.

HIGH SCHOOL - Students participated in a bowling trip to pilgrim lanes and will attend another bowling night on January 15th. SADD leaders are coordinating volunteer work at Cor Unum in Lawrence for the months of January and February with the hope of regular volunteer work.

CGS- Will also participate in the bullying awareness day. In addition, students have begun planning their exclusive field trip to laser craze in North Andover. Students will also take part in the Skateland activity.

MARSH - 20 Students attended bowling at pilgrim lanes on December 18th. SADD plans on joining forces with our Health teacher and take part in the anti-bullying campaign. They hope to use the a Post-it note activity and have a spirit day... They are wearing fluorescent colors and calling it "Dress Bright for What's Right"...and may organize mix-it-up day at lunches as well.

TENNEY- This school has spearheaded the anti-bullying campaign with the intention of making it a "black out bullying day" various activities are planned for the day and they intend on using a spirit day.

TIMONY- The Timony is working on details for the anti-bullying campaign and making special activities for their school. Mrs. Alaimo and this group has organized and put together the district-wide Skateland trip.