

Tewksbury Memorial High School

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Dear Students and Parents/Guardians:

Even though the weather still feels like summer, the beginning of the 2015-2016 school year is right around the corner. I am determined to make my second year as your principal of Tewksbury Memorial High School even better than my first. There are exciting changes ahead for TMHS! I believe that these changes will only improve the overall learning experience for our school community. The 2015-2016 school year will be a time of transition; starting in the fall of 2016, TMHS will be moving to a waterfall schedule with seven rotating classes. Students will have year long courses as well as a number of semester electives to choose from! With the implementation of the new schedule next year, the graduation requirements will need to be examined; I will be creating a Graduation Requirement Committee specifically for that purpose. This school year also brings our NEASC Self Study process in preparation for the reaccreditation visiting committee in September of 2016. All schools and colleges engage in this process every 10 years. All faculty, along with parent volunteers, and students will be working on committees to reflect and evaluate all aspects of our school community. Our students and teachers will be able to communicate more effectively with the implementation of a Gmail account for each student starting in September. Similar to last year, I have scheduled the Admin Chats for parents and guardians throughout the course of the year and informal sessions for students to come and meet with me. However, this year they will have a content focus. I have asked the department head for each major content area to be at the Admin Chat to answer any questions you might have. I hope that you will be able to attend one of the chats so that we can have the opportunity to hear your thoughts and ideas. I also encourage students to set up an appointment with me or just stop by my office to share an idea or thought.

Please take the time to read all the information below. We have included important information about upcoming events as well as new procedures.

Administrative Chat Schedule for Parents and Guardians

Our Administrative Chats will be held on the following Friday mornings from 7:30-8:00 a.m. in the Principal's Conference Room at TMHS:

October 30, 2015	(Guidance)	February 26, 2016	(English/Social Studies)
November 20, 2015	(Athletics)	March 18, 2016	(Science/Foreign Languages)
January 29, 2016	(Mathematics/Spec. Ed)	April 29, 2016	(Phys Ed./Bus/Art)

With the upcoming changes in our schedule, we have added some new faculty and staff members to the TMHS family. Please join me in welcoming the following new TMHS faculty and staff: Ms. Jessica Simpson, Fine and Performing Arts Department, Ms. Heather Ware, Fine and Performing Arts Department, Ms. Jude Reiger, Science Department, Ms. Amanda Bailey, Mathematics Department, Mr. Viktor Muravyev, Mathematics Department, Ms. Samantha Tavantzis, Health and Wellness Department, Mr. Richard Staples, School Psychologist, Ms. Jessica McClellan, School Nurse, and Ms. Erin Murphy, Classroom Instructional Aide. We will have a lead teacher for Special Education, Ms. Michelle Dick and a head of the English Department, Ms. Lynne Hardacre. We will no longer have a Humanities Department. Mr. Brian Aylward, who has been the head of the Humanities Department, will now be the head of the Social Studies Department.

We would especially like to welcome the Class of 2019 to TMHS! **All ninth graders will attend their Freshman Orientation on Tuesday, September 1, 2015 at 9:00 a.m.** Please refer to the enclosure regarding the Freshman Orientation Program details. Bus schedule for orientation is also enclosed and will be posted on the website. **Upperclassmen begin the new school year on Wednesday, September 2, 2015.**

Home and School Communication:

As always, please visit the Tewksbury Public Schools webpage for updates and information.

TMHS's traditional Parent Open House is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 9, 2015 from 6:00-8:00 p.m.** This informative session will explain new school procedures and give parents and guardians time to visit their sons' and daughters' classes to gain information on course expectations from the respective teachers.

Student Handbook:

Please make sure that both you and your student take the time to review the student handbook. We make changes to the handbook each year and it is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the handbook and its contents. Students and parents must sign the Signature Page of the Student Handbook and return the signed form to first period teacher by September 11, 2015. This year our Student Handbook will only be available electronically. The handbook can be viewed on our website www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us under Tewksbury Memorial High School's *for students* link.

Student Gmail Accounts:

Starting this fall students will have access to their new Gmail account. Their Gmail address is their last name, first initial and year of grad @tewksbury.k12.ma.us. For example John Doe class of 2017 will have doej17@tewksbury.k12.ma.us.

Student IDs/School Pictures/Senior Portraits:

All students are required to be photographed on **Wednesday, September 9, 2015** during the school day for the purpose of student IDs and for the option of purchasing school pictures. Additionally, seniors should also be sure to make their appointments for their senior portrait with O'Connor Studios so that they can be sure to have their picture in the yearbook.

Class Information Dates:

It is important for both students and parents/guardians to stay up to date on all pertinent information related to their class. This year, TMHS invites both students and parents/guardians to several events during the course of the year with the goal of providing our school community with current information regarding your student's class.

Class Information Dates Schedule

Wednesday, August 26, 2015 9:00-11:00 a.m. Senior Common App Coffee

The Common App Coffee is an opportunity for our seniors to get a head start on the college application process! We will have light refreshments as well. The common application is the application that most colleges and universities across the nation use for their admission process. The application is all done electronically and becomes available to students on August 1, 2015. Guidance counselors and Ms. Palladino, English teacher, will be available to provide help and advice on the college essay and the common app. Students should have access to their social security number, resume with activities, parents/guardians contact information, parent's occupation and education level in order to complete the application. Registration is not required, but is encouraged, so that we have an idea of numbers. Please contact Mrs. Whitehouse in Guidance to register.

Friday, September 18, 2015 7:30-8:45 a.m. Senior Parent Breakfast
9:00-10:00 a.m. Senior Student Assembly

Senior parents may come and enjoy breakfast while meeting your student's guidance counselors and other members of the TMHS community. Afterwards, students will meet in the auditorium for an informational meeting on senior year activities.

Friday, September 25, 2015 7:30-8:45 a.m. Freshman Parent Breakfast

Freshman parents may come and enjoy breakfast while meeting your student's guidance counselors and other members of the TMHS community.

Wednesday, October 14, 2015 7:30-11:15 a.m. PSAT Exam for all Sophomores and Juniors

Again this year the district will be paying for all sophomores and juniors to take the PSAT exam. This exam gives our sophomores and juniors practice with the type of questions on the SAT exam. It also gives the students feedback on their strengths and specifically what Advanced Placement courses they should consider taking. While the sophomores and juniors are taking the PSAT, we will be having a series of workshops for our seniors. We also suggest that seniors use this day for a college visit, job search or recruiter meeting. This absence will be exempt for seniors with proper documentation of the visit or meeting. All freshmen will report to school for a regular school day.

Thursday, April 14, 2016

**7:30-8:45 a.m.
9:00-10:00 a.m.**

**Junior Parent Breakfast
Junior Parent Assembly**

Junior parents may come and enjoy breakfast while meeting your student's guidance counselors and other members of the TMHS community. Afterwards, please join us in the auditorium for an informational meeting on senior year activities.

Additional Early Release Days – Wednesday, April 6, 2016 and Wednesday, June 8, 2016 (High School Only)

Only the high school will have an early release on these two days. The faculty will be using this time to complete reports for our NEASC accreditation scheduled for September of 2016.

Critical Forms (*Please update your contact information right away*):

Back to school always means filling out several critical forms so that we can best serve your child. To reduce the amount of paper we send home to you, the forms and notices that pertain to **all** students are enclosed with this letter. Most forms that are individual to your child's needs can be found on the school website (i.e.: parking permit, club and athletic sign up and user fee forms...etc.). Access the link to our website www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us under Tewksbury Memorial High School for forms and up-to-date information from Guidance, Athletics, and the entire TMHS school community. Students will submit the enclosed **Accident Illness**, **Medical (if applicable)**, **Consent & Release**, and **Student Handbook Signature Page** forms to the **A-Block teacher** at the start of school. Since we use email to communicate with parents primarily we ask that you make sure that your email in Aspen is up to date when you are updating your other information in Aspen.

Extra-Curricular Activities:

It is important for students to feel connected to their school. When students are connected by being involved in clubs, activities and athletics they are often more successful in the classroom. I challenge all of our students to join at least one club, activity, and/or athletic team at TMHS. Bring your friends along and make many new ones in the process! This year **all students participating in athletics or in a club must register at Community Pass. You may also pay the user fee online through Community Pass at <https://register.communitypass.net>. You can pay with a credit card or using your checking account. Students will not be allowed to try out for a sport or participate in a club until the fee has been paid. You will be able to login to Community Pass on August 1st to pay.** All Tewksbury families have an account with Community Pass. You received an email in April with your username and login. Please see the insert with directions on logging into Community Pass.

Student Parking:

Parking spaces are only for senior and junior students. If you wish to obtain a parking permit (and meet the set requirements), you will be issued a pass. The cost this school year for a parking permit is \$150.00. All students must register for a parking permit through Community Pass at <https://register.communitypass.net>. You can pay the fee with a credit card or using your checking account through Community Pass. You will be able to register and pay as of August 15th. See the insert with directions on logging into Community Pass.

Student Schedules:

Please review the enclosed student schedule to ensure correct placement. Students with incomplete schedules should contact the Guidance Office via email at pwhitehouse@tewksbury.k12.ma.us (Mrs. Whitehouse, Administrative Assistant) or call (978) 640-7838 to schedule an appointment.

Don't forget...first day of classes is on Wednesday, September 2, 2015. Students should arrive to school by 7:25 a.m. and report to the first semester **A Block** class by 7:30 a.m.

I am excited to begin my second year as your principal at TMHS! Let's make the 2015-2016 school year even better than last year! Enjoy the rest of your summer with friends and family!

Sincerely,

Kristen S. Vogel

Kristen S. Vogel, M.A.T.
Principal

Tip: To stay informed of student academic progress and school news, visit these sites often.

Aspen Student Portal: <https://ma-tewksbury.myfollett.com/aspen/logon.do>

TMHS Webpage: <http://www.tewksbury.k12.ma.us/MemorialHigh.cfm?subpage=498003>