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# Tewksbury Memorial High School Principal's Newsletter February 2017

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

Planning for next year is upon us! Believe it or not we are already thinking about next year's scheduling process. In early February our teachers made thoughtful recommendations for the level of study for each of their students. Students are now able to go into Aspen and select the electives they would like to take next year. In March when students meet with their guidance counselor, they will review their course of study for next year, including electives. We are encouraging students to review the Program of Studies carefully to ensure they select the electives they really want to take next year. The Program of Studies for 2017-2018 is available on the TMHS website under the Guidance tab in Quick Links. For next year, students will only have until early October to change an elective for either first semester or second semester. We will no longer allow students to make changes to elective courses for second semester after first quarter progress reports are posted.

Over the next month, I would ask that you have a conversation (maybe many!) with your students about their graduation requirements, exploring new courses and their overall course of study for next year. We want all of our students to be challenged and balanced in their course of study. Encourage your students to push themselves outside their comfort zone in the classroom. If they are particularly interested in a subject area, suggest they take an honors or AP course in that area. It is important that they challenge themselves academically. College admissions officers will tell you that they are more interested in the rigor of the course of study of a student than they are in straight "A's" on a student's transcript. It is also an important life skill for our students to have to work harder in a class. As we all know life is full of challenges and learning how to work through them, ask for help and sometimes struggle are important skills for our students as they move into young adulthood. It is beneficial for students to have an experience where they work hard, learn and maybe only get a C. It is in this moment that they learn deeply about who they are as a student and person. They also often realize that it is the course where they earned the C where they learned the most! Last year, in my February Newsletter I included a quote from an article written by the President of my Alma Mater, William Fox, about honoring the C student. I think that it is still relevant and an important reminder. He writes that colleges have established a pattern of grading that has an expectation of perfectionism. I would agree that to some extent high schools have as well. President Fox goes on to challenge that idea by discussing the lessons of taking a difficult course and earning a "C".

"We have developed a perpetual habit on our campuses, in our culture, in all the professions, of making the acquisition of prizes, the grand recognition of high achievement, and the acing of the big test a matter of ultimate significance. I am immensely privileged to watch students every day do extremely difficult things in thought or performance, often with excellence. Simply amazing. And yet, I also wonder or worry that something has been lost by dismissing the power of the C to inspire, deepen determination, and grant the profound realization that it may be the best opportunity ever extended. In no better way than earning the undesirable C can someone discover what can be accomplished in life before anything that truly matters has been accomplished anyhow.

There will be many instances in life of earning a C, no matter what the transcript recorded while in college. We may take up a new sport or art, which we will never master. We may write a report for the office that is not top-form. We may make a business decision that yields middling to mediocre results. Knowing and remembering the lessons of the C student can be reassuring. This is also a person who should never be underestimated."

A Word From the President: Honoring the C-Student, William L. Fox, St. Lawrence University Magazine, Volume LXIV, Number 1, Winter 2015.

## **Parent/Teacher Conferences**

Parent/Teacher Conferences are scheduled for Tuesday evening, March 14 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. by appointment only. An electronic signup link has been emailed to parents. We encourage parents who have concerns about their student's progress to sign up for an appointment. [Click here for signup link.](#)

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## Calendar of Events

### **March**

*1-3 ELA MCAS Retests*

*6 Math MCAS Retest*

*7 No School—Professional Development*

*Spring Sports Sign Up Meeting 6:00 p.m.*

*10 Progress Reports Issued*

*11 SAT Testing 7:30 a.m.*

*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.*

*Blood Drive*

*21 MCAS ELA Comp*

*22-23 MCAS ELA Reading*

*27 School Council 4:00 p.m.*

*27-31 Tribe Project (see details listed below)*

### **April**

*8 Town Wide Concert*

*13 Junior Semi*

*Report Cards Issued*

*14 No School - Good Friday*

*16 Easter*

*17-21 No School - April Recess*

*24 School Council 4:00 p.m.*

*26 PAC Meeting 7:00 p.m.*

*27 Hats Off Luncheon 12:15 p.m. at TCC*

*28 Administrative Chat 7:30 a.m.*

# TMHS Happenings

## MCAS Testing Reminder

All 10th graders will be taking the ELA MCAS on March 21-23, 2017. Testing begins promptly at 7:30 a.m. MCAS is a graduation requirement in Massachusetts so it is important that students be present and on time to school. If a student is ill, they must have a doctor's note in order to take a make up MCAS test.

## The Tribe Project

During the week of March 27-31, 2017, we will have a number of activities focused on student safety and education on the effects of substance use. Below is the schedule for the week:

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

**Wednesday, March 29** - A speaker from Minding Our Minds will talk with our 11th and 12th graders about substance use and mental health.

**Wednesday, March 29** - **TMHS S.E.L.F** 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.

**Thursday, March 30** - **Mock Crash** will be run by our SADD Club. It is 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.

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## **Mandatory Workshop for Juniors/Seniors and Parents**

Also, on **Wednesday, March 29** at 7:00 p.m. TMHS will hold 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.**

## **Parent Opportunity**

We are exploring the idea of a Senior Project for our seniors and the idea of students earning a Global Competency Diploma at TMHS. If would be interested in being a part of either committee, send me an email at [kvo-gel@tewksbury.k12.ma.us](mailto:kvo-gel@tewksbury.k12.ma.us)

## **Mock Trial**

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.

## **Guidance Department Information**

### **Senior News**

A reminder to all Seniors: Please update your Naviance account by indicating the status of your applications. Remember to visit the Career Center, the Guidance webpage and your Naviance accounts for the latest list of available scholarships.

### **Junior News**

All juniors should plan on taking the SAT exam twice before second semester of their senior year. We recommend students to take the SAT at least once prior to the end of their junior year. Students need to register for the SAT on their Collegeboard account.

The annual TMHS College Fair is scheduled for Thursday, May 4 from 8:15 a.m. to 9:45 a.m. On average we have 70- 80 colleges that participate in our fair.

The National College Fair will be held at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center on Sunday, May 7 from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. and on Monday, May 8 from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

The annual regional College Fair will be held at the Athletic Complex at Merrimack College on May 23. For more details visit <http://www.neacac.org/spring-fair-schedule>

### **ASVAB Testing**

The ASVAB test will be administered to interested students on April 12 from 7:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. Senior or junior students interested in taking the ASVAB career aptitude exam should registered in Guidance. Registration for the ASVAB will close on April 5.

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## Guidance Department Information *(continued)*

### Scheduling News

Students in grades 9-11 have had the opportunity to select their electives for next school year. All students will have a 1:1 meeting with his/her counselor to review their course selections for next academic year. At the individual meetings, counselors will also review each student's transcript and graduation requirements to ensure that students are on track for graduation. Students will complete a brief questionnaire to assist counselors in understanding each student post-graduate goals. Each class has been assigned a designated date and time to meet with Guidance.

Schedule meetings are as follows:

- Sophomores: February 28 through March 3 (English Classes)
- Juniors: March 6 through March 13 (US History Classes)
- Freshman: March 13 through March 17 (Biology Classes)

*\*Any student who is absent during the scheduled visit should make an appointment with guidance*

### Athletics

Congratulations go out to the following TMHS Athletes and Teams for their outstanding Winter Season:

- Kelly Golini MVC/DCL 2 Player of the Year in Girls Ice Hockey
- Blake Hiltz Division 2 State Champion Wrestler at 160 LBS.
- Samantha Beatrice Silver Medalist on Beam in State Individual Gymnastics Championships  
(Samantha is the first Tewksbury Gymnastic Member to qualify for the NE Championships...ever!)
- Rachel Sessa Division 4 State Champion in the 1 Mile Indoor Track
- Red Rangers Girls Ice Hockey MVC/DCL League Champions. Four years in a row!
- Girls Indoor Track 2nd Place Division 4 State Track Championships
- Boys and Girls Basketball Both qualified for the State Tournament
- Boys Ice Hockey Qualified for the State Tournament

### SADD

On Wednesday, February 15 SADD held it's second annual Dating Game hosted by Hope Mackenzie and Will Matovu to highlight and celebrate healthy relationships. The winners, Aaron Whitehouse and Susana Aguilar, received a \$50 gift card to a restaurant of their choice (Strega Waterfront in Boston), and our 2nd and 3rd place finishers (Jake Arsenault and Hannah Slattery, and Matt Cahill and Emma Scopa) each received gift cards to Macs in Tewksbury. A huge thanks to all of those who made this night possible, including Shaun Johnson and Amanda Clarke who worked the sound and lights for us!



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## Fine and Performing Arts Department

The Tewksbury Memorial High School Theater Company will be performing their one act play at TMHS in the Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center on March 2 at 7:00 p.m. This year's play is "Game of Tiaras." The play is a 40 minute farce based on "Game of Thrones" and written by Don Zolidis. Come enjoy some good hearted comedy! The students will then proceed to competition. The Massachusetts Education Theater Guild competition will be held on March 4 at Chelmsford High School. Best wishes to the TMHS Theater Company, "Fly with Wings!"

Affinity, the TMHS Winter Color Guard for the first time hosted a competition here at TMHS. The NESBA Winter Color Guard Competition was held Sunday, February 26 in the TMHS gymnasium. The event was a great success with 26 competing percussion and color guard groups ranging in age from 10-30 years of age. Affinity placed 2nd in their division. Congratulations to Affinity and Ms. Ware!

The Music Department is looking forward to the upcoming event, Music in Our Schools Festival. It will be featuring Tewksbury music students and held Sunday, March 12 at 12:00 p.m. in the TMHS cafeteria and in the Dr. Christine L. McGrath Performing Arts Center. Hope to see you there!

The following first semester Painting students have Aboriginal and warm/cool paintings on display at Town Hall Annex: Chelsey Pellegrino (senior), Emily Amaral (junior), Allyson Bechat (junior), Zak Bennett (senior), Casey MacKay (senior), Stephanie Tam (junior), RJ O'Keefe (junior), Danielle Rosenblatt (senior), Miranda Hulme (senior), and Cathy Bozek (senior).



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## News from the International Club

The International Club members would like to thank the TMHS community for participating at our shoe drive. We collected about 100 pairs of shoes.



## Yearbook Information

### Last Chance to Order a Yearbook

Seniors, if you have not ordered a yearbook, please do not wait much longer. The yearbook advisor is placing the order for a specific number of yearbooks this week to be printed by Jostens. The advisor will only order a small amount of extra yearbooks to be sold at the end of the year. If you do not reserve a copy, there is no guarantee you will get one.

The previous sales history is used to determine the number of yearbooks ordered. Order online at [jostensyearbooks.com](http://jostensyearbooks.com) or bring in a check for \$70 made out to TMHS Yearbook. Please submit the check to Mrs. Sullivan in Room A-103. Thank you.

## Hats Off

Congratulations to Michael Catanzano '17 and Victoria Mirabito '17 for the month of February. 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 aca-

demically, have contributed to the co-curricular program at the high school, and have been actively involved in the community. Keep up the great work!



Michael Catanzano '17



Victoria Mirabito '17

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## Classroom without Walls: Experiential Learning

### Spain 2017

During February vacation 39 TMHS students embarked on an adventure to Spain. In Madrid they walked through its busy streets, visited the Prado and Reina Sofia Museums, strolled around Retiro Park, and had a “tapas night” with live music.



In Toledo they learned about how three cultures, three religions: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam coexisted and flourished for centuries.



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## Classroom without Walls: Experiential Learning *(continued)*

Students traveled through the region of La Mancha where they saw Don Quijote's windmills.



Traveling south we reached the beautiful cities of Granada and Seville.



King Matt, His Guard and His Queens



Inside the Alhambra Palace



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## Classroom without Walls: Experiential Learning *(continued)*



Beautiful orange trees were everywhere!



The Winning Group of the “City Challenge”



Our last hotel was up the in mountains. Here we have some of the teachers on the old fashion medium of transportation, the donkey!



Yes, it was a very busy week! Our students were awesome, always punctual, attentive and respectful.