



---

## District Updates

### Spotlight on Black History Month

- Madison Public Schools is dedicated to celebrating Black History Month through the examination of history, literature, music, art, dance, and so many other individual and collective contributions to American life. Using a wide range of resources, students at all grade levels are engaging with Black History Month in an age-appropriate way and school leaders, teachers, and clubs within the schools are holding schoolwide activities to create dialogue and build understanding. Students are exploring a wide range of media that examines the many experiences of being Black in America, including film, poetry, speeches, memoirs, histories, and a variety of other texts. Below are a few highlights taken from the many activities being undertaken throughout the district.
- In grade 10, students are reading the story *How it Went Down* (Kekla Magoon) to explore media bias, truth, and remembrance.
- At MHS, the Diversity Council held a meeting on the topic “Race in School: Are We Really Integrated and Equal?”
- At MJS, an advisory lesson has been developed to explore Black History Month with all students.
- 7<sup>th</sup> grade students will watch Matthew Cherry’s short film *Hair Love* and undertake a variety of activities analyzing the topics covered.
- In grades K-8, morning announcements are highlighting historical figures, civil rights activists, and other notable African Americans throughout the month.
- 5<sup>th</sup> grade students at CAS will be studying the poetry of Langston Hughes and will be developing presentations on famous African American mathematicians.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students at KRS are learning about Madison History and homes that worked to help people to freedom as stops on the Underground Railroad.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students at TJS will be exploring biographies of famous African Americans including Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks, Jesse Owens, Wilma Rudolph, and Benjamin Banneker.
- Elementary music students are learning about African American musical pioneers from throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and how the history of slavery affected the development of American popular music.
- Art classes at different levels are focusing on African American artists and African artwork
- STEAM and technology classes are exploring African American scientists and are completing coding challenges as an extension related to the engineers and mathematicians featured in *Hidden Figures*.

### National Merit Finalists!

- Madison Public Schools is pleased to congratulate **Sadie Hoberman, Henry Marinovic, and Adam Sher**, who have been selected as National Merit Finalists. Finalists represent less than one percent of U.S. high school seniors and include the highest-scoring entrants on the PSAT/NMSQT in each state. Over 1.5 million 11<sup>th</sup> grade students entered the 2021 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the PSAT/NMSQT in 2019. Approximately 15,000 students are selected as National Merit Finalists based on a rigorous selection process that examines academic excellence along with other factors.
- Sadie, Henry, and Adam will now be considered for one of the 7,600 Merit Scholarship Awards and will be notified in March about they are recipients. We are very proud of the accomplishments of these students!

## School Updates

- The MHS Key Club is the Students Change Hunger State Champion! Students collected \$7,095 in donations and 4,462 pounds of food to total more than 25,000 nutritious meals. In addition to the state award, the Key Club received the following recognitions: CFBNJ Division 5 Most Meals Donated, CFBNJ Fundraising Champion, and CFBNJ SCH Champion.
- The MHS Key Club is collecting items to assemble 500 cold weather kits for [Bridges Outreach](#), which distributes food and other essentials to homeless individuals in New York City and New Jersey. From now until February 14<sup>th</sup>, donations can be dropped off in-person at the HS or can be ordered for delivery to the Key Club through Amazon at the [Student Wish List Project](#).
- Congratulations to **Guilherme Pereira** (11<sup>th</sup> grade), who will be representing MHS in the Poetry Out Loud program after winning the schoolwide competition. Poetry Out Loud is a national program that engages high school students with poetry through reading and performance. MHS has participated in the program for the past 11 years and regularly has outstanding student performers qualify for Regional and State competitions.
- The new texts designed to bring more diversity into the curriculum have begun to be rolled out in English classes. Teachers and students are very excited about the books!
- The Interact Club is making Valentine's Day cards to be shared with residents of local nursing homes. A drop box for the cards has been placed in the main lobby. For every five cards that a student makes, they will receive two service hours.
- Project Aware is requesting gently used children's or young adult books to be donated for local families who would benefit from more access to varied reading materials. Collection boxes have been placed in the main lobby and books will be accepted through February 5<sup>th</sup>.
- Congratulations to Fine Art Digital Imaging student **Jessica Murray** (11<sup>th</sup> grade), who won the Silver Key for the Northern New Jersey Art Region in the 2021 Scholastic Art Awards. Her photo titled "Dream or Nightmare?" can be seen below. Jessica and her teacher, **Ms. Berry**, will attend a virtual awards ceremony at the Montclair Art Museum on February 25<sup>th</sup>.



- MHS Guidance
  - MHS will be hosting two optional, in-school SAT opportunities in March for current 11<sup>th</sup> grade students. A letter from the Guidance Department with more information can be found here: <https://5il.co/p0jq>

- MHS Athletics
  - Congratulations to **Emma Torkelson** (12<sup>th</sup> grade), who has been selected as the MHS representative for National Girls and Women in Sports Day (NGWSD). The NGWSD inspires girls and women to play and be active in order to realize their full power. High schools from across the country select one female scholar-athlete each year as a representative who embodies the true characteristics of sports performance and leadership qualities. The 35<sup>th</sup> Annual NGWSD will be held February 3<sup>rd</sup>.
  - The 2021 Spring Athletic Season Tentative Start Dates have been announced. Baseball and Softball practices begin on March 26<sup>th</sup> for pitchers and catchers and on April 1<sup>st</sup> for the full team. For all other sports (Boys & Girls Lacrosse, Boys & Girls Golf, Boys Tennis, Boys & Girls Track), practices begin on April 1<sup>st</sup>. Competition for all sports runs from April 19<sup>th</sup> to June 20<sup>th</sup>.

#### Madison Junior School

- MJS participated in the 2021 World Read Aloud Day this year. Students in all grades and subject areas enjoyed picture books read aloud to them by teachers, counselors, administrators, secretaries, and even the school nurse! Selected books related to Black History Month, the current topics being taught, or were just an old favorite shared by the reader.
- The MJS Unified Sports club will begin during the second week of February. Unified Sports is a Special Olympics program that promotes inclusion for all students and has a philosophy that training together and playing together is a quick path to friendship and understanding. This year, activities will include arts and crafts, skills and drills in the gym, and games and hobbies.
- The MJS Student Council is running a Souper Bowl Food Drive during the month of February. The top three advisory classes that bring in the most items for the food pantry will be honored with their picture in the morning announcements and a coupon for a free scoop of ice cream!
- The MJS fall production of *Mirror Mirror* came to a close. Directed and produced by **Ms. Ward** and starring MJS students this wonderful play can be viewed any time via [this link](#).
- On January 27<sup>th</sup>, the 8<sup>th</sup> grade Peer Leader Club joined their 6<sup>th</sup> grade advisory partners and led the weekly lesson. Peer leaders worked with 6<sup>th</sup> graders on the power of one little word and how simple words can hold great meaning.

#### Central Avenue School

- On February 3<sup>rd</sup>, CAS students participated in a virtual character education and anti-bullying assembly called *Youth Mover*. Brandon White, a professional ballroom dance instructor and motivational youth speaker, spoke to the students about bravery, kindness, and being yourself! Thank you to the PTO for organizing this assembly!
- In-person Chorus for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students began in early February under the direction of **Mrs. Chiarino**.
- A schoolwide choice board was established for students to celebrate Black History Month! The teachers have planned many other activities for the month, such as featured authors, famous African Americans, and readalouds!
- All K-5 students participated in World Read-Aloud Day via a live Zoom Webinar storytelling event with Library Media Specialists **Ms. Thomas** and **Ms. Bessin** on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- All three elementary schools celebrated Valentine's Day on February 12<sup>th</sup>.
- CAS is preparing for *One School, One Book*, in which the students will all be exposed to the same book during the spring to help unite the school. Each classroom teacher will read the book aloud and incorporate extension activities. The selected book is *Be You* by Peter H. Reynolds. The book serves as a joyful reminder of the ways in which every child is unique and special!
- Family Bingo Night was held on January 29<sup>th</sup> as an enjoyable virtual event that engaged over 100 families. The event was hosted by **Mr. Liss** and the PTO with help from the Student Council.
- Students in 1<sup>st</sup> grade decorated bags filled with sandwiches and desserts to help lift the spirit of their friends in Newark, NJ.

Kings Road School

- As a way to promote community spirit and unity, music teacher Ms. Ward and school counselor **Mr. Levine** created [this video](#) for KRS families to initiate a Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament for both in-person and remote students.
- In-person Chorus for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students began in early February under the direction of **Ms. Ward**.
- The 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Grade KRS Student Council will be creating original Valentine's Day cards for hospitalized veterans.
- The KRS community collected, packaged, and delivered socks to Bridges Community Outreach. Over 400 pairs of socks were donated and packaged by KRS students for families in need.
- Students in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade wrote a letter to themselves to memorialize their experiences from the last 11 months. The letters will be sealed like a time capsule to be opened at a later date.
- *Fenway and Hattie* reading and trivia continues to keep the KRS community busy! We are just about halfway through the book and are loving seeing the world through the eyes of this Jack Russell terrier! A pacing calendar was provided to KRS families to help keep their reading up to date. Students are eagerly hoping that they are one of the lucky random prize winners on Fridays.
- All three elementary schools celebrated Valentine's Day on February 12<sup>th</sup>.
- The KRS Vision Committee convened in late January and decided to survey students about the words they think best describe KRS. The Vision Committee developed a Google Form for students to choose five words from a number of choices provided. The survey results will be used to modify/create the Mission, Vision, and Core Values of KRS.
- All K-5 students participated in World Read-Aloud Day via a live Zoom Webinar storytelling event with Library Media Specialists **Ms. Thomas** and **Ms. Bessin** on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Torey J. Sabatini

- TJS successfully completed The Great Kindness Challenge during the week of January 25<sup>th</sup> and has been recognized as a 2021 Kindness Certified School!
- Over the last two weeks, TJS families have donated 1,161 pounds of food to the Interfaith Food Pantry! Thank you to the families that donated, the 5th grade peer leaders for promoting our schoolwide community service project, and **Mrs. Bletcher** and **Mrs. Lade** for helping to organize the event.
- In-person Chorus for 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students began in early February under the direction of **Ms. Ward**.
- All K-5 students participated in World Read-Aloud Day via a live Zoom Webinar storytelling event with Library Media Specialists **Ms. Thomas** and **Ms. Bessin** on February 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Staff members took part in a "Secret Supporter" initiative organized by **Mrs. Warhya**. Staff completed a Google Form and were paired up with a buddy who they will support with surprise gifts and kind gestures over the next few months.
- Celebrating differences and building up students to help them see themselves (and their classmates) in a positive light is critical in ensuring an inclusive environment. This month TJS concluded an activity in grades 3-5 that used the text *The Best Part of Me* by Wendy Ewald. Students identified a positive physical feature of themselves and wrote about it. The results were amazing and black and white photographs now line the hallways of the new wing! Students enjoyed participating in these lessons, which were taught by **Mrs. Bletcher** and **Principal Sing**.
- On February 10<sup>th</sup>, TJS students participated in a virtual character education and anti-bullying assembly called *Youth Mover*. Brandon White, a professional ballroom dance instructor and motivational youth speaker, spoke to the students about bravery, kindness, and being yourself! Thank you to the PTO for organizing this assembly!
- TJS Family Trivia Night occurred on February 11<sup>th</sup>! The trivia theme was Valentine's Day/President's Day. Thank you to **Ms. D'Amico** and **Mrs. Bletcher** for coordinating the event along with the PTO.
- All three elementary schools celebrated Valentine's Day on February 12<sup>th</sup>.