

METHUEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



SUPERINTENDENT'S MONTHLY REPORT

MARCH, 2015

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL JROTC Academic Team to Compete in National Academic Bowl Championship in Washington, DC

METHUEN, MA –24 FEB 15 -- After advancing through two phases of online competition, the Methuen High School Name's JROTC academic team composed of *Team Co-Captains Christopher Quinn and Sean Cushing and members Alexis Ellsey, Eric Ton, Jerrel Garey* will compete in person at the final Championship event of **The 2015 Army JROTC Academic Bowl Championship** in Washington D.C., on the campus of The Catholic University of America, June 26-30, 2015. This event is sponsored by the Army JROTC and is conducted by College Options Foundation.

During the initial two rounds of competitive online play, the Methuen High School JROTC Academic team earned top scores out of the 1,512 teams that competed from around the world to win a place in the National Academic Bowl competition and the all-expense paid trip to DC. The team is one of only twenty-four Army JROTC Academic Bowl teams in the nation to advance to the finals. In the two fast-paced preliminary rounds, students were tested on their knowledge of JROTC curriculum, English, Math and Science. One of the main goals of the JROTC Academic Bowl is to prepare students for state exit/graduation exams as well as college entrance exams, such as the SAT and ACT. **Please join me in congratulating the team on their impressive achievement as they prepare for the National competition.**

The **JROTC** Cadet Staff continues to prepare for their inspection on April 10th. This inspection is a new format that no JROTC program has seen before. The Marksman, Academic and Physical Training teams have been competing against other Massachusetts schools. So far this season, all teams have received awards for their performance and the marksmanship team has placed for the first time since 2012.

MHS UPCOMING DATES

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Event</i>	<i>Location</i>
March 6 & 7	7:00 p.m.	Musical Production "SPAMALOT!"	MHS Auditorium
March 10	2:30 p.m.	Student Faculty Basketball Game	MHS Field House
March 11	2:30 p.m.	Mat Ball Tournament	MHS Field House
March 12 – 14	all day	DECA State Competition	Boston Marriott Copley Place, Boston, MA
March 13	6:00 p.m.	JROTC Military Ball	Wyndham, Andover, MA
March 18	6:00 p.m.	Edible Art Night	MHS Cafeteria

March 19 & 21	7:30 p.m.	Independent Theater Club Perf.	MHS Auditorium
March 20	6:00 p.m.	Relay for Life - Battle of the Bands	MHS Auditorium
March 28	3:00 p.m.	Coffee House	MHS Cafeteria

METHUEN HIGH SCHOOL – SCHOOL, CLUB AND ACTIVITY UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. James Giuca, Principal

The **Science Club** experimented with the thermodynamics of ice-cream production last week. Their upcoming projects include dismantling a projection television and using its optical components for magnification. They are curious if the pieces can be used in a telescope or if they can produce rays concentrated enough to melt this beloved snow here on campus.

The **Foreign Language Department** is planning to run a trip to Spain and Portugal in April 2016. Currently, they have 9 students and 1 adult signed up and looking forward to adding more to the group. Several more students have shown interest and attended our kickoff meeting last week.

Parents of students in grades 8-11 were afforded the opportunity to meet with counselors and engage in the course request process at the **Guidance Department** Course Request Night held at Methuen High School in the media center on February 24. The event was a big success in that approximately three hundred parents were in attendance to have their questions answered and to complete the first step in ensuring their student's education at Methuen High School starts well.

The **Senior Class** is planning Mr. Methuen for Thursday, March 12th, 2015 at 7:00 p.m. in the Methuen High School Auditorium. The event will feature a talent competition, fashion competition and a question and answer competition. A prom deluxe package including prom tickets and other goodies will be raffled off at the event. Once again, teachers will compete for the coveted Mr. Methuen *Old School* title won last year by English teacher, Mr. Jennings. Prom plans for the event on April 30th are also underway and this year's theme is "The Red Carpet."

National Art Honor Society planned a Mock Iron Chef competition, arranged food sculpting teams, and distributed information to the staff district wide informing everyone about our Edible Art Fundraiser Event coming this March. Students have also finished sculpting and painting our Recycling Character Barrels that will be placed in the foyer. At the **Chorus** Coffee House on March 28th, art students will be organizing a miniature art show hanging in the foyer to be hung and dismantled in the same evening. The work on display will be the work that was submitted in portfolios to Art Colleges by students here applying to their top choice Art Schools.

The **MHS TED-Ed Club** just had a Connect Meeting Thursday February 26th sponsored by TED-Ed in which the MHS Club got to meet with other TED-Ed Clubs from Burlington High School, Burlington, MA; John E. Dwyer Technology Academy, NJ; and the Scholastic Learning Institute from Cyprus! The students from all four clubs shared their passions and ideas regarding their planned talks (presentations) and shared the obstacles and solutions they have discovered along the way with each other. The students enjoyed connecting with students from other communities and cultures!

Best Buddies wrapped up February with the club's annual Talent/Fashion show. The event kicks off a huge fundraising opportunity: an autographed jersey by none other than the spokesperson for Massachusetts' Best Buddies Organization, Patriots Tom Brady! The raffle will be held on Friday, March 13th, making this somebody's very lucky day indeed! On March 12th, the chapter will host a St. Patrick's Day party in the MHS cafe. Members will make shamrocks, listen to music, and enjoy treats.

Adopt-A-Grandparent continues to meet every Wednesday afternoon at the senior center. They are planning our "Senior" Prom. The theme of the prom is "Travel the World." We've still been playing lots of 45s, dabbling in the Wii, card games, and occasionally pool.

The **Mock Trial** team went one and two this year with a win against Lowell (as the Prosecution) and a one point loss to Central Catholic and bitterly fought loss to Andover. The team also took a field trip into Boston to watch the Harvard Law Students perform a mock trial. We had 30 kids on the team this year and will do a break down party at the end of the month.

The **Methuen High School Musical** will be performing Monty Python's *SPAMALOT!* on Friday, March 6 and Saturday, March 7 at 7:00p.m. in the Methuen High School Auditorium. A Tony-Award Winning musical, *SPAMALOT!* is a lovingly ripped off from the movie "Monty Python and the Holy Grail". The story is a whimsical, nonsensical, and hilarious farce tracing the story of King Arthur's knights on a quest to find the Holy Grail.

COMPREHENSIVE GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Christopher Reeve, Principal

LOWER SCHOOL

- Grades 1 and 2 will participate in an enrichment program titled "Romper Rhythm Puppets" during the day Wednesday, March 4th. We are pleased to bring this creative experience to the CGS.
- Next week, second graders will attend the play, "Flat Stanley" at the Calderwood Pavilion in Boston. This field trip has been entirely funded by a grant from the Methuen Cultural Council.
- We are excited to hold our first "Family Engagement night" on March 5th. This great opportunity, intended to build our school community, is being supported by a field test with Houghton Mifflin. Many teachers and support staff will be in attendance from 5:30- 8:00.
- We have just finished our DRA reading assessment. We are now in the process of compiling all results to monitor students' growth. Enrichment activities and interventions will be used to meet the needs of all learners.
- Our amazing KIDS' CANCER CLUB was able to raise \$900.00 for the fund to support Mr. Bernie McNally of the Timony Grammar school. We are so proud of their amazing dedication and hard work.
- Kindergarten registration will be held on Wednesday March 4th, throughout the day, and at night from 6:00- 8:00.

MARSH GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Stephen Sierpina, Principal

Lower School

- Jump Rope for Heart was held on Thursday, February 5, 2015, for grades 3 and 4 in the Upper School Gym. Since the students raised \$20,000 (well in excess of their goal), Mr. Sierpina and Ms. Lamoureux were ‘Slimed’ on Friday, March 6th! Look for pictures in the next issue of the “Methuen Life”.
- Selected Grade 4 students took the NAEP test in reading, that or science on Thursday, February 12, 2015. The test was rescheduled from February 3 due to inclement weather. The NAEP representative and test administrators were very efficient, and the testing went quite smoothly. The results of the NAEP testing are not reported back to the school, and therefore do not affect any student’s report card assignments.
- PTO sponsored a Bingo Night on February 13th and the annual Jigsaw Jamboree on March 6th.
- Lower School teachers will be receiving their second round of WIDA Professional Development during the third week of March during grade level meeting time.
- Kindergarten registration was held on Tuesday, March 2nd, with morning, afternoon and evening times.
- “Read Across America” was held at the Marsh on Wednesday morning, March 4th, for Kindergarten through Grade 5. Lisa Simonian of the PTO did a great job coordinating this opportunity for community members to come in and read to the students.
- The Marsh School play, “Aladdin,” will be performed on March 12, 13 and 14th in the auditorium.

Upper School

- February seems like a blur, between snow days and vacation days!
- Our ‘Marsh Got Talent’ show was postponed from February 5th to April 2nd.
- 8th graders went for a visit to MHS on February 10th.
- February 12th we implemented NAEP testing in math, reading, and science for 75 grade 8 students.
- February 13th the Student Council had a Red, Pink and White Spirit day and sold carnations as a fundraiser.
- Select 6th and 7th grade students will take the Massachusetts Youth Health Survey on February 23rd.
- 8th Grade Parent Night at MHS was held February 24th
- Make-Up Academic Bowl met on February 27th
- Bowling Club starts March 6th
- Jig Saw Jamboree on March 6th
- Marsh School Play, March 12th, 13th and 14th
- National Junior Honor Society Induction, March 18th

TENNEY GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Ms. Mary Beth Donovan, Interim Principal

The February snow did not slow down the learning at the Tenney. Here is a look at what happened in between snow days and vacation.

- We unveiled the **Show What you Know** initiative. A new branch of our PBIS program, SWYN is designed to promote student responsibility and pride in school work. Students who show stamina, responsibility and respect for their work during MCAS practice and during

actual testing receive gold tickets and the opportunity to win prizes and the admiration of their peers and teachers.

- A pre-Valentine's day assembly featured a presentation on SWYK, student created cheers on the value of hard work, dancing teachers and some very proud parents. Student in current grades 5 to 8 who had Individual Growth scores of 75 percent or higher on the 2014 MCAS were recognized. Their families were invited as well to the celebration. More than 100 moms, dads and relatives attended. One of the Tenney AIP goals is to see a five to 10 percent increase in MCAS student growth.
- A Think Tank formed by a team of volunteer teachers is changing the way we look at how students learn outside the classroom. A group of teachers representing special and regular education along with administrators are researching and proposing small changes in school schedules and approaches. For example, every morning, all lower school children do a sun salute to help start the day refreshed and relaxed. The Think Tank is also getting our kindergarten students up and moving in the morning as they wait to line up for class. In the past, the students had to sit at cafeteria tables.
- Lower school parents got a special Valentine from appreciative administrators on Friday, Feb. 13. The morning drop off line has been a bit of a safety concern with high snow banks and increased traffic. Mr. Bateman, Ms. Donovan and Mr. DeReubis worked with drivers to make the drop off safer over a few weeks, to say thank you to parents for their cooperation, the administrators handed out Valentines and Tenney Rocks pencils to parents.
- The Tenney was well-represented at the Methuen High Course Selection Night. Dean of Students Carl DeRubeis, Associate Principal Paula Simone and Guidance Counselor Valerie Gallagher attended to help eighth grade students parents get ready for high school.

TIMONY GRAMMAR SCHOOL UPDATES

Submitted by Mr. Timothy Miller, Principal

Mathematics:

We are proud to share our most recent mathematics data. As determined by our pre and post math assessments, students in grades 5 through 8 are demonstrating consistent growth. Due to the interventions and student supports implemented by our grade level teams, the Timony Upper School is experiencing an averaged 14% increase in student growth percentiles.

Literacy:

In the last month, 3rd and 4th grade team meetings have focused on improving the literacy capacity of our ELL students. Teachers and coaches are committed to provide the necessary supports to narrow language proficiency gaps. In addition, Lower School grades have just finished their reading assessments. At this time, teachers and coaches will re-evaluate our current interventions based on this data.

PBIS:

Timony students continue to S.O.A.R and are being recognized for meeting our defined behavioral expectations (**S**afety, **O**wnership, **A**ceptance, and **R**esponsibility). Students are earning incentives that are activity based. Most recently over 600 Lower School and over 300 Upper School students attended the last S.O.A.R reward; approximately 20 different activities were offered and Lower School students were able to choose the activity that sparked their interest level. Upper School students participated in a Team Trivia event. Since the full implementation of

our PBIS program, we have experienced a decrease in student behavior referrals. There are 151 fewer documented discipline records as there were at this time last school year.

Family/Community Engagement:

We are in the early stages of forming new partnerships with 2 local Merrimack Valley businesses: Sultan Café, N. Andover and Tripoli Bakery, Methuen. The purpose of our partnerships is to support our PBIS and PTO efforts and in turn help support our locally owned businesses in the Merrimack Valley by patronizing them. In addition to our current community efforts, we feel the need to shine the spotlight on the efforts our Upper School students are putting forth at this time. Our student body is organizing a benefit dance for Mr. Bernie McNally. Mr. McNally, a well known and beloved 6th grade teacher was recently diagnosed with brain cancer. Timony students are sponsoring a “Rally for McNally” dance this Friday, March 6th. All proceeds from ticket and concession sales will be donated with love to Mr. McNally and his family.

SADD UPDATE

High School: The high school successfully participated in the anti-bullying campaign with “Dress Bright for What’s Right.” Students wore bright clothing to support good choices and fair treatment of others in the community. Pictures and statements were taken at lunch to support positive behavior and awareness. Students will go to pilgrim lanes to bowl as well as Cor Unum to volunteer. In addition, students will participate in the national initiative, “Kick Butts Day.”

CGS: The CGS participated in the anti-bullying campaign with “Blackout Bullying.” Students wore black to support the SADD national anti-bullying campaign. Pictures and statements were taken at lunch to support anti-bullying. Students will participate in the national initiative, “Kick Butts Day.”

Marsh: The entire upper school participated in "Be Bright for What’s Right". On that day, everyone dressed in neon colors in the upper school. Also, SADD placed inspirational quotes on EVERY locker in the upper school and created large posters for EVERY homeroom door in upper school. It was awesome!!! We also had a "mixed up lunch" where students sat at different lunch tables and many grade 8 teachers joined students at their tables for lunch. All in all, it was a very positive experience that most seemed to enjoy.

Tenney: Tenney will be hosting its second annual Kick box to Kick Butts Day. ALL 5th grade students will report to the gym during specials and be introduced to a local kickboxing instructor as we discuss the purpose and goal of the day. Volunteer Kristen Dionne, a martial arts instructor with Ready Set Go in Methuen will lead the kids in a 45 minute kickboxing class to show that physical activity is a much healthier and fun alternative to smoking. Student will be invited to be in a group photo and all receive goody bags at the end with more information for parents and some giveaways.

Last year this was a huge success. SADD members will help organize and decorate for the event and also create a thank you care package for our instructor. They will also assemble goody bags and giveaways.

Along with this campaign, displays will be assembled throughout the school that will remind all students about tobacco's plan to use kids as replacement smokers. Kids will be encouraged to participate in activities throughout the week to show they will not fall for big tobacco's gimmicks.

Timony: These meetings will focus on preparation for Kick Butts Day 2015. The signature activity this year is #NotAReplacement where students make a poster stating they are not a replacement for the thousands of people who lose their lives to tobacco each year. The tobacco industry must 'replace' these 'consumers' if they are to continue making money on their tobacco products.

Once the poster is created (using a template) students will take a 'selfie' with their poster and post this to the #NotAReplacement site.

We will also use the activity "*Airing out Big Tobacco's Dirty Laundry*". Students will set up a table in the cafeteria during 7th and 8th grade lunch and asked fellow students to write a quote from Big Tobacco that 'targets' youth as potential customers for their tobacco products. These quotes will be displayed in the cafeteria and copied onto white paper T-shirts. They will be hung out on 'clotheslines' with clothespins in the glass entryway into the cafeteria.

The Skateland field trip will be a way for grade 7 grade through high school students across the district to participate in a wholesome activity with a group of individuals who are sending out a message of positive choices.