

METHUEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY REPORT

JANUARY, 2016

UPCOMING DISTRICT-WIDE DATES

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
January 15		K-12 Early Release Professional Development	
January 18	No School	Martin Luther King Day	
January 21	7:00 pm	SEPAC Meeting	CGS Grammar School
January 25	6:30 pm	School Committee Workshop	Timony Grammar School

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL – SCHOOL, CLUB AND ACTIVITY UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Richard Barden, Principal

Our schoolwide goal is to provide meaningful learning opportunities that inspire every student. We will continue to engage students through instructional practices that reflect our high expectations. We ask that families reinforce with students the importance of student attendance. For optimal growth, students are expected to attend school each and every day. As a reminder, the second term ends on Friday, January 29, 2016. Please contact the high school if you have any questions or concerns regarding your student's academic performance.

Here are some of the events planned for the month of January:

- “Shrek the Musical” - Thursday, January 7, Friday, January 8, and Saturday, January 9, 2016
- DECA Regional Competition - Thursday, January 7, 2016
- Connections - Wednesday, January 13, 2016
- Professional Development Early Release - Friday, January 15, 2016
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day - No School - Monday, January 18, 2016
- Vocational/Technical Fair - Wednesday, January 20, 2016
- Choral Festival - Thursday, January 21, 2016
- Mock Trial at Boston District Court - Friday, January 22, 2016
- ACCESS Testing - Monday, January 25, 2016, through Thursday, January 28, 2016
- Mock Trial at Lawrence Housing Court - Tuesday, January 26, 2016
- Winter Band Concert - Wednesday, January 27, 2016
- Connections - Thursday, January 28, 2016
- Second Term Ends - Friday, January 29, 2016

Coming up in February and Early March:

- Science Fair - Monday, February 1, 2016
- MCAS Biology Retest, Session 1 - Monday, February 1, 2016
- MCAS Biology Retest, Session 2 - Tuesday, February 2, 2016
- Connections - Friday, February 12, 2016
- Coaches vs. Cancer - Girl's Basketball NA @ Methuen - Friday, February 12, 2016
- Winter Recess - No School - Monday, February 15, 2016, through Friday, February 19, 2016

- MCAS ELA Retest, Composition Sessions A and B - Wednesday, March 2, 2016
- MCAS ELA Retest, Reading Comprehension Sessions 1 and 2 - Thursday, March 3, 2016
- Guidance Department Junior Students Parent's Meeting - Thursday, March 3, 2016
- Early Release - Friday, March 4, 2016
- MCAS ELA Retest, Reading Comprehension Session 3 - Friday, March 4, 2016
- JROTC Military Ball - Friday, March 4, 2016
- MCAS Math Retest, Session 1 - Monday, March 7, 2016
- MCAS Math Retest, Session 2 - Tuesday, March 8, 2016

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

- **MHS Science Fair** will be Monday, February 1, 2016 from 7:15-11am and from 6:30pm-8:30pm in the MHS cafeteria. Students have been working extremely hard to prepare for this event. All are welcome and encouraged to attend this great showcase.
- **The Mock Trial team** continues to prepare for their Boston and Lawrence events later this month. The team has been working tirelessly to prepare for the upcoming challenges from other schools.
- **Best Buddies** was proud to share the club's involvement in MHS community outreach to "Adopt a Family" for the holiday season. Members bought numerous presents to make the holidays extra special for a young person. Joy Santoro is the happy recipient of the BB raffle for tickets to see, "It's a Wonderful Life", presented by Merrimack Valley Repertory Theater. Hope she enjoys the show! Members celebrated with an evening of cookie and card decorating while listening to holiday music and socializing with one another on December 21st in the cafe. Much fun and hot chocolate was enjoyed by all! The club is looking forward to planning events for 2016.
- **JROTC:** Many cadets and cadre served meals on December 29th and 31st at the Lazarus House. On Thursday January 7th the cadets will be briefing the M.I.T. Cadre on the program. During the holiday break the marksmanship, physical training and academic teams put a great deal of work in practicing for the upcoming competitions. Lastly, the mentorship program at the Timony and Tenney schools have been going strong and the middle school presentations at all 4 grammar schools will be the last week of January.
- **Video Club:** On Monday January 11th and January 25th. The Club is open to all students from 2 PM until 3 PM in room 2110. Students are able to learn about all aspects of media production utilizing industry standards equipment. Such as Studio production including how to operate TV studio cameras or behind the scenes Control room switching, graphic design, special effects script writing or on-screen talent. Students are encouraged to stop by for more information.
- **National Honor Society** participated in the Adopt-a-Family program for December. The students brought in many gifts for two families. Both families were extremely excited and grateful!
- **Concert Choir and MHS Band:** Several members of the MHS choir and band participated in the Mayoral inauguration on Sunday January 3rd.

Methuen High School Upcoming Dates

Date	Time	Event	Location
January 6,7 & 8	Multiple	Shrek The Musical	Methuen High School
January 7	All Day	DECA Regional Competition	Merrimack College

Date	Time	Event	Location
January 12&13	School Day	Chucky's Fight	MHS Auditorium
January 20	9:18-10:18	Vocational/Technical Fair	MHS Cafeteria
January 21	7:00-9:00pm	District Choral Festival	Methuen High School
January 26	2:00 PM	Mock Trial	Lawrence Housing Court
January 27	7:00-9:00pm	Winter Band Concert	Methuen High School
January 29		Term 2 Ends	Methuen High School

COMPREHENSIVE GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Christopher Reeve, Principal

LOWER SCHOOL

- Our annual New Year's Day Ice Skating fundraiser, at Methuen High School, was a great success! This event was organized by the advisors and students of the CGS Kids' Cancer club. Many CGS families and staff members took part in the festive event.
- Grades 3 and 4 will participate in the Jump Rope for Heart Kickoff which begins January 5th. This informative fundraiser (in conjunction with the American Heart Association) is a CGS favorite. Each year, a guest speaker educates the students on ways to be heart healthy. Our students really get moving during this fast-paced fundraiser!
- Beginning January 19th, students in the 4th grade will participate in classroom demonstrations by "The Map Lady." These classroom workshops provide our students with opportunities to expand their map reading skills.

UPPER SCHOOL

The New Year brings with it many activities at the CGS Upper School. Here is what we have to look forward to in the month of January:

- Grade 8 calendar fundraiser
- Continental Math League Meet
- Academic Bowl Meet at the Marsh School
- Grade 8 Career Day
- CGS Morning Basketball Program
- Student interviews conducted by Essex Tech
- JROTC visit to prepare for course selection at MHS

To a wonderful 2016,

The CGS Upper School

MARSH GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Stephen Sierpina, Principal

Lower School

- Parent Conferences held the second week of December were very well attended. The staff did a great job of scheduling conferences throughout the week to accommodate the parents' schedules, provide adequate time for discussion and for other support staff to attend as appropriate.
- The Lower School Food Drive to benefit Lazarus House was held on December 23rd, and was a resounding success. We collected over 1,500 food items (about 300 more than last year) which were delivered to Lazarus House that afternoon by the PTO. The students were delighted to help

out families in need during the holiday season! The classroom with the most contributions at each grade level earned an extra 15-minute recess to be scheduled at the teacher's convenience.

- Although our PBIS kick-off was official as of January 4th, the students have already had a great deal of exposure to our key terms (Safety, Respect, Responsibility) and expectations from bulletin boards, classroom discussion and "previewing" from the teachers. The coaches have done a tremendous job keeping everyone informed and minimizing any additional tasks to implement the program.
- Our annual Jump Rope for Heart Day is tentatively scheduled for February 4th, Grades 3 and 4 get together as grade levels and jump in the large gym on that day, raising money for the American heart Association. Grades 1 and 2 will jump during their regular gym times during the week, and parents are invited to come in and watch.

Upper School

- At the Marsh Upper School, staff members at the Marsh ended the last Monday of 2015 with a December Holiday Breakfast before students arrived that day. It was a great way to end 2015.
- Looking forward to January of 2016, we are preparing to host the Academic Bowl meet on January 13.
- All ELL students will be taking the ACCESS assessment this month in order to measure their progress towards English acquisition.
- Also in January, educators are preparing evidence to submit for their Mid-Cycle Formative Evaluations. These evaluation meetings will begin by January 15.
- Finally, student progress reports for Term 2 will be sent home the week of January 18.

TENNEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Ms. Mary Beth Donovan, Principal

Students and staff ended 2015 and started 2016 with plenty of learning and holiday spirit. Some highlights:

- Shaw's Market of Salem, NH has generously donated \$400 to The Tenney. The money will be used to support our Positive Behavior Intervention System.
- *Are You Smarter than an Eighth Grader* was a holiday highlight. Our eighth graders competed Family Feud-style with teams of parents and school administrators, showing off their academics and pop culture knowledge. The students won the top prize. We were so pleased that Dr. Kwong, Mr. Gosselin, Mr. Lussier participated.
- Our Giving Tree tradition continued this year, under the direction of teacher Dawn Patterson. Staff "adopted" Tenney students and families who needed a bit of help this Christmas and packed the tree with gifts.
- Our Peer Leaders, with guidance from teacher Joyce Wyman, collected hundreds of gently used coats to provide warmth to others in our community.
- Officer Farelli hosted a winter safety program for our lower school students.
- More than 50 of our seventh and eighth grade chorus members, under the direction of Holly Gray, visited area nursing homes to sing Christmas carols.
- Our holiday concerts were well attended thanks to chorus and band directors Holly Gray and Brian Fulks.
- Our eighth graders took their learning outside at the Quarrybrook Outdoor Learning Center, a private non-profit organization dedicated to providing learning experiences in nature. They learned about types of energy and how energy transfers outdoors using hands-on-inquiry based learning experiences. Teacher Doug Patten received the grant.
- Sixth graders learned about just how big the world is during their study of the globe in a visit from Earth View. Sixth grade teacher Christine Dionne organized the event.

- Our vertical team meetings have begun. The fourth and fifth grade teachers met to talk about curriculum, student development and the transition from upper and lower. This month, our eighth grade teachers will spend some time having our conversations with their peers at the high school.

We have much to look forward to later this month:

Jan. 11: Ski Club begins

Jan 13: Geography Bee, Auditorium, 9 am

Jan. 15: Half Day/Hat Day

Jan. 21: PTO Meeting, 7 p.m.

Jan. 25: Adult Paint Nite, Grade 8, Fireside Restaurant, 7 pm

Feb. 2: 100th Day of School

TIMONY GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Timothy Miller, Principal

We are off to a great start in the New Year here at the Timony.

- We are continuing to work with our students to improve vocabulary with our focus on a "Word of the Week" each week in both upper and lower school. Our ELL Coach selects a term from current content curriculum to focus on. Through this whole school effort, students are more familiar with words that might normally confuse them in classwork or assessments.
- Just prior to the holiday break the Timony Band had their winter concert. These talented students had an excellent performance in front of a packed auditorium.
- Additionally, the Timony Chorus will have their winter performance coming up on January 14th at 7:00 pm.
- The National Junior Honor Society sponsored a food drive and was able to help provide holiday meals for 22 local families.
- The Timony Academic Bowl team will participate in their next meet on Tuesday, January 12th and will then finish their season with a competition on home turf! We are looking forward to their continued success.
- Lower School Spirit Council is leading the charge to keep our students engaged in their school community by sponsoring Fun Fridays during the month of January. Students will be encouraged to participate in activities with their grade level peers that help to create bonds of friendship. Upper School will be following their lead.

SADD UPDATE

District-Wide

Diane Alaimo is preparing our third annual SADD Skateland night for late February/March. All schools in the district will take part in this annual event, where we rent Skateland solely for the SADD students, providing a safe and fun environment for all SADD members in Methuen for several hours on a weekend evening.

MHS

On Saturday, December 19th, a group of 12 members went with Ms. Rubino and Mr. Brouder on a community awareness mission to help stop underage drinking. The group, partnered with Evelyn Rodriguez, the Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative Coordinator of the Lawrence/Methuen Community Coalition, visited 5 liquor stores in Methuen accompanied by a police officer. The students covered boxes in the stores with stickers, urging patrons NOT to buy alcohol for minors. The students enjoyed this activity very much and felt as though they were helping their community. More activities such as this have been requested.

CGS

The CGS group attended "Zoo Lights" at the Stone Zoo in Stoneham, MA on Sunday, December 20th. A bus transported 38 members to the zoo for a fun night of looking at animals and enjoying the holiday light display. Thanks to a local business, this activity was completely cost-free for the students.

This month, Sergeant Gunther will be coming to the CGS to speak to the students after school. In addition, the group will be having an open gym afternoon, providing them with an hour and a half after school filled with music, basketball, and other healthy activities.

MARSH

Sergeant Gunther from Methuen's narcotic unit came to my December meeting. It was a great meeting with terrific discussion. Students were very active participants with excellent questions.

TENNEY

Our Tenney SADD members worked hard during the holidays to collect and organize items donated by Tenney students for a local organization, Debbie's Treasure Chest. The group successfully collected over 500 items including toiletries, school supplies, hats, mittens and books to deliver to needy families in the community. In addition, the groups cut out snowflakes to create a bulletin board (pictures to follow) to demonstrate how each one of us can make a difference. Each snowflake represented one item donated and were displayed with the quote "A snowflake is one of nature's most fragile things, but look what happens when they stick together".

For January, our members are interested in setting up a community service project that will include an outing for SADD members and the Best Buddies program at the high school. Members will also be hosting a future "Superheroes Don't Wear Capes" spirit week against bullying. 7th grade Health students have been creating a project that will teach their peers to become a defender when they are a bystander to bullying. These projects will be rolled out during the spirit week to motivate kids to take action.

TIMONY

December Meeting dates: *December 3 and 17, 2015*

January Meeting dates: *January 7 and 21, 2016*

December meetings:

- Students voted on student leaders to help organize events and maintain bulletin board.
- Discussed possible 'committees' that will highlight student's talents and interests.
- Participated in 'Decking the Halls' at the Timony for our 'Evening with Santa' by making construction paper Christmas trees with positive messages and SADD logos topped with the Red Ribbon campaign ribbons.

January Meetings:

- Will form planning committees for Skateland fundraiser, Rock the belt seatbelt activity for lower school students and begin planning KICK BUTTS for March.

Superintendent's Inclement Weather Letter

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

1/11/16

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.