



Mt. Ararat High School
73 Eagles Way
Topsham, Maine 04086
207 729 2951
207 729 2953 fax
www.mta.link75.org



Empowering All to Grow, Learn, Explore & Soar

To: Parents/Guardians & Students

From: Donna F. Brunette, Principal

Date: May 11, 2016

RE: MTA Newsletter

The midpoint of our fourth quarter has been noted and your child's progress report is available for your review. If you are receiving this newsletter through our Infinite Campus messenger system please check for your child's progress report using the access instructions for Infinite Campus; if you are receiving a printed copy of the newsletter your child's progress report is included with the mailing.

Yesterday I posted a letter on our website titled "Principal's Letter Regarding Substitute Issue" and Superintendent, Bradley Smith, communicated via our phone messenger system to call parents' attention to this letter. Please know that we are aware of the news articles that reported on a substitute teacher being charged with a sex offense involving a student in another school district. The individual referenced in the articles had subbed on one occasion at Mt. Ararat High School and several students reached out to school personnel to express concerns after seeing the individual in the news. I hope that you understand that due to confidentiality laws there is a limit to what can be shared with the community. District and school level administration follows policies and procedures to address safety concerns. If your child has a concern regarding safety at school, please contact administration, a school counselor, or our school resource officer. Our goal is to ensure that your child feels safe at school so his/her focus can be on learning.

MTA was recently in the news when a concern was raised about school administration denying a request to wear a military sash during the MTA graduation ceremony. Graduation focuses on students receiving a specific academic degree or diploma and our practices are in place to focus on this momentous occasion. The goal is to have the MTA graduation ceremony reflect the accomplishments of students specific to our programs. Our practice is to have those students who march in the graduation ceremony wear the cap and gown as delivered and the cords and sashes worn are issued by our high school to recognize academic achievements at MTA. Many students begin preparing for post secondary careers prior to graduation; we are proud of their individual accomplishments and greatly appreciate our students who choose to serve our country. During our Senior Awards Night we proudly recognize individual students for various accomplishments associated with high school and post secondary aspirations and this would be the venue to honor our students who have chosen military service.



The concept design process has begun for the MTA Building Project. Please look for updates on our website and consider signing up to receive alerts.

The warmer months are here and I want to remind students and parents about the expectations at school for clothing selection. I have recently talked with some individual students about the dress code (available on pages 30-31 in the "Mt. Ararat High School 2015-2016 Handbook") and would ask that students assume responsibility for selecting clothing that is in line with the dress code. Students following the expectations are free of the worry that there will be encounters with adults at school requesting that adjustments be made.

Seniors and Senior Parents/Guardians

Included with this newsletter is a letter from Bree Candland, our Senior Class Advisor, outlining plans and important information about upcoming events for our seniors. Please review this information carefully and note the dates and times on your calendars.

Student Recognitions

Congratulations to the Mt. Ararat Science Club who worked very hard and did exceptionally well at the 5th Annual Northern New England Regional Seaperch Challenge Competition on Saturday, April 9. The students were challenged to design and build aquatic robots to complete a number of underwater tasks quickly and efficiently. The team of Ashley Parker, Lauren Labbay, and Elliot Bowie had strong finishes in all of their events, finishing 5th overall. The team of Ryan Rethi, Ian Scanlon, Gage Palmer, and Jacob Tobias also had strong finishes in all of their events and at the meet were awarded 3rd Overall. The team of Matt Berger and Sula Demers were awarded 1st in the Underwater Arcade Event and 1st Overall. For the third straight year Mt. Ararat will represent Maine at the National Seaperch Aquatic Robotics Competition in Baton Rouge, Louisiana on May 21. Matt and Sula will be working to improve upon Mt. Ararat's strong 29th place finish from last year.

Senior Rose Horowitz represented Maine in the National Poetry Out Loud finals in Washington D.C. on May 3rd. She delivered superb recitations, which many MTA students and staff watched on live streaming video. She also won first place nationally in Poetry Ourselves, the original written poetry portion of the competition, with her poem "Mythomania." Congratulations Rose!

Several MTA students were recognized by Meridian Stories, a digital storytelling contest, for their team efforts:

Op-Ed Text Alive! Category

- 1st place: *The Draft for Equality* (Daphne Frizzle, Abigail Nordwall, Rebecca French)
- 2nd place: *Youth Homelessness in Maine* (Kevin Bolduc, Alexander Dau, Nathan Leslie, Zoe Stilphen)
- 3rd place: *What You Don't Tell Them, They Will Go Looking For* (Mae Flibotte, Peter Mao, Ryan Glass, Kobi Appleby)

Six-Word Micro Memoir

- 3rd place: *What They Don't Know, Doesn't Hurt* (Kendall Hamilton, Griffin Thurston, Megan Smith and Joslynn Couture)

Congratulations to the students who recently competed in the MidCoast Regional Envirothon Competition. MTA's Envirothon Advisor, Mike Cooney, took three teams of students to the competition on April 27, 2016 at MOFGA in Unity. Most of the students had never been to a competition before, but they didn't let that impact their performance.

- Team 2 (First Place Overall): Tim Cox, Orion Sargent, Joe Beale, Joe Patton, Matt Donovan, Eagan Eldridge
- Team 1 (Second Place Overall): Emma Levy, Lindsey Papa, Lexi Thompson
- Team 3 (Fourth Place Overall): Ben Waltz, Seth Skeleton, Ryan Rethi

All three teams did decidedly well, and Teams 1 & 2 will advance to the State Competition on May 27th. Congratulations on your outstanding performance.

A special thank you to senior, Alec Stuckey. Alec advocated and helped organize a process so juniors could have some choice on Capstone Day regarding topics of specific interest. Alec saw this as an opportunity to support seniors with audiences that would be specifically interested in the presentations. It was also important for juniors as they prepare for next year when they will need to complete a Capstone project. Alec saw this as a priority and he worked with administration and our Advisory Coordinators, Evelyn Barbour and Jessica Cowie to make it a reality. Thank you, Alec.

The Outing Club is bringing the year to an end with a two exciting overnight trips - one whitewater rafting on the Kennebec and the other Sea Kayaking Downeast. The club, in its third year, went on over 10 outings - including paddle boarding, snowshoeing, and rock climbing, as well as four overnights! Over 25 different students participated in these events, working them around academics, athletics, work, etc. The club is always looking for interested new members. I hope to see you in the fall! ~Rachel Olson

Teacher Acknowledgements

Thank you, Evelyn Barbour and Jessica Cowie, for your tireless efforts to make the Senior Capstone Day a well organized celebration of our seniors' engagement in a self-directed study. The work you both do with students, staff, and the community is commendable.

Congratulations to Dennis Edmondson who was selected as an AP US History reader this year. Mr. Edmondson will also be attending the Maine Social Studies Summer Symposium on June 29th.

Rachel Olson will be attending a Gilder Lehrman Teacher Seminar on Westward Expansion in Boulder, CO this summer. We hope you have an informative seminar and safe travels Rachel!

National Teacher Appreciation Week was the week of May 3rd this year. Please note the following quote by Carl Jung: "One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material, but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child." Thank you to our teachers for your brilliance and all the connections you have made and continue to make with the children you teach, coach, and advise.

Important Calendar Dates

| | |
|-------------|--|
| 5/17 | MTA Band Concert at the Orion |
| 5/24 | CNA Nursing Assistant Graduation at Region 10 @ 4:30pm |
| 5/25 | Step Up Day (No School for Seniors) |
| 5/26 | Tech Region 10 Senior Recognitions @ 5:00pm |
| 5/26 | District Budget Meeting at the Orion @ 6:30pm |
| 5/30 | Memorial Day (No School) |
| 5/31 | Professional Development Day (No School for Students) |
| 6/1 | Senior Awards Night |
| 6/2 | MTA Choral Music Concert |
| 6/2 – 6/7 | Senior Final Exams (schedule is posted on our MTA website) |
| 6/7 | Underclass Awards Night |
| 6/9 & 6/10 | Marching Practice for Graduates (Attendance is Mandatory) |
| 6/12 | Graduation Day |
| 6/13 – 6/16 | Underclass Final Exams (schedule is posted on our MTA website) |
| 6/17 | Last Day of School (Exam make up day for underclass students) |

Interact Club

With the year winding down, The Interact Club held an ice cream social and elected new officers for the 2016-2017 school year. Many thanks to Senior Sara Lamb who served as President this year. Sara was integral to running the weekly meetings as well as fund raising and making our annual Cram the Van the most productive ever. Thank You Sara! During Capstone Day, Interact and the National Honor Society organized a bake sale and raised \$200 for the Barbara Bush Children's Hospital. Finally on May 23 the Brunswick Rotary will be recognizing three of MTA's finest for their "Service Above Self." Cameron Loeschner, Kevin Giroux and Isabella Blessington are not only excellent students but give freely of their time for their community. Thank you to Cam, Kevin, and Isa.

Nurse's Notes--May 2016

Greetings MTA Families... I hope you are well and enjoying spring! The birds are singing, the flowers are blooming, and unfortunately, the ticks are also crawling! Tick-borne illness is a significant issue in Maine and misconceptions are common, so I wanted to take a moment to provide some information that may be helpful to you and your students. Lyme (and Anaplasmosis, Babesiosis, etc.) can be quite severe, but fortunately, you can really decrease your risk of contracting a tick-borne illness with a little care.

*Lyme is transmitted by deer ticks only (not dog ticks) and the tick must be attached and feeding for at least 24 hours in order to transmit a disease. This makes daily tick checks very important because you can avoid a lot of worry and unnecessary medication, by removing any ticks promptly.

*A rash that resembles a "bull's-eye" or "target" is the most common side effect of Lyme, and it may develop anywhere on the body (not just at the site of the tick bite) up to a month after the bite itself.

* Many people, when bitten by a deer tick, quickly develop a red area (often itchy) at the site of the bite. This red area is not a 'bull's-eye rash' but just a reaction to the tick bite. A true "bull's eye" rash consists of a dark red circle in the middle, a clear area, and then a lighter red circle surrounding it. It is, however, important to monitor the site for signs of a skin infection (increasing redness, swelling, warmth, or pustular drainage).

* Not all of people who contract Lyme develop a rash. Other common symptoms include swollen or painful joints, sore

muscles, fatigue, fever, headaches, and general flu-like symptoms. If you develop what feels like “the flu” during the summer months, call your doctor.

*Check your body (including your head and back) for ticks daily. Keep in mind that ticks at the nymph stage are quite small and may look like nothing more than a freckle or a speck of dirt. Pay special attention to your head, hairline, nape of the neck, armpits, waist, groin, thighs, and behind the knees. Check your pets, too.

*If you find a tick, use fine-tipped tweezers or a tick spoon to remove the tick. Do not use petroleum jelly, a hot match, nail polish, or other products. These may cause the tick to vomit its stomach contents back into your body, which can increase site irritation.

*After removing the tick, cleanse your skin with soap and warm water. Despite careful removal, the tick’s mouthparts may remain in the skin, however once the rest of the tick has been removed, the mouthparts themselves cannot transmit Lyme and your body will gradually work them out.

* Ticks are difficult to kill and may climb back out if you simply put them in the trash. Dropping the tick into a small container of rubbing alcohol is an effective way to make sure the tick is no longer a threat.

* You can reduce ticks in your yard by keeping the grass mowed and raking up piles of leaves. Wearing long pants and tuck them into your socks is a good idea when walking in wooded areas, as is avoiding brushing against, vegetation as much as possible. Still, it’s difficult to totally avoid tick-friendly habitats entirely, so a daily check is your best defense.

I wish you a happy, healthy, and tick-free rest of the spring! As always, please feel free to contact me (729-2951, ext.264 or changa@link75.org) with any questions or concerns.

Annie Chang, RN, BSN, BA
MTA School Nurse

School-Based Health Clinic - Overweight and Obesity: The Dangers to Health

Body mass index (BMI) is a weight-to-height ratio, calculated by dividing one's weight in kilograms by the square of one's height in meters and used as an indication of overweight, obesity and underweight. As part of the School Based Health Center (SBHC), at Mt. Ararat High School, each student member who belongs to the SBHC gets his/her BMI checked yearly for free. Each overweight or obese student is given brief counseling to decrease their weight and to increase their physical activity, thus decreasing their risks of health related problems. Overweight is a BMI of 25%-29% and obesity is over 30% BMI. Of 156 students in the SBHC, 67 were considered overweight or obese. This equates to 43% of the students who belong to the SBHC.

The problem with a higher calorie intake and less physical activity is that it causes weight gain. Extra weight causes the cells of the body to become resistant to the effects of insulin. Insulin production is a result of the pancreas secreting insulin after eating to help take care of the circulating glucose (sugar) from our diet to be utilized for energy. As a person gains weight, combined with a sedentary lifestyle, a high-carbohydrate and fat diet, the extra weight causes the cells of the body to become resistant to the effects of insulin. The pancreas responds by producing more and more insulin, which eventually begins to cause the pancreas to "burnout" leading to pancreatic beta cell dysfunction and decrease insulin secretion. Relative insulin deficiency then causes decreased cellular glucose uptake, high blood sugar and ultimately, Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus (T2DM). There are other pathological processes that happen in the body to worsen and cause T2DM.

The unhealthy effect of overweight and obesity also can cause a cascade of poor health problems: high blood pressure, Polycystic Ovary Syndrome (PCOS), high cholesterol, degenerative joint disease, sleep apnea, cancer, gastrointestinal reflex, fatty liver disease, gallstones, and other problems for those grossly obese (>40% BMI).

Compounding unhealthy conditions is the use of tobacco, illicit drugs, and some genetic factors. Children and adolescents are at risk for these unhealthy conditions! The long-term effects are much greater than when an adult acquires the condition! If your adolescent is overweight or obese start TODAY in motivating your adolescent in increasing physical activity, decreasing portion sizes of food, careful selection of food, only one serving of food at a mealtime, and stop smoking or unhealthy behaviors. Adolescents need physical and dental examinations yearly! It takes a community to help students with these issues; let's all help! Nancy Porr, Nurse Practitioner, SBHC

Class of 2017

Thank you family & friends of 2017!!! Our auction was a HUGE success and we will now begin our fundraising and planning for a very fun Project Graduation trip!!!! Stay tuned...Cheers to 2017!!!

Class of 2019

(Hershey's) "Kiss 'Em Goodbye" fundraiser. Parents—want to send a special treat to your students? Students - have a favorite teacher or a friend you're going to miss? The Class of 2019 will be selling treat bags with Hershey's kisses and a message to the people of your choice for \$1. Kisses will be on sale from May 23-27 at lunch (minus Wednesday the 25th, which is Step Up Day) and we'll deliver to homerooms on Wednesday, June 1 (no school for students on Monday, May 30 or Tuesday, May 31). Special note to parents—if you would like to send kisses to be delivered at MTA, email Lynn Sirois at sirois1988@comcast.net with your message and we will write up the tag for you. Send the money in a clearly marked envelope to the main office for 2019 advisor Bree Candland.

Exciting news! Thanks to your generous support this year, we have earned \$3025! To put that in real terms, it means we currently have enough in our account to pay for caps and gowns senior year (yes, it's a long way off) for 85 members of the class of 2019! We have a permanent account at Bootleggers, so you can drop your recyclables off there and ask them to credit our account. We didn't get enough volunteers to staff the Compass Rose event later this summer, FYI. We are really excited about our Kiss 'Em Goodbye fundraiser (see above) and hope that will be a strong fundraising activity to end the year!