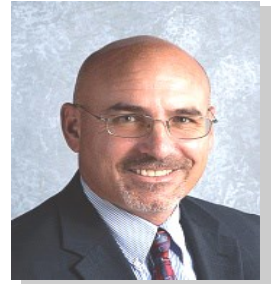




Special Points of Interest:

- ❖ 8th Grade Student News—Page 3
- ❖ Opus Optima Literary Magazine—Page 6
- ❖ NMS Snapshot—Page 7 and 8

December 2019



Principal's Corner

A message from Thomas Einhorn, Principal, Newtown Middle School

Our Veteran's Day Celebration was a very special event. We invited Veterans in our community to share breakfast and to attend a student-led program. Students shared information about each branch of the Military and read poems as to why they appreciate Veterans, along with performances of musical selections. We were humbled by our more than 50 veterans in attendance, and we appreciated the opportunity to thank them for their service.

During the months of November & December, there are many events that will allow our school to give back to the community. These events include, but are certainly not limited to Food Drives and Clothing Drives and daily kindness reminders to staff and students. Kindness comes in many different packages and we always encourage our school community to share in any way we can. In partnership with our PTA, we are currently working on plans for the creation and installation of a Be

Kind tile mural which will adorn the wall just outside of the Main Entrance. Stay tuned for more information in the coming months.

As a reminder, we encourage you and your students to visit our school [website](#) as it has many resources that may be of interest to you. Please also know if we can be of any assistance, you need only contact us.

Best wishes for a restful December break and all the best for the New Year.

Tom Einhorn

Principal



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Assistant Principal's Corner

By James Ross, Assistant Principal

Newtown Rotary Club Students of the Month



**November 2018
Rotary Winner
Grade 8 Newtown Middle School**

Ellie A.

It is rare to meet an eighth grade student as mature, sweet, and caring as Ellie. Ellie greets each and every day with a smile for both peers and teachers. She is a diligent student who strives for excellence in all she does. Her work ethic and engagement in class are exemplary and she sets a "high bar" for her peers to follow. Ellie is involved in many activities. She is a talented artist and participates in Art Enrichment. She is a member of the Newtown Travel Soccer League, and an avid horseback rider. Ellie is responsible both in school and out in the community. Ellie has volunteered at the Booth Library, Ben's Bells, and as a camp counselor for Jessica Rekos barn and King's Bridge Farm. In fact, this summer Ellie completed 67 hours of community service.

Ellie has an innate ability to find goodness in others. She is personable, polite, and accepting of all. We, the teachers of 8 Red, are confident that our cluster and the world are a better and brighter place due to Ellie's personality and dedication.

Assistant Principal's Corner (cont.)

By James Ross, Assistant Principal

NMS - Junior Advisory Program

At Newtown Middle School, students meet throughout the school year in Junior Advisory groups. The purpose of our Junior Advisory Program is to provide a rich social and emotional learning experience for all of our students. Our program and lessons are designed using the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework. CASEL defines social and emotional learning (SEL) as the process through which children and adults acquire and effectively apply the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions. Our Junior Advisory Program this year will focus on the areas of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Staff members will use lessons taken from the Second Step Curriculum, a scientific-based research program for social-emotional learning.

Below are the lessons that were taught in November:

7th Grade:

1. **Study Skills:** Students work in collaboration to develop the necessary skills to help them study for a variety of assessments and to study in a more productive manner.
2. **Full Value Contract:** Students have the opportunity to apply the full-value contract to the middle school setting. They will discuss what this looks like in different classrooms and settings and will develop a better understanding of the different components of the contract.

8th Grade:

1. **Your Identity:** A healthy self-concept is key to students' success and well-being in school and in life. During adolescence, students are developing their sense of self. This lesson guides students toward evaluating themselves in favorable ways by examining how they see themselves now and in the future and by teaching students to recognize the positive traits others see in them.
2. **Identity and Social Groups:** One of the main aspects of adolescence is exploring and beginning to form an identity. Our beliefs about ourselves, as well as others' beliefs about us, shape our identity, and having different identities in diverse settings and situations is common. However, the need to fit in and conform often leaves adolescents feeling pressured to adopt identities they are not comfortable with. This lesson encourages students to seek out relationships in which other people accept them for who they are, so they do not have to take on identities that do not suit them.

Counseling Office News

High School Transition Timeline from the 8th grade counselors

Attention all 8th grade students and parents/guardians

Believe it or not, it's that time of year when we start talking about high school! Mrs. Hague-Doehr and Miss Connelly have been busy providing classroom lessons through Road Trip Nation to help 8th graders deepen their knowledge about their own strengths, skills and interests as they relate to career and post-high school choices. We want you all to be keeping your eyes on the calendar with some very important upcoming dates in mind. Below is an outline on those that are key.

- 12/20/19 Program of studies available online. This can be found on the NHS Counseling Office Webpage <https://sites.google.com/newtown.k12.ct.us/school-counseling-office/home?authuser=0>
- Early to mid January- Mrs. Hague-Doehr and Miss Connelly will be presenting HS course selection lessons to 8th graders in cluster classes. Students will be provided with worksheet which they will then need to bring to their HS counselor scheduling meeting in March.
- Mid January- 8th grade teachers begin to make course level recommendations through the portal - these are based on the criteria which is set by the department coordinators at Newtown High School
- End of Q2- (1/15/20) 8th grade teachers complete course level recommendations
- January 23rd- 8th Grade Counselor Coffee- parents will experience the same lesson their students received regarding HS scheduling (7:30-8:30 AM and 6:30-7:30 PM)
- 2/4/20- (tentative date based on end of quarter needing adjustments due to weather related school closures) HS recommendations available on the portal
- 2/5/20 Incoming 9th Grade Info Night at NHS (for students and parents)
- 2/7/20 Shadow day at NHS
- March 2-11- HS counselors here to schedule students in 1:1 meetings set for 10 minutes each.



NMS Clubs

Attention All Writers



Mrs. Olsen and Mrs. Colwell are looking for writers and editors to join the Literary Magazine Writing Club.

Our Purpose

- To meet with other writers
- To make friends
- To write and edit for our Award Winning

NMS Literary Magazine -The Opus Optima

When- Mondays *December 2nd and December 16th*

From 2:40-3:40

Where- A-12

All are welcome; even if you cannot come to every Monday meeting. Members of the Lit Mag Art Club, we encourage you to join us as well. We work together and you can participate in both clubs.

The NMS award winning Literary Magazine Opus Optima is looking
for **You!**



Our exceptional school magazine needs your original creative writing pieces to make this year's magazine an even bigger success than last year.

We would love to include a diverse range of writing from all genres including but not limited to: short stories, reflections, memoirs, poems, song lyrics, arguments, and letters.

Writing can be from teacher assignments or creative writing pieces you've worked on independently.

Submit all entries to the Literary Magazine by sending them as an email attachment to Mrs. Colwell (colwellk@newtown.k12.ct.us) or Mrs. Olsen (olsena@newtown.k12.ct.us) or hand deliver to Mrs. Colwell in A-11 or Mrs. Olsen in A-12.



Snapshot NMS

Is Technology Responsible for a Decline in Students' Reading? *By Camden Hawk*

Many think that technology has caused a decline in middle school students' reading. So, I did some research and interviewed an English teacher about it. Mrs. Olsen is an English teacher here at Newtown Middle School. She's been teaching for 30 years. She taught at Bethel Middle School for 13 years as a reading teacher, and 3 years in Stamford, Connecticut as a kindergarten teacher. The rest, she's taught here at NMS as an English teacher.

According to the November 1, 2012 article, "Technology Changing How Students Learn, Teachers Say" published in the New York Times, by Matt Richtel, "In the Pew survey, which was done in conjunction with the College Board and the National Writing Project, roughly 75 percent of 2,462 teachers surveyed said that the Internet and search engines had a 'mostly positive' impact on student research skills. But nearly 90 percent said that digital technologies were creating 'an easily distracted generation with short attention spans'". This tells readers how many teachers feel about the situation.

When Mrs. Olsen was asked what she thought about the topic, she said. "Yes and no. Yes because social media has caused a distraction at home. But no, because I think many kids like to read on Kindles or on their phones, and it's easier for them so they don't have to drag books along." This makes sense because technology could have positive or negative impacts, it all depends on what part of technology you're talking about. Technology is a wide range of things and without specifics, it could be so many things.

I asked what part of technology since it is a wide topic. Mrs. Olsen replied with, "I truly think that it's more of social media, and cellphones, and being connected to friends through it which distracts kids". When kids do use their phones inappropriately in school, it is usually to talk to someone over the phone, such as texting, etc. Phones shouldn't be allowed in classrooms unless a teacher makes it clear that they are allowed.

Mrs. Olsen agrees that technology should be allowed in schools. Since we've started using computers and Google Classroom it's been a gift to everybody because papers don't get lost, and they get turned-in efficiently. Also, teachers can see as students are writing and communicate with them about the piece. Mrs. Olsen thinks all her students have become better writers since we've started using Google Classroom. It is a great

way for teachers and students to communicate while writing, and just easier for everyone.

When asked if she thought students should be bringing their phones to school every day, she said, "I don't mind that kids bring them, it's part of growing and learning to be responsible and not distracted, and in our cluster students are allowed to use them for educational purposes. I think it's fine as long as they follow the school boundaries". This shows that students just need to follow the set rules and know that if they aren't using technology correctly, it can cause distractions and consequences

Lastly, she stated, "I think kids need to appreciate the expense of technology and know that it truly is a blessing, not something that they should take for granted. Since they haven't paid for the phone, [it doesn't seem] like it's real and/or they just don't realize the responsibility and honesty that comes with it". Kids shouldn't use technology inappropriately, especially when they didn't pay for it. Many kids didn't have to do anything to get their phone, it is provided by their parents, so they should be grateful. Also, they should be limiting themselves on their phone so it doesn't become an easy distraction.

Technology is so many things Many think that phones are a big distraction because of everything that comes with them and is stored on them. It honestly depends on the kid and the situation. Many know that kids use their phones inappropriately in school, and it does cause distractions. So, technology may not be a reason for less reading but technology definitely can be a distraction that keeps students from keeping their focus on school work.

Is Tech Ed Safe?

By: Natalie Bender

Most schools around the world have a class called Tech Ed. Usually, when people first start this class they worry they could get hurt extremely easily. But in reality, hardly anything ever happens. My Tech Ed teacher, Mr. Eppley, who has been teaching for 4 years, clarified that no one has gotten hurt in his Tech Ed class. The only injuries he knows of were in one of his college classes. He clarified this by saying, "In college, I myself got hurt. I went to go turn off a belt sander ... I wasn't paying full attention and my hand missed the off switch and I sanded about half the top of my hand off." There was another injury that he had mentioned and it was about a girl that got her hair stuck in a drill press and had to go to the hospital. He had said the number one injury is with the glue gun and it hardly causes any injury. Those are the only two injuries he knows of out of 4 years of teaching and going to college.

Mr. Eppley stresses the importance of safety in this class so no one gets hurt. He stated that he is most worried about the Exacto knife. He said this after I asked what tool he worried about the most, "The Exacto knife scares me the most because the people that are using it don't have a fear of using it, so they don't take the same safety precautions they would have with the drills, because they don't think about it that much". This all shows that Mr. Eppley makes sure students take precautions in Tech Ed so it is a safe class where it's very difficult to get hurt.

Mr. Eppley has made it clear that he stresses the importance of safety so kids will think more about safety and how to prevent an injury. This is how he ensures kids know what safety looks like in the Tech Ed room. "I have them read a safety contract then they have to sign it. Then take a test to show me that they understand the contract and how to be safe." Since he started teaching in Newtown 4 years ago, no one has gotten hurt in this class and he makes sure that no one will.



Newtown School Health Services

November Newsletter

November 27, 2019

Inside this Issue:

- Flu Shot Availability
- Spread the Message...Don't Vape!
- 6th & 9th Grade Students need current year physicals
- Fragrance Sensitivities
- Spot Vision



Flu Season

We are starting to see the first few cases of influenza, along with all of the cold viruses that are common at this time of year. If you missed the flu clinics that the nursing department sponsored at Newtown Middle School, don't worry - flu vaccines are available **everywhere!** Get yours and protect not just yourself but your family and friends and all of the vulnerable young children and elderly in your life! Get your flu shot as soon as possible for the best protection—Thanksgiving break is the perfect time!

Where to Get a Flu Shot

Walgreens: 49 S. Main Street, Newtown—walk in

Stop & Shop Pharmacy: 228 S. Main Street, Newtown—walk in

CVS Minute Clinic: 22 Depot Hill Road, Southbury—walk in

Pomperaug Health District: 77 N. Main St., Suite 205 Southbury—every Monday 3-5:30PM ([Click on this link for additional information](#))

Love Your Lungs—Don't Smoke! Don't Vape!

November has long been "Quit Smoking" month. Now it needs to expand to "Quit Smoking, Quit Vaping" month. Vaping has been seen by some as a harmless activity, but it is now very clear that vaping can cause serious lung injuries to users. One of the greatest deterrents to vaping (also smoking, drinking, drug use) is

parental attitude. If parents and siblings communicate, through actions and words, that they think vaping is dangerous, those students will be much less likely to try it. So, bring up the subject of vaping at the dinner table. Make sure your kids know how you feel about it! There is more information in the school

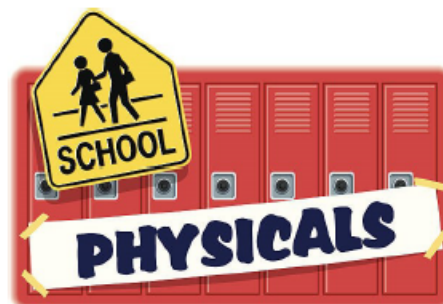
health offices for anyone who is trying to quit.



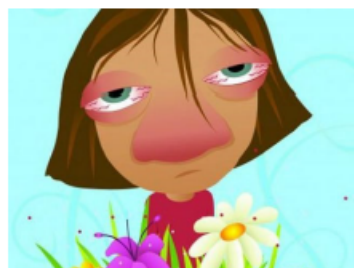
Sixth and Ninth Grade Required Physicals

All Newtown students in the sixth and ninth grade are required by the State of Connecticut to have a physical exam by the end of the school year. Physicals completed any time after August 26, 2018, can be accepted. The student's immunizations must also be up to date. For full information on Immunization requirements please click on the following link:

[2019/20 CT Department of Education Immunization Requirements](#)



Use of Fragrances—Request for Consideration



Strong smells are frequent triggers for migraines, allergies and asthma. A reminder recently went out to school staff to make sure everyone avoids exposing others to strong fragrances, air fresheners, diffusers, etc. We would like to remind students as well to please avoid strong smelling substances that could make others uncomfortable in the school environment. Thanks for your help!

Spot Vision Screening

Vision is critical to learning for children. Catching problems early and correcting them helps ensure that poor vision isn't an obstacle to learning. Early intervention can also mean preventing permanent loss of vision. Newtown school nurses have recently finished screening our elementary students and 5th graders using the "SPOT Vision Screening" system, with support from the Newtown Lion's Club and the VNA. SPOT screening is a faster and more accurate method of

screening vision than the old method of using wall charts. SPOT screening accurately screens for Myopia (near sightedness), Hyperopia (farsightedness), Astigmatism (blurred vision), Anisometropia (unequal refractive power), Strabismus (eye misalignment) and Anisocoria (unequal pupil size). Results of screening were sent home with students indicating either that their vision is within normal limits" or that the student needs a full eye

exam. If you have any questions about the vision screening process, please contact your school nurse.



Student Council News

By: Susan Musco and Shari Oliver



Thank you to everyone who helped with our annual food drive! We were able to provide WIN, Women Involved in Newtown, with many boxes of food to supplement the Thanksgiving baskets they provided to Newtown families in need. The winner of the homeroom competition who turned in the most items was Mr. Miller with over 100 items! Mr. Miller's homeroom will enjoy a pizza party for their efforts.

In addition to our success with the food drive, our Student Council Board of Director chair people, Alexis U. and Eleanor C-H, along with other members of the student body, participated in our annual Veterans Day Assemblies. NMS Student Council members, along with our student body and staff, was able to relay our student body's deep respect and admiration of our local heroes!



On behalf of all of our Student Council members we wish you a relaxing and enjoyable Thanksgiving!





Veterans Day Assembly

By Madyson Miller, Research and Information Literacy

Here at Newtown Middle School, we hold a Veterans Day assembly to honor all of our relatives and teachers who are veterans. Students' relatives are welcome to come if they have served. During the assembly, each student has the opportunity to introduce their veteran. The chorus sings songs such as God Bless America and our National Anthem. Mr. Hedin, our orchestra teacher, and Mr. Pope, our chorus teacher asked for volunteers in their classes to sing or play their instruments during the assembly. The chorus sang God Bless America while the orchestra played. Mr. Ryan, the social studies teacher in 7 red, Mrs. Oliver, the social studies teacher for 8 purple, and Mr. San Angelo, our school librarian, put together this program to honor our veterans. We had students introduce each branch of the armed forces. These are the 7th-grade assembly hosts: Alexis Underwood, Eleanor Cruwys-Hayes, Reese Lischuk, Willow Assante-Labash, Charlie Massett, Daniella Crisci, Edward Liu. Jake Beckley played TAPS on his trumpet. The 8th-grade assembly hosts were: Alexis Underwood, Eleanor Cruwys-Hayes, Brady and Dylan Macey, Puma Marx, Julia Forlenzo, and Jake Beckley playing TAPS again. It was an honor and a privilege to host these heroes at Newtown Middle School.

A yearbook makes a great holiday gift!

Only \$36 until 1/31/20 - Don't miss out on the memories!

Click [THIS LINK](#) to order at any time,
or call 877-767-5217 during regular business hours.

Please email Miss Lang if you have any questions.

December Yearbook club meetings

We will meet the first TWO Wednesdays of the month - 12/4
and 12/11. Reminders will be on our Classroom page.

Please arrange a ride home, or sign up for the late bus.

See Miss Lang if you have any questions.

Holiday Staff Luncheon **Donations Needed**

This month I am looking forward to one of my favorite events, our Holiday Staff Luncheon on December 18th! This is our chance to show the Newtown Middle School teachers and staff how much they mean to us. Use this [link](#) to sign up and bring something through our Perfect Potluck. Please consider cooking, baking or bringing something in for this special day. Thank you so much for your consideration.



The holiday season is here and we have so much to be thankful for. The NMS PTA would like to acknowledge the entire Newtown Middle School community for your support. To all of you who have joined the PTA, we thank you. It's not too late...a copy of our membership form is attached to this newsletter. Our directories will be distributed in early December and they are complimentary with your PTA membership. We will have a few extras and once they are gone we will not be getting anymore. It takes ALL of us to make the NMS PTA successful. Whether you chair an event, volunteer for the Book Fair, or contribute to our Annual Appeal, you are taking part in contributing to the benefits and continuation of our children's enhanced education.

In closing, on behalf of the Newtown Middle School PTA Executive Board, I would like to wish you all a happy, healthy, and safe holiday season! If you should have any questions about PTA volunteer opportunities, ideas for new activities, etc. please feel free to contact us at newtownmspta@gmail.com. Please know your questions are always welcome!

Sincerely, Melissa Beylouni & Kristen Bonacci — Co-Presidents

Jennifer Chaudhary — First Vice President

Monica Kwarcinski — Second Vice President

Brooke Heinen — Treasurer

Julia Crisci — Secretary



NMS PTA Membership and Donation Form

Name (1): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Name (2): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Student(s): _____

Home Room Teacher(s): _____

NMS PTA Membership and Directory - Please indicate member name(s) in the section above. Membership is required in order to be eligible to vote during meetings. We welcome members throughout the year; forms must be returned by September 30th to secure your copy of the student directory. Membership fee is not tax-deductible.

Circle your choice: Family, Individual, or Staff membership

Family PTA membership (list two names above) \$ **25.00**

Includes 2 adult members & student directory if paid by September 30

Individual PTA membership (list one name above) \$ **15.00**

Includes 1 adult member & student directory if paid by September 30

Staff PTA membership (list one name above) \$ **6.00**

Student directory not included, unless requested

NMS PTA Donation - ***Please consider a one-time donation*** of \$25 or whatever you feel comfortable giving to defray the cost of annual programs while eliminating the need for fundraisers! Your donation is tax deductible to the PTA as a 501(c)(3) organization; consult your tax advisor for confirmation.

Suggested one-time PTA Donation \$ **25.00**

Other Donation Amount: \$ _____

Total Amount Enclosed (Membership + Donation)

\$

Please make check payable to NMS PTA – one check combining donation and membership fee is fine.

NMS PTA Volunteer Opportunities

Circle your interests and we will contact you. Thank you for your help!

- | | | |
|------------------------------|---|----------------------------|
| • Book Fair | • Cultural Arts | • Reflections Arts Program |
| • Staff Breakfasts/Luncheons | • 8 th Grade Moving Up Dance | • Call Me List |

School Based Health Center



5 Ways to Get Your 5 a Day



You may have heard that you should eat 5 servings of fruit and vegetables a day — which works out to a total of about 2½ cups. But experts actually recommend getting even *more* than that amount.

There are no limits on the quantities of tasty fruits and veggies you can enjoy — unless, of course, you load 'em up with butter or dressing, or deep-fry them! But many of us still find it hard to fit fruit and veggies into our meals.

Here are some ideas to help you get into the 5-a-day (or more!) habit:

Start with the first meal of the day. Plan to eat a serving or two of fruit with breakfast every day. Mix it up so you don't get bored. Half a grapefruit, an apple, or a handful of berries on your cereal are all good choices. Continue this pattern by eating vegetables at lunch and at dinner.

Get extra energy from fruit or vegetable snacks. The carbohydrates in fruit and vegetables are great sources of energy. Combine them with a serving of protein — such as a piece of cheese, a cup of yogurt, or a tablespoon of peanut butter, and you get staying power too. Ants on a log, anyone?

Double up on fruit and veggie servings. Recommended servings of fruit and veggies can be small. Unlike other foods, it's OK to double the [serving size](#) of fruit or vegetables. Serve yourself a 1-cup portion of broccoli or tomatoes instead of the standard serving of ½ cup.

Use fruit and vegetables as ingredients. Enjoy bread? Bake up a batch of zucchini bread and get your veggies along with your grains! Use applesauce instead of oil in your baked goods. Chop up veggies (peppers, carrots, celery) and toss them into your favorite chili recipe. If you don't like vegetables much, sneak them into foods you do enjoy (like grating carrots into tomato sauce or, again, zucchini into bread). It's a great way to get your veggies without having to taste them!

Try a new fruit, vegetable, or recipe each week. Our bodies like variety. So set a goal to try something different each week. You may find a new favorite. One good way to get variety is to eat the fruit and veggies that are in season in your area. They usually taste better than the bland fruit salad or shriveled apples you're used to seeing in the cafeteria!

Dates to Remember

Look for details in the Lion's Roar or on the NMS website <http://nms.newtown.schooldesk.net/>

December

December 4

7th Grade Concert
@ NHS
7PM

December 4

Cookie Dough Delivery/Pick up

December 5

PTA Reflection Entries Due

December 9

8th Grade Concert
@Reed Intermediate
7PM

December 20

Early Dismissal
12:32PM
Lunch Served

December 23-January 1

No School
Holiday Recess

January

January 2

Students return to school

January 17

2 hr. Delay Start

January 20

No School
Martin Luther King Day



