

LMMHS EXPRESS

Vol. 20 No. 2 Principal's Newsletter Lenox Memorial Middle & High School March 2010

“Intelligence is not enough. Education is not enough. Intelligence plus CHARACTER – that is the true goal of education.”

Martin Luther King’, Jr.

Hello:

I hope that you have enjoyed your February Break and are looking forward to a beautiful Spring. We are very busy here at LMMHS, gearing up for MCAS, while continuing our daily work of teaching and learning. The tragedy in Haiti affected us all. Our community here at LMMHS took seriously the need for assistance and many of our students and faculty raised funds to help with the devastation. SAVE (Students against Violent Engagements) coordinated donations solicited at The Winter Concert, Basketball Games, and the Environmental Fair. The Environmental Fair was a collaborative effort between our Evergreen Club and The High School Student Council. \$1610.00 was donated to Partners in Health and the International Rescue Committee. The Senior Class and The Student Relief Club worked together to donate funds raised through the February dance to the effort in Haiti as well. The Middle School Student Council raised \$335.00 for Doctors without Borders through a lunchtime collection and the Film and Food Bank snack sale revenue. In mid May, the Middle School Student Council will be sponsoring a talent show, with all proceeds going to Partners in Health.

If you have attended our basketball games this season, you have noticed the “Sea of Gold”, our students and community members wearing gold and maroon t-shirts. Carl Zurrin, a member of the junior class, designed these shirts and the class is selling the shirts as a class fundraiser. If you are interested in purchasing this spirited t-shirt, please see Donna Navarino in the front office. Thank you, Carl!

Enjoy the last remnants of our Winter Wonderland. Thank you to all who contribute to our Newsletter-

Susan

ATTENTION PARENTS OF STUDENTS WHO WILL BE ATTENDING THE PROM

The LMMHS Junior Prom is scheduled for May 22nd at The Lenox Library. There will be a **mandatory** prom meeting for all students and parents of students who will be attending the prom on May 3rd at 7:00 p.m. in the Duffin Theater. Please mark your calendars for this very important meeting.

BULLYING PREVENTION INITIATIVE

In collaboration with the Berkshire District Attorney's office, LMMHS is taking a proactive approach to bullying and negative behaviors. As you know, bullying does not occur in isolation and must be addressed from a systematic perspective. In order to intervene successfully, interventions must be implemented not only with the bully and target, but also within the larger school community, including teachers and parents. Therefore, in an effort to raise awareness and provide intervention, a series of didactic presentations will be offered to students, faculty, and parents for the remainder of the school year. LMMHS and the District Attorney's office will work together on long term planning, with the intention of providing these presentations in a systematic manner in the future.

The District Attorney's office has provided us with the Olweus Bullying Surveys. Upon our return from February break, we will be distributing these surveys to all middle and high school students. This will serve as a tool to measure the frequency and the types of bullying, and can identify the "hot spots" where bullying happens. The data from the surveys will help administration and educators tailor a bullying prevention strategy to the needs of the school, and will serve as a baseline to measure progress in reducing bullying.

Specifically in the 6th grade, a bullying behavior rubric is in development and will be posted in each classroom once it is completed. A

confidential reporting system for students has been initiated. Class meetings will be starting with the purpose of building a sense of class cohesion and community; teaching the rules and consequences of bullying; helping students understand their role in bullying situations; and addressing issues about bullying as they arise.

LMMHS is looking forward to working collaboratively with the DA's office, parents and the community to develop an action plan to reduce and eliminate bullying behaviors in school and the broader school culture and ensure a climate that aligns with our social expectations of our school's mission. If you have any questions or would like more information, please feel free to contact our Dean of Students, Chris Sposato or our School Adjustment Counselor, Kris Grimes.

GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT NEWS

Transitioning to High School

On February 4th, 8th grade students and parents attended a ninth grade orientation evening. Graduation requirements and the process for course selection were reviewed and ninth grade teachers provided an overview of their curriculum so that parents and students could make informed decisions regarding courses. A similar orientation meeting was also convened during the school day with all eighth grade students.

Eighth grade parents and students will also be invited to have an individual appointment with Ms. Spoehr to plan their high school schedule and review their Differential Aptitude Test scores. Parents will be sent letters informing them of openings for appointments. Please call Mrs. Omelenchuck in Guidance at 637-5560 for an appointment.

Vocational Opportunities

Lenox students in grades 8 & 9 who may be interested in attending a vocational program

may do so with the Pittsfield Public Schools at either Taconic High School or Pittsfield High School. There will be a field trip scheduled for students interested in this option at the end of the month or the beginning of March..

The programs that are offered are: Culinary Arts, Health Assisting, Auto Body Repair & Refinishing, Small Engines Technology, Electronics, Horticulture, Cosmetology, Maintenance Facilities Management, Carpentry, Graphic Communications, Manufacturing Technology, and Metal Fabrication & Joining Technologies.

If you or your child are interested and/or would like to learn more, please contact Ms. Spoehr, in guidance at 637-5560 or email her at nspoehr@lenoxps.org.

Course Selection Calendar

The scheduling and course selection process for the 2010/2011 school year has begun.

We will follow the approximate timeline listed below. Please begin to review course options with your daughter/son at the appropriate time.

In Feb, the following activities occurred:

- Program of Studies distributed to students in grades 9 through 11
- Eighth grade assembly to explain high school Program of Studies, graduation requirements, and course selection process
- Sixth & seventh graders considered taking Spanish, French, Honors Math
- Faculty makes course recommendations to Guidance for 8th and 9th grade students.
- Faculty counseled students in grades 10 & 11 on course recommendations.

- Course recommendations will be mailed to parents
- Parents may call with any course selection concerns

- Guidance counselor begins meeting with parents of 8th graders to plan high school course selections

In March:

- Initial master schedule constructed

In April:

- Course conflicts resolved, master schedule finalized

College Night set for students and their parents

College Night is scheduled for Tuesday, March 23rd 2010 in the Duffin Theater from 7:00pm too 8:30pm. The topic: "The College Admissions Process: How to proceed with your college search" will be introduced by Peter Andersen and Stephanie Sears, Lenox Memorial High School Guidance Counselors. Kendra Linder-Johnson will also present from the Massachusetts Educational Financing Authority. This College Admissions Seminar prepares high school students and their parents for the college search and competitive admissions process. Topics include current trends in admissions, factors that impact the admissions decision, the visit, the admissions interview, the essay, and preliminary steps in the college financing process.

AP Testing at Lenox High School:

According to the College Board, Advanced Placement Program® (AP®) courses give you a head start on college while you're still in the supportive environment of a high school classroom. Taking the end-of-course AP Exam sends a powerful message to colleges and universities that you're ready for them, and can enable you to gain admission, college credit, and placement into advanced courses.

Students taking the AP exam for 2010 will find out in February the schedule for AP exams and the test fee. This year the cost of the AP exam is \$ 86.00. The deadline to submit the exam fee is Friday, March 19th. Checks should be payable to Lenox High School and given to their

instructor. For families who are financially eligible, there is subsidy available through the Commonwealth. As we get closer to the actual date, the Guidance Department will provide test room locations. It is very important for students to be aware of the days and times for each of their exams because once an exam has started, an absent student has to pay an additional fee to take a retest. Please call Mr. Andersen in the Guidance Department at 637-5560 if you have any questions regarding AP exams.

SAT News

The SAT test will be administered again at Pittsfield High School on the following dates:

<u>Test</u>	<u>Sign up deadline</u>
March 13	February 10
May 1	March 31
June 5	May 5

As always, students report to PHS at 7:45am with a photo ID, two #2 pencils, and a calculator. All college bound Juniors should plan to take the SAT exam in the spring. Some college bound juniors and sophomores may be interested in taking the SAT II subject test if the colleges they are interested in require it. Make sure to check with the individual college you are interested in to determine what SAT II subject test to take. Students can pick up registration forms in the guidance department or sign up online through www.collegeboard.com. If you have further questions regarding testing, please contact Peter Andersen, Guidance Counselor at (413) 637-5560.

MyRoad.com update

Since the last newsletter, many Lenox High School students have taken advantage of the useful college/career search tool sponsored by Lenox Public Schools, MyRoad.com. For those of you who don't know about it, MyRoad.com is an excellent web based tool that student can use to review post high school options, take a career

assessment, and build a portfolio of their accomplishments as the approach senior year. Students can access the program from any computer with Internet access.

The password required to sign up for MyRoad.com is **221165**.

Scholarship Update

A mailing was sent home in mid-January to inform Lenox High School students and their families about the process to apply for local based scholarships. Please note, additional information on local and national scholarships is available by accessing the Lenox Middle and High School Guidance website:

www.lenoxps.org.

Please contact Peter Andersen or Stephanie Sears at (413) 637-5560 if you have further questions regarding the scholarship process.

Prospective College Athletes

Seniors interested in playing college athletics must meet NCAA guidelines and fill out a clearinghouse form. Forms are available in online at www.eligibilitycenter.org/

CONNECT to a career with a professional internship

Many types of internships are available to juniors and seniors. It is a great way to gain practical experience to list on a resume or college application. Students may do an internship for one or two semesters and up to three hours a day. Grades are determined through attendance and participation, the mentor's evaluation, a weekly journal, and quarterly projects. Students also engage in quarterly seminars.

Students may also intern after school and earn academic credit that will appear on their transcripts. This is especially for students

whose schedules are full of classes, and yet still want practical experiences in a field they are interested in studying further.

Applications are available in the Guidance Office and are now being accepted for the 2010-2011 school year. Applications are due May 1, but students are strongly encouraged to turn them in early and to meet with Ms. Sears at their earliest convenience.

Please talk with Ms. Sears at 637-5560 x 1202 or ssears@lenoxps.org

JOB SHADOW DAY

In the past month, fifty-three sophomores from Lenox High School participated in a job shadow experience, an event across the country where thousands of students visited businesses to observe people in various fields of interest. Our students traveled to businesses in Lenox, around Berkshire County, and even outside of the area.

The students identified their strengths and selected careers of interest. While many students planned their own day, others were matched up with willing employers. The students talked about their expectations for the day, asked questions of their workplace hosts, and followed up with thank you notes.

In the six years that the program has been in place at LMMHS, this year was one of the most successful and positive. On their evaluations, 85% of the students thought that they might pursue careers in the fields they shadowed. One student remarked that “I found out what it takes to do this job.” Other comments included “people here really seem to love their jobs”, “I need to work on my leadership skills”, and “It was a lot better than I thought it would be”. Even students who discovered that they would be better suited in another field seemed to value the experience.

Job Shadow Day is one part of the Career Preparatory Program at Lenox High School. As juniors and seniors, students can participate in internships in which they earn academic credits and gain practical experience for college or a future career area. Internships can occur during or after school. For more information about this program, please contact Stephanie Sears in the Guidance Office.

Many thanks to the following local businesses for their support:

Scott Barrow Photography	The Book Store
Bradley Architects	TD Banknorth
Legacy Banks	G L & V
Lenox Police Department	Holiday Farm
Berkshire Medical Center	Canyon Ranch
Morris Elementary South Street Veterinary	Peter Alvarez Salon Jim Benson
Ronnie’s Cycles	Lenox Hairstyles
Shakespeare & Co	Mark Smith Design
Jane Iredal Cosmetics	Campoli & Monteleon
Pittsfield High School	Baystate Medical Center
Berkshire Physical Therapy	Berkshire Community College
Mazda Dealership	MA Dept of Fisheries and Wildlife
Cain Hibbard Myers & Cook	Gladys Allen Brigham Community Center
Williams College Museum of Art	

SCIENCE / HEALTHCARE OPPORTUNITIES

There are a number of opportunities coming up for freshman, sophomores, and juniors interested in science or healthcare ranging from shadow days and internships to workshops and volunteer opportunities. Some of these start in early March and continue through the spring,

while others are in the fall. Students should see Ms. Sears in Guidance as soon as possible if they would like more information.

HEALTH SERVICES

Vision and Hearing:

All students are required to have a vision and hearing screening. Vision and hearing screening will be done on students once during the middle school and once during high school. Colds, headaches or simply a bad day can affect testing. Students will have another opportunity to complete the screenings if they are not feeling well. If your child fails either screening, a letter will be sent home with a form to be completed by a physician or visional hearing specialist. We know that if your child can hear and see will, he/she can learn better.

Immunizations:

A reminder to parents of 6th grade students that the following immunizations are required for students entering 7th grade.

- Hepatitis B series completed
- MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella)#2
- Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis vaccine) now the recommendation

Also, physical exams are required during grade 7. Please keep these requirements in mind when you schedule examinations with your child's physician.

Scoliosis:

Scoliosis screening is required for students in grades 6 through 9. This screening is to detect early signs of curvatures of the spine. This is done during physical education classes in the nurse's office. Scoliosis screening will occur during the months of March. and April.

If you have any questions, please contact our school nurse at 637-5560.

STUDENT ATHLETES AT LMMHS

Congratulations to all of our fall sport athletes as every one of our fall teams had a combined GPA of over 3.0 and earned Gold Academic Excellence Awards from the MIAA. Our Girls' Varsity Soccer was the highest combining for a 3.81 GPA. Well Done everybody!!

GIRLS AND WOMEN IN SPORT DAY

Juniors Meghan Ryan and Kayleigh O'Brien traveled with Coach Teasdale and Principal Strong to Boston for the annual Girls and Women in Sport Day Celebration. The girls joined other female athletes from across Massachusetts celebrating the growth and participation of women in athletics. They heard speakers, received certificates and celebrated women of all ages. Thanks to Meghan and Kayleigh for representing LMMHS!

A SPECIAL THANK YOU

A special thank you goes out to the Booster Clubs from Basketball and Volleyball as well as the Youth Basketball Association in town. All three groups made sizable contributions to the athletic department allowing us to purchase a beautiful new scoring table that will be used for basketball and volleyball games in the gym. Please stop in and check it out at our next home game. It is wonderful to see the community support for our programs!

SPRING SPORTS

Think Spring!! The first day of spring sports will be Monday, March 15. Our sports are Softball, Baseball, Boys and Girls Tennis, Boys and Girls Track and Field and Lacrosse at St Joe HS. All students **MUST** have an up to date physical on file with the nurse. Please make sure that is checked – you can call 637-5560 and talk to Coach Cogswell or one of the nurses, Mrs. Pignatelli or Mrs. Woodger. Go Millionaires!!

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENT COUNCIL

The Middle School Student Council has had a busy quarter. Before the holidays, the MSSC coordinated Operation Troop Support, gathering donations for soldiers serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. In January, the annual Film and Food Bank took place. Middle school students joined 3rd, 4th and 5th grade Morris students and their families to watch "Up" at the Duffin Theater. Each viewer brought cans and packages of food for the Lenox Food Pantry. During the movie night's intermission, the MSSC's bake sale and raffles raised \$78. The MSSC then organized a loose change collection for Haiti Relief. Thanks to the generosity of students, faculty, staff and families, the MSSC is able to add \$257 to its bake sale/raffle proceeds for a donation of \$335 to Doctors Without Borders for their work in Haiti. Finally, MSSC reps met to make "Welcome & Thank You" bags of treats for substitute teachers at LMMHS.

LENOX COMMUNITY GARDEN

The High School Student Council and Evergreen Club are teaming up to tackle the project of creating a community and student run garden to benefit the school cafeteria. We are looking for ready and able volunteers, no experience necessary, during the spring and summer to help us accomplish this feat. We also appreciate any donations (equipment, monetary, etc.) to make this garden grow. For more information, please contact HHSC member Brittany Benham at bbenham@lenoxps.org.

LOCAL ILLUSTRATOR AND AUTHOR VISITS OUR 6TH GRADE ART CLASS

Marc Rosenthal is a local illustrator and author, living here in Lenox. He graciously accepted the invitation to visit the entire sixth grade class to talk the students through the processes involved in drafting, illustrating and creating a visual narrative. He began by showing the students his

sources of inspiration, in other artists' work and of books that he has always enjoyed. He talked about how simple lines create and change a character and it's expression. The students were thoroughly impressed with the sketches he drew as examples before our eyes!

THANK YOU, Marc Rosenthal!

SUPERINDENTENT SEARCH

The Lenox School Committee has appointed a 12-member Advisory Committee to assist them in reviewing applications, conducting interviews, and helping to select an outstanding Superintendent of Schools to begin on July 1, 2010. The vacancy has been advertised in recent weeks with a deadline of March 8 for applications. Preliminary interviews will begin during the week of March 23 and it is hoped that a final selection will be made by mid-April.

One important step in the search process is to gather opinions and viewpoints from people in the schools and community about the knowledge, skills and attributes most desirable when searching for a new leader. A series of focus group sessions has been arranged for this purpose.

These focus group meetings will be held on Tuesday, March 9, 2010:

School administrators	12:30 to 1:45 P.M.	Superintendents Office
Middle-High School teachers and staff	2:30 to 3:15 P.M.	Lenox Memorial Middle-High School
Elementary teachers and staff	3:30 to 4:45 P.M.	Morris Elementary School
Parents, students, residents	6:00 to 7:30 P.M.	Lenox Town Hall

Each focus group session will be conducted by Dr. William Erickson, a search consultant from NESDEC, who will also answer any questions people may have about the search process. Results of these meetings will be reported in the form of a candidate profile to advise the School

Committee in the selection of applicants to be interviewed.

Everyone in the community is invited to participate in one of the focus group sessions listed above, and to bring ideas and suggestions that will help guide the Superintendent selection process. The School Committee will greatly appreciate the contributions, thoughts and opinions of Lenox residents and school employees.

Please check our lost and found for articles you maybe missing !!

LOCAL ATTORNEYS VISIT THE EIGHTH GRADE

Local attorneys Veronica Fenton and Bob Monteleone visited eighth-grade Social Studies classes and facilitated debate and discussion about Fourth Amendment rights in school. Students enthusiastically applied their knowledge of search and seizure to real-world scenarios, and explored the limits of their Constitutionally protected individual rights. Thank you to Ms. Fenton and Mr. Monteleone, who added an excellent new dimension to our study! (Beth Gray, 8th Grade Social Studies)

HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVIST FROM KENYA VISITS LMMHS

Human rights activist, Kang'ethe Mungai, from Kenya will be visiting Lenox High School at the end of March. The date of his arrival is approximately March 22. We will have a fundraiser for him on March 31, in the cafe and theater where he will speak of his work and the political situation in Kenya. We will also see a film in the theater from the TV Magazine, "Independent Lens", regarding Wangai Maathai's Green Belt Movement and Mr. Mungai's work with her. A buffet will be served for \$10.00 and a donation of \$5.00 for the film. More details will be forthcoming soon in a letter from Mrs. Nardi, World History teacher.

A Primer For Parents

By Dana Williams

Cyberbullying is the latest version of an age-old phenomenon. By age 4 or 5, children learn to use name-calling or teasing as a form of social power. And that power continues, through elementary and middle school, on into high school -- in the classroom, the cafeteria, school hallways, on playgrounds and school buses, and, more recently, on computer screens and cell phones.

While many generations have viewed this phenomenon of social cruelty as a childhood rite of passage, research has shown the early isolation some children experience can follow them throughout their academic careers, sometimes leading to depression, low self-esteem and even violence.

"Early on, parents have to work at creating open communication with their kids about what's going on in school every day," said Wendy Craig, a psychology professor and researcher on bullying at Queens University in Kingston, Ontario. "Creating an atmosphere of open communication is important because many times kids are reluctant or embarrassed to talk about being teased or bullied."

Craig offered a number of ways parents and teachers can help take the sting out of social cruelty -- for those on the giving or the receiving end:

If You Suspect Your Child is Being Teased or Bullied

- Look for the signs: Keep an eye out for reluctance to go to school, silence about what's happening at school, frequently lost objects or possessions, a frequent "everybody's picking on me" attitude, or low self-esteem.
- Ask open-ended questions: Show interest by asking questions less likely to be answered with a brief yes or no. Don't ask, "Did you have a good day?" Instead, try asking, "What kinds of things did you do at recess today?" or "What happened at lunchtime today?"
- Share your experiences: Tell your child about your own childhood experiences with being teased or bullied. Talk about how it made you feel and how you handled it.
- Respect the child's wishes: Parents often want to act immediately by calling the teacher or a school administrator, which can sometimes make the situation more difficult for the child who is being teased or bullied. If your child asks you not to do anything about it, try to respect this wish and work instead on making her feel empowered enough to try handling the situation on her own.
- Try role-playing: Reenact the bullying or teasing, and help your child practice non-aggressive ways to handle it. Brainstorm witty or humorous comebacks. Teach your

child preventative tactics such as reporting aggressive, abusive behavior and staying near friends or adult supervisors.

If You Suspect Your Child is the Aggressor

- Be a good role model: Be aware of your own aggressive behavior. Observe how you handle fights over parking spaces at the grocery store, and keep a handle on your aggression at sporting events, for example.
- Reevaluate discipline techniques: Children who are bullies require discipline that is non-violent and logically handed out. As with any parenting moment, never discipline in the heat of anger.
- Identify the triggers: Know what pushes your child's buttons and when he is most likely to become aggressive. Role play and suggest ways your child can respond to these situations assertively, not aggressively. Validate and reward assertive versus aggressive behavior.
- Suggest ways to join in with others: Provide opportunities for your child to be of service to others -- reading to a younger child, helping out at a soup kitchen, making cards for nursing home residents. These activities can help your child feel better about herself, making her less likely to bully.

Above all, parents should know that the old "sticks and stones" adage doesn't tell the whole truth. Words may not break bones, but they can break a child's spirit and self-esteem.

Source URL: <http://www.tolerance.org/supplement/primer-parents>

Links: <http://www.tolerance.org/author/dana-williams>

Other Helpful Information...

Tell children to never share personal information online.

Email address and cell phone numbers should be guarded

Limit amount of time children spend online

Purchase tracking software that can block inappropriate messages and websites, as well as track online activity

Ask your child to report threatening messages

Assure bullied children you will not take away the phone or computer

Never respond to a bully

Print messages if harassment continues

Report the situation to the bully's ISP

Change your child's email address if necessary

Source: Allan Beane, Ph.D. How to Help Your Child Be Bully Free and StopTextBully.com