

# Tewksbury Memorial High School Principal's Newsletter December 2016

## From the Principal's Desk - *Kristen S. Vogel, M.A.T.*

Our December 8th professional development included extensive training by our staff on suicide prevention and two hours of training on mindfulness strategies for the classroom. Many faculty identified, at the beginning of the year, that they wanted to learn mindfulness strategies that they can incorporate into their classrooms. We had Peter Franklin, a high school English teacher and a trained mindfulness instructor, teach us about the importance of mindfulness in a high school classroom and trained us all on mindfulness strategies. As a result of the training, many have begun to use the tools and students have reported less anxiety and feeling good about what they just did! Mindfulness is about being present and in the moment. As you know, adolescents spend a significant amount of time wondering about the “what if” of past events and the future. Much of this is a result of our cell phones. We want them to be present so they are best able to learn. Mindfulness teaches them how to self-regulate, reflect and be positive. There is research that shows embedding social emotional learning; metacognition, collaboration, mindfulness, self-regulation, responsible decision-making, into the curriculum can increase academic achievement by eleven percentile points. Below is an excerpt from an article about the adolescent brain.

### **Tuning Schools to the Adolescent Brain**

In this article in Education Week, psychologist/author Thomas Armstrong reminds us of the three layers of the human brain, “this incredible three-

pound organism designed by nature over hundreds of thousands of years to react with excitement and awe to the amazing world that stretches out before it”:

- Brain stem – Survival, reproduction, fight/flight, body functions;
- Limbic system – Emotions, connections to others;
- Prefrontal cortex – Planning, decision-making, self-monitoring, impulse-control.

The limbic system has matured by a person's teens, but the prefrontal cortex doesn't develop fully till the early 20s. This means adolescents tend to act on impulses not tempered by mature reflection and restraint. “Research indicates that while adolescents are able to reason like adults by the age of 15 or 16,” says Armstrong, “they can do this only under ‘cold cognition’ settings (e.g., where there is no emotional pull or peer influence). When they're around their peers or in an emotionally charged situation (‘hot cognition’), teens’ prefrontal-cortex functions don't work as well, which is why a teenager will respond affirmatively to an anti-drug curriculum in the classroom, but then go out and smoke weed with his friends at night... Neuroscience research tells us that the teenage brain is exquisitely sensitive to environmental influences. This neuroplasticity makes it vulnerable to a wide range of societal dangers – traffic accidents, drug abuse, suicide, violence. But it also makes it acutely sensitive to the influences of teachers...”

Armstrong believes these insights about the brain have several implications for secondary schools:

- Curriculum – Schools should orchestrate learning experiences that include metacognition, goal-setting, planning, working memory, reflection on one's learning, and frequent opportunities to make responsible decisions. School should put teens in classroom interactions with their peers that help them integrate impulsiveness, energy, and peer connections with their developing ability to reason and reflect.
- Out-of-school experiences – Students should be involved in apprenticeships, internships, service learning, community-based learning, small peer-learning groups, entrepreneur-based learning, and student-directed projects.
- Metacognition – Students need to be explicitly taught how their brains work, how to use that knowledge to direct their learning and stay out of trouble, and how to regulate their feelings under stressful and tempting situations.
- Stress reduction – “Research suggests that the adolescent brain – subject to the vagaries of dopamine (which connects to reward and pleasure) and serotonin (which connects to well-being and happiness) in the brain – is more susceptible to stress than the brains of either children or adults,” says Armstrong. This suggests that adolescents benefit greatly from mindfulness, meditation, yoga, and frequent aerobic activity.

“‘Brain-Friendly’ Practices for Adolescent Success” by Thomas Armstrong in Education Week, October 12, 2016 (Vol. 36, #8, p. 28, 24), [www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org)

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## Calendar of Events

### *January*

**2 No School**

**3 School Reopens**

**16 No School—Martin Luther King Day**

**19 Hats Off Luncheon 12:15pm**

**20 Administrative Chat 7:30am**

**26 Half Day—Professional Development**

**30 School Council 4:00pm**

### *February*

**2 Eighth Grade Parent Information Night 6:30pm**

**3 Report Cards Issued**

**3 Junior Parent Breakfast 7:30am**

**Junior Guidance Assembly 9:00am**

**6-7 Biology MCAS**

**16 Hats Off Luncheon 12:15pm TCC**

**17 Half Day—February Recess**

**20-24 No School—February Recess**

**27 School Council Meeting 4:00pm**

## Hats Off

Congratulations to Rachel Bradley'17 and Adrianna Favreau'17 for the month of December. These two outstanding senior students were nominated by faculty & staff and were honored at a luncheon sponsored by

the Tewksbury Rotary Club. Each month, two of our students are nominated for this award. Hats Off is a joint initiative of the Tewksbury Rotary Club and Tewksbury Memorial High School. The award recognizes

those students who have distinguished themselves academically, have contributed to the co-curricular program at the high school, and have been actively involved in the community. Keep up the great work!!!!



**Rachel Bradley'17**



**Adrianna Favreau'17**

## Administrative Chat Schedule

Friday mornings, 7:30-8:00am

Principal's Conference Room

January 20, 2017 (English/Social Studies)

March 17, 2017 (Science/World Lang.)

April 28, 2017 (Phys Ed./Bus/Art)

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# TMHS Happenings

## Presidential Scholars

Congratulations to seniors Sara Catanzano and Nicholas Zullo who were selected by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education as nominees for Presidential Scholar representing the Commonwealth of Massachusetts! The Commissioner nominates 10 males and 10 females from Massachusetts for this prestigious award!

## SADD Toy Drive

Below is a picture of Hope McKenzie delivering the toys SADD collected at TMHS to donate to the Nashua Children's Home!



The Psychology and Law Class has worked their way through the many processes of the legal system that involve psychology. Starting the year with the police, the students worked on interrogation techniques and profiling. Now they are examining the court systems. In the picture below, the students are working on a jury selection. Functioning in teams for the prosecution and the defense, the students chose a jury that would benefit their case and then negotiated with the other side to come to a jury of twelve. From this activity the students learned the role of psychology in jury selections, the negotiation needed to settle on a final twelve, and the value of cooperative work. Looking forward, the students will be completing a plea bargain scenario and a child custody/divorce mediation activity before moving into the corrections component of the course. Overall, it has been a busy year for this class.



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## Ms. Hill's Modern World History Class

Welcome to Versailles! The students in Ms. Hill's Modern World History class just participated in a role play of a luncheon at the Palace of Versailles with Queen Marie Antoinette and King Louis XVI. The students played the roles of nobles, peasants and clergyman to re-enact the issues facing these estates during the French Revolution. Debate and discussion at times became heated, as each student fully engaged with their new persona. Modern World History is a new offering this year at TMHS, combining previous 9th and 10th grade curriculum. As the year progresses, the students will cover many more topics, including imperialism, world wars, and the modern era.



## Winter Concert

On December 15th our Chorus and Band had their annual Winter Concert conducted by Heather Ware, our chorus and band instructor. The Band and the Chorus did a selection from Irving Berlin together at the end of concert! Below is a picture from the concert of the combined selection:





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## News from the International Club

The International Club is participating in the Festival of Trees – 2016 at the Tewksbury Public Library. There are 46 trees on display from organizations and businesses in town. Our tree is decorated with flags from the United Nations and ornaments with the phrase ***"Peace on Earth"*** written in many different languages.



## Spanish III Culture Fair

This past Monday, students in Spanish III showed off their research projects to friends and family at the 3rd Annual TMHS Culture Fair. Students spent a month researching a cultural topic of their choosing. The project culminated in a presentation and paper written in Spanish.



**Parents Asking Students About the Topic They Researched for the Culture Fair**

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## Third Annual Culture Fair Photos

### Spanish III Students Show Off Research Project



Attendees of the Culture Fair Were Encouraged to Make Their Own Carnival Mask or Design Their Own Statue for the Fallas

### On the Right, Brent Duffy and Colby Pierce Demonstrate the Mattress Jumping Festival of El Colacho



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## Third Annual Culture Fair Photos (*continued*)



**Raymond Humphrey Shows Off His Knowledge and Passion for Lucha Libre**

## **Larrabee Library Fall/Winter Update**—*Librarian: Mary S. Eldringhoff, M.Ed., M.S.*

### **Intern Program and Database Training**

Two new programs were initiated this fall in the Larrabee Library. During the first two weeks of school, an in-house intern program welcomed 37 students to the library intern training. These interns were prepared to work in a fully functioning library as well as being equipped to support any teacher at TMHS who might request intern assistance. With the institution of the new waterfall schedule, all Freshmen, Sophomore and Junior students received formalized instruction in accessing information suitable for academic research. These classes, offered by librarian, Mary Eldringhoff, focused on using the online database structure available via the high school web site and discouraged the use of search engines as an end-product research tool. Seniors will receive training in January offering skills and strategies that will support their college and career paths after graduation.

### **Book Buddies and Open Mic**

Building on previous success, both the Book Buddies and Open Mic programs have returned to TMHS for another year. Elementary aged students in the district are being visited by high school students dedicated to reading aloud to the next generation.

As the TMHS Open Mic enters its sixth year of existence, we continue to enjoy enthusiastic audiences who come prepared to experience the performances of their highly talented fellow students. While Friday Night Open Mic has become a standard, we recently have had requests to perform elsewhere in the community. Those plans are currently being developed. Stay tuned for details!

### **Registering to Vote**

As students turned 18 years old this fall many of them chose to register to vote online in the Larrabee Library. The election cycle of 2016 prompted many students to embrace this important act of citizenship. Post-election interest in registration continues at a strong pace.

### **Festival of the Trees**

This December, for the third year in a row, Ms. Nicole LaPierre and her art students collaborated with the librarian to produce a Literacy Tree as an entry into the Tewksbury Public Library Festival of Trees. Students Josh Tirrell and JJ Agouli volunteered to set-up this year's entry. Their effort was much appreciated. The decorations were provided by the students of our Art Department and were based on the Jan Brett book: *Who's That Knocking on Christmas Eve?* Shout out to Stephanie Tam for her leadership on this project.

The librarian and intern staff at the Larrabee wish all our families peace and joy in the New Year!

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## Larrabee Library Fall/Winter Update *continued*



**TMHS Literacy Tree was an entry into the Tewksbury Public Library Festival of Trees.**

### Fine and Performing Arts Department

TMHS art classes, in conjunction with Mrs. E and the Larrabee Library, have created an outstanding literacy tree to add to the collection of community-decorated trees which the Tewksbury Public Library annually displays. This year's tree was based upon "*Who's Knocking on Christmas Eve*", a children's holiday book written by Jan Brett. Ms. LaPierre's Drawing classes and Foundations in Art classes contributed ornaments of trolls and festive food based on the illustrations in the book. Special thanks to junior, Stephanie Tam for painting the polar tree topper and the creating the food illustrations used for the ornaments. Also, special thanks to freshmen, Rebecca Deck and Emily Butler for drawing the trolls. The tree will be on display at the Tewksbury Town Library through December.

The Tewksbury School District Barnes and Noble Fundraiser chaired by Trahan parent, Danielle Clark, was held December 3rd in Burlington. The event was a great success. The Fine and Performing Arts Department was happy to contribute art to the festive occasion. Thank you to the following students for contributing work:

**Ms. Arnold's Students:** Danielle Souza'17, Raf Perez'17, Erika Whynot'17, Emily Stewart'17, Sydney Burlamachi'17, Jade Sabbag'17, Destiny Gennetti'18, Erika Deveau'17, Lexi Teves'17, Ashley Turri'18, Catherine Merritt'18, and Jen Campbell'17.

**Ms. LaPierre's Students:** Stephanie Tam'18, Miranda Hulme'17, Casey MacKay'17, Bricen Boudreault'20, Danielle Rosenblatt'17, Noah Gagnon'17, Abby Eskenas'18, Justin Rosberg'18, Karina Crowley'17, Chelsey Pellegrino'17, Emily Amaral'18, Samantha Schultz'18, MacKenzie Bednarek'17, Hannah Slattery'20, Stephanie Baptiste'19, Jordyn Cavicchi'18, Brandon Winn'18, and Emily Saunders'17.

**Mr. Moffat's Students:** Alicia Moore'17, Connor Dane'17, Elena Desmond'17, Joseph Branchaud'20, Emily Stewart'17, Kelvin Nguyen'17, Raymond Humphrey'18, and Jason Benitez'18.

**Ms. Sullivan's Students:** Emma White'19, Brooke DeSimone'19, Jofia Eltakim'19, Sami Salvaggio'19, Jane Kirby'19, Lauren Riccardi'17, Emma Allen'20, Olivia Axson'19, Katelyn Frontain'20, Maia Medina'20, Josue Perez'17, Elizabeth Lam'19, Ryan Manson'18, Annmarie Marquis'17, Kayla McCalgue'18, Masym Lorick'18, Jared Ward'17, and Tracey Costa'20.



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## Fine and Performing Arts Department *(continued)*

Ms. Ware and the TMHS Band & Chorus performed their Annual Winter Concert at the high school on December 15th in the Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center at 7:00pm. The hard work of the band and choir shined as they brought holiday cheer to TMHS and the community. Highlights of the concert included: the band's "Ukrainian Bell Carol", choir's "Winter Song", and actual snow! Congratulations to our performing art students:

**TMHS Concert Band Students:** Lily Allen, Samantha Nugent, Stephen Duquette, Thomas Barinelli, Diego Monteiro, Christopher Nguyen, Andrew Froio, Megan Cunningham, Andrew Laperriere, Hannah Austad, Matthew Edwards, Garrett Starr, Amaya Allen, Matthew Donahoe, William Cokkinos, Rae Sarno, Kassandra Daley.

**TMHS Chorus Students:** Dylan Alves, John Cabral, Brian Carta, Scott Mazzapica, Connor Mangan, Julie Carlisle, Rosalyn Impink, Francesca Ligotti, Justina MacNeil, Rachel Mahoney, Samantha Nugent, Brienne O'Rourke, Victoria Ribeiro, Janine Richardson, and Courtney Santiago.

Congratulations to the amazing cast and crew of "It's a Wonderful Life". The play was performed December 1st-3rd at TMHS in the Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center. It was a smashing success! Great appreciation to Ms. Scarpa, Ms. Sullivan, Mr. Moffat, Ms. Ware, and Ms. Chan for providing our students such an amazing opportunity and memorable experience.

**Cast:** Scott Mazzapica, Sara Axson, Brian Carta, Matthew Donahoe, Alexis Margios, Brienne O'Rourke, Chris Reynolds, Jillian Waugh, Jonathan Reynolds, Connor Mangan, Lydia Joyce, Samantha Pontes, Maeve Costigan, Matthew Edwards, Melanie Crepeau, Peter Carey, Brooke Fullerton, Samantha Nugent, Scotia Corley, Janine Richardson, Maylin Bourgois, Nick MacNeil, Joshua Sanders, Brendan Flynn, Kassandra Daley, Rachel Mahoney, Justina MacNeil, Colby Brooks, Erin Ciampa, Julie Carlisle, Christopher Mitchell, Dylan Alves, Allyson Bechat, Jasmine Won, Connor Nugent, Tyler Hoyt-Paulding, Justina MacNeil, Alanna Dooling, Madison Gallant, Rachel Mahoney, Mikayla Dolan, and Delaney Jackson.

**Crew:** Amanda Clarke, Alyssa Raso, Hayden Pontes, Ibby Ahmed, Jake Gustin, Jess Lisiecki, Kendra Waugh, Laura O'Donnell, Nathan Nkabasele, Rae Sarno, Sansan Nguyen, Shaun Johnson, Dylan Cormier, Marysa Donovan, Ariana Margios, Alanna Rose, Kyle Kwiatowski, Joe Brown, Francesca Ligotti, Lily Allen, and Katelyn Wolotschaj.

Thank you to the painting class for displaying vintage reproduction 1930s holiday card paintings in the lobby to complement the show. Some of these beautiful paintings are still on display in the main office at TMHS through December: Abby Eskenas'18, RJ O'Keefe'18, Emily Amaral'18, Jordan Lemieux'18, Zak Bennett'17, Chelsey Pellegrino'17, Sam Schultz'18, Stephanie Baptiste'19, and Patrick Alves'17.

## Yearbook Parent Recognition Ads

Senior Parents who are interested in placing a congratulatory ad for their senior student in the 2017 Yearbook should go to the following website to create their ad. [www.jostens.com/yearbookads](http://www.jostens.com/yearbookads).

The money we receive for these ads helps to pay for the yearbook. The price the students pay does not cover the entire cost; the rest is raised from our parent ads and business ads. The deadline is January 30, 2017. Find your favorite childhood photo and surprise your student and celebrate his or her success! Any questions, please email: [ssullivan@tewksbury.k12.ma.us](mailto:ssullivan@tewksbury.k12.ma.us)

### Order a Yearbook

If your student hasn't ordered a yearbook, you can order one at [jostensyearbooks.com](http://jostensyearbooks.com). The price is now \$65 and will increase to \$70 on February 1, 2017.

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## Life Threatening Allergies:

### How do they impact TMHS students and their families?

**From the School Nurse - Jessica McClellan, BSN, RN**

Forty students at TMHS have anaphylactic allergies that require them to carry an epi-pen with them. Many of these life-threatening allergies are to common foods such as tree nuts and seafood. These students must scrutinize every bite of food they put in their mouth since it is truly a matter of life and death for them.



Every six minutes in the US, someone goes to the ER due to an anaphylactic reaction. Teens and young adults are at the greatest risk to suffer fatal reactions due to ingestion of an allergen. A student who develops anaphylaxis risks death if he doesn't treat with epinephrine within a few minutes.

Food allergies are a growing concern for American children and parents. According to the CDC, the US saw an 18% increase in childhood food allergies between 1997 and 2007. Another study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed a 50% increase in childhood food allergies between 1997 and 2011. These childhood allergies are costing the US nearly 25 billion.

In addition to economic cost, more students and families than ever are facing the social difficulties that come with having life-threatening allergies. Even a simple social gathering such as a birthday party requires forethought for someone with these allergies. A peanut allergy sufferer needs to check if the birthday cake was made with equipment that may have come in contact with nuts. Someone with a severe latex allergy needs to ensure there will not be balloons present prior to deciding to attend.

Please be advised that we are committed to supporting the courageous TMHS students who face life-threatening allergy challenges and have learned to make responsible choices for their health and well-being. As we understand the impact on students and their families, let's consider how we can better practice tolerance and empathy in our interactions with each other.

## TMHS Student Council

Over the past months, TMHS Student Council has been as busy as ever. The week of Thanksgiving, Student Council organized and hosted the annual Pep Rally. All classes participated in games hosted by each Class Council. We loved seeing the energy and school spirit from the whole school. After a successful Thanksgiving Break, Student Council came back and began to host the annual Holiday Charity Drive. Collecting toys, clothing and other holiday items to donate to the Tewksbury Hospital, the House of Hope and Alternative House of Lowell, the TMHS Community came together for a great cause. During lunches, Student Council members asked students and staff to donate to the lists given to us by the charities. A big thank you to Mrs. Eldringhoff and her interns for keeping the items in the library and helping to deliver the gifts. We have truly enjoyed serving our school and community over these past few months, and look forward to 2017 as an opportunity to continue to do more.

