
Tewksbury Memorial High School **Principal's Newsletter January 2017**

From the Desk of the Principal - *Kristen S. Vogel, M.A.T.*

Dear Parents and Guardians of TMHS Students,

I am writing you this letter for two very important reasons.

First let me say that at TMHS we have much to be proud of!

This year we had a NEASC (New England Association of Schools and Colleges) accreditation team visit that garnered an overwhelmingly positive report about our school, staff, students and academic program. We earned "Level One" status from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for our students' excellent performance on the MCAS in both 9th and 10th grade. We also saw most of our fall sports team qualify for postseason play. One of our students was commended by the National Merit Scholarship Board for her exceptional scores on the PSATs compared to students across the nation. Also, we are currently hearing that our students are being accepted to some of the nation's most competitive colleges and universities.

The second reason for this letter regards our growing concern around our students' potential unhealthy decision making.

This past fall we experienced some sobering incidences that underlined this concern and made us aware that we need to do more as a community to ensure that our students are making good, responsible and legal decisions. This means continuing to educate students about the long term effects of substance use, the legal ramifications of underage drinking, and the possible consequences of drinking and driving.

Our current 9th and 10th grade health curriculum specifically addresses the effects of alcohol and substance use. In October and in March, we have whole school assemblies addressing the issue and impact of drinking and drug use and positive decision making. In fact, this year we had Kevin Brooks speak to the entire student body about his drunk driving accident at the age of 18 years after attending an underage drinking party that paralyzed him and killed his best friend. Also, every other year we have our Students Against Destructive Decisions club collaborate with the Tewksbury Police Department to run a mock crash simulation involving drunk teenage drivers and the aftermath of the accident. However, we need to do more to educate the entire school community about underage drinking. And we need your support in order to do this important work.

After speaking with students on our Principal's Advisory Council, all of our athletic captains, coaching staff, the members of the SADD club, parents at a Town Wide PAC meeting, members of School Council, the Wellness Committee and the School Committee via Superintendent Malone, we took their suggestions and created a plan to better educate our school community about the effects of underage drinking and positive decision making.

- With input from coaches and athletes, we will work to create program for all of our student athletes to promote leadership and positive decision making.
- At the suggestion of our students, we will expand the Chemical Health Policy to all extracurricular activities. Starting next year any student who participates in both athletics and in clubs and activities will have the same consequences for violation of the Chemical Health Policy. This is the practice at many other area high schools.
- After working with students and parents and talking with other high schools, we have created a week of prevention/education activities focused on substance use and positive decision making for the week of March 27-31, 2017. The SADD club came up with a name for the week of March 27 through April 1, 2017, **The Tribe Project**. The choice of the name for this week comes from the meaning of tribe. In Native American tradition, a tribe is a group or community of people. That is what we are at TMHS and this week is about learning and supporting each other as a community.

From the Desk of the Principal *(continued)*

On **March 27**, we have Marc Mero of Champion of Choices speaking to the entire student body. We are able to have Marc speak to our students as a result of the TMHS PAC.

On **March 29**, we will be having a speaker from Minding Our Minds talk with our 11th and 12th graders about substance use and mental health.

On **March 29**, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m., the TMHS School Council has organized a fair for the entire school community, including parents, to learn about the social emotional learning of our students. There will be speakers on mindfulness, depression and anxiety in adolescents and substance abuse in young adults. There will also be information available on yoga, fitness programs, healthy eating, internet safety, and counseling.

On **March 30**, our SADD Club is running a mock crash of a drunk driving accident at TMHS. In partnership with the Tewksbury Police Department, we hold the mock crash every other year. At the suggestion of students, we will be showing the mock crash to all students this year.

Also, on **March 29**, at 7:00 p.m., there will be a **mandatory workshop on Social Host Law, underage drinking and the effects of alcohol and substance use. All junior and senior students and a parent/guardian must attend this workshop in order to participate in any senior week activities and/or attend the junior or senior prom. Students will not be allowed to purchase a ticket for senior week activities or for a prom, if the student and parent have not attended the workshop. If the student and parent/guardian cannot attend on March 29, you will have to arrange to come to TMHS to watch recorded version of the workshop before purchasing tickets.**

- In order to keep our students safe during prom season, we will be transporting seniors via coach bus to and from the senior prom starting this year. Juniors will continue to be transported via bus to and from the junior semi at the Tewksbury Country Club.

Our students' health and safety is a priority. We will do all that we can to educate them when it comes to positive decision making around drugs and alcohol; this is hard work especially with adolescents. However, we can't do this work without all of your support. We have so appreciated the input we have received from students, parents, coaches and teachers. Thank you in advance for all of your support!

Hats Off

Congratulations to Alexis Brincklow'17 and Samantha Pontes'17 for the month of January. These two outstanding senior students were nominated by faculty & staff and were honored at a luncheon spon-

sored 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!



Alexis Brincklow'17



Samantha Pontes'17

Calendar of Events

February

2 Eighth Grade Parent Night 6:30 p.m.
3 Report Cards Issued
Junior Parent Breakfast 7:30 a.m.
Junior Class Guidance Assembly 9:00 a.m.
6-7 Biology MCAS
17 Half Day—February Recess Begins
20-24 No School—February Recess
27 School Council Meeting 4:00 p.m.
28 PAC Meeting 7:00 p.m.

March

1-3 ELA MCAS Retests
6 Math MCAS Retest
7 No School—Professional Development
10 Progress Reports Issued
14 Parent/Teacher Conferences 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
16 Hats Off Luncheon 12:15 p.m. TCC
17 Administrative Chat 7:30 a.m.
21 MCAS ELA Comp
22-23 MCAS ELA Reading
27 School Council 4:00 p.m.

TMHS Happenings

Congratulations!

To Stephanie Tam for her first place essay in the statewide Voices of Democracy competition! Stephanie has earned an all expense paid trip to Washington DC on February 25, 2017, to compete in the national Voices of Democracy essay contest! Here is a link to her [winning essay](#).

NEASC Final Report

As you all know we had our decennial visit by NEASC in September to determine our accreditation as a high school. We received the final report which provides a summary of their findings for the seven standards we are assessed on as a high school along with commendations and recommendations. The committee recognized our amazing facility, our strong and supportive school climate, our new schedule and our 21st century teaching and learning. They also identified areas where we need to be better; vertical curriculum alignment, teacher collaboration time and more opportunities for students to engage in authentic learning experiences. The entire report is available on our website as well as in hard copy at the Town Hall, the Tewksbury Public Library, and the Center School.

International Club News



The International Club is sponsored their 5th Annual Shoe Drive. Thank you for sending to TMHS those shoes that lay idle in your closets and may have ended up in a landfill. Thanks again you for your help!

Guidance News

College Process

Southern New Hampshire University and Rivier University held onsite college admission decision days in January. On-site decision days allow students to meet one-on-one with admissions representatives regarding the college admissions process and freshman transition programs. Additionally, students have the opportunity to have an in-depth conversation regarding program of studies.

Students who are planning to attend a state college or university that requires the Accuplacer exam should register in Guidance. TMHS now has the ability to administer the exam for all college bound and dual enrollment students. The exam will be given later in March to allow our seniors to work with his/her college to determine the appropriate placement for English and Math courses.

Scholarships

Beginning in January, the Guidance department will begin to receive a multitude of scholarships for our students. To assist students accessing application information we have published an active list on the Guidance webpage, and Naviance. A printed spreadsheet is available for students in our Career Center. Please be advised, our local Rotary Club Scholarship and Community Scholarship application are currently available. Additional scholarship resources include: www.fastweb.com <https://www.salliemae.com/college-planning/tools/scholarship-search/>

Parent Presentations

On Thursday February 2, 2017, TMHS hosted it's annual 8th Grade Parent Information Presentation. This was a wonderful opportunity for 8th grade parents to meet with our administrative and department head staff. Student representatives were available to describe our extra-curricular activities and athletic opportunities. The presentation was held in the auditorium.

Our Annual Junior Parent Breakfast took place on Friday February 3, 2017.

FAFSA Day 2017

Middlesex Community College will host **FAFSA Day**, a free community workshop to help students and families fill out the 2017-2018 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), the federally required application for financial aid. **The workshop will be held at 1pm, Sunday, February 12, in the Cowan Center on the Lowell campus, 33 Kearney Square, Lowell, MA.**

FAFSA Day at Middlesex offers different options for families seeking assistance, including computer support, to complete the FAFSA online, as well as one-on-one assistance from financial aid experts.

To prepare for the event and to allow FAFSA Day volunteers to provide you with email updates prior to the event, all participants are encouraged to register in advance. To register, visit www.FAFSADay.org.

For those seeking assistance filling out the FAFSA at the workshop, students and parents* should EACH bring:

- FAFSA IDs (Usernames and passwords available at <https://fsaid.ed.gov>)
- Social Security Number
- Driver's license number
- 2015 federal tax return
- Bank statements
- Business and investment records
- Alien registration card (if you are not a U.S. Citizen)

*Students who were born before January 1, 1994, do not need to bring parental information.

Looking for a part-time job?

Students who are 16 years of age or older and seeking part-time employment should be visiting the Guidance office to register for an appointment with the Greater Lowell Workforce Development Board (GLWDB) who works with local employers to provide students with employment opportunities. The GLWDB visits TMHS twice a month to work with students.

Fine and Performing Arts Department

Upcoming Fine & Performing Arts Events

Affinity, the TMHS Winter Color Guard

NESBA Winter Percussion and Color Guard Competition

Sunday, February 26, 2017

Noon

TMHS Gymnasium

The Tewksbury Memorial High School Theater Company

One Act Play *Game of Tiaras*

Thursday, March 2, 2017

7:00 p.m.

Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center

Music in Our Schools Festival

Featuring Tewksbury Music Students

Sunday, March 12, 2017

Noon Reception

TMHS Cafeteria and Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center

Affinity, the TMHS Winter Color Guard

NESBA Winter Color Guard Championships

Saturday, April 1, 2017

Affinity Winter Color Guard Tentative Performance

4:48 p.m.

DCU Center Worcester, MA

The Tewksbury Memorial High School Theater Company

Musical *Footloose*

Thursday, April 27, 2017

7:00 p.m.

Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center

Friday, April 28, 2017

7:00 p.m.

Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center

Saturday, April 29, 2017

2:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center

The 33rd Annual Tewksbury District Art Show

Featuring Art Students K-12

Friday, May 12, 2017

6:30-7:30 p.m. **TMHS Band & Chorus Concert**

Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center

Open Mic To Immediately Follow Band & Chorus Concert

TMHS Larrabee Library

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. **Public Showing of Art Exhibit**

TMHS Cafe

Saturday, May 13, 2016

10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. **Public Showing of Art Exhibit**

TMHS Cafe

Fine and Performing Arts Department *(continued)*

TMHS Concert Band performance with Wynn Middle School

Monday, May 15, 2017-Tentative Date (Band only)

During the Day

Heatherwood Retirement Community

TMHS and Wynn Band Concert

Friday, May 19, 2017 (Band Only)

During the School Day

Wynn Middle School Auditorium

Great East Music Festival

Sponsored by Inspire Arts and Music, Inc.

Friday, May 26, 2017

8:00 a.m.

Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center

TMHS Marching Band Clinic

All Students Grades 5-12 Are Welcome!

Sunday, June 11, 2017

9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

TMHS Gymnasium

Larrabee Library Programs

College Meet and Greet

The New Year began with a bang in the Larrabee Library as fifty members of the graduating Class of 2016 returned to TMHS ready to answer questions and discuss their freshman college experience with our current seniors.

The transition from high to school to college is traditionally challenging as students learn to develop a new skill set that will insure their academic success. Issues of time and money management, living in small spaces, possibly changing majors and how to handle being sick away from home can all combine to create formidable barriers to that success.

It was impressive that so many of our graduates chose to give back to the TMHS community, and students who attended were an appreciative audience. The following fields of study were represented:

Engineering: Chemical, Biomedical, Computer Systems

Sciences: Nursing, Health Science, Occupational Therapy, Biology, Chemistry, Pharmacy, Animal Science, Human Physiology

Fine Arts: Literature, Education, Undeclared, Theater, Theater Education, Elementary Education, English
Emergency Management, Business, Economics, Communication, History, Political Science, and Criminal Justice



Larrabee Library Programs *(continued)*



TMHS Open Mic

On the evening of January 20, TMHS Friday Night Open Mic hit the road to demonstrate their considerable talent at the Heatherwood 55+ Community on Main Street. Heatherwood extended this invitation to Mr. Moffat after our theater company performed selections from *It's A Wonderful Life in December*. MC for this event was Justina Macneil and fifteen performers signed-up to participate. Heatherwood graciously supplied snacks and drinks for our students and a new connection between different generations was celebrated.



Athletic News

Congratulations go out to Rachel Sessa on setting a new TMHS record in the 2 Mile Run....Eleven minutes. Congratulations also goes out to Kelly Golini who scored her 100th goal for our Tewksbury/Methuen Red Rangers "Shout out" to Girls Basketball for impressive wins over Central Catholic and Billerica, both teams ranked in the top 25 in Massachusetts... Way to go!

Theater Company News

Judine Somerville Workshop

Did you happen to catch *Hairspray Live!* on NBC this past December? Students in the TMHS Theater Company were fortunate enough to participate in a workshop with a cast member from the live theatrical production! The TMHSTC was granted the opportunity to work with Judine Somerville, who was one of the Dynamites not only in *Hairspray Live!*, but in the original Broadway run of the show. This once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to work with and learn from an industry professional was brought to the TMHSTC courtesy of the Tewksbury Cultural Council.

During the workshop, students were able to hone their skills as performers. They started by warming up and learning choreography. Later, Somerville gave the students advice about navigating the theatre world during a question and answer session. The TMHS Theater would like to thank the Tewksbury Cultural Council and Donna Miceli for making this engaging experience possible!



Mock Trial News

The TMHS Mock Trial team is currently 2 - 0, with one trial left for the first round of the 2016-2017 season. This year's trial was a criminal case involving a murder and an insanity defense based on PTSD. The students rose to the challenge of this intricate and involved case, presenting a solid insanity defense for our client. Mock Trial is a student user fee club, open to anyone at TMHS. We generally begin our sessions in the late fall and wrap up in February. This year we have many new members on board that took to the formalities and rules of court procedure right away. Our graduating members have worked hard for the past few years and will be missed.

