



District Updates

- **Spotlight on Black History Month**

- Madison Public Schools is celebrating Black History Month during the month of February through the examination of history, literature, music, art, dance, and other disciplines. Students at all grade levels are engaging with Black History Month in an age-appropriate way and principals, teachers, and clubs within each school are promoting activities to create dialogue and build understanding regarding Black History Month. Using a wide range of resources, students are exploring 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 of the many activities being undertaken throughout the district.
- In MHS art classes, students will be studying the African American artists including David Drake, an enslaved potter that lived in 19th Century South Carolina; Theaster Gates, a contemporary social practice installation artist whose work has been featured at the Tate Gallery in London; Kerry James Marshall; and Kehinde Wiley. In US 2, students will be working on the “Unsung Heroes” project, which has students research a minority figure who made a significant impact during WWII. In ELA classes 9th grade students are reading *Born a Crime* (Trevor Noah) and 10th grade students are “The Narratives and Life of Frederick Douglass.”
- At MJS, students are learning about Afro-Latinos in Spanish classes and classes will read short biographies and listen to music by such artists as Celia Cruz (Afro-Cubana) and ChocQuibTown (Afro-Colombiano). The Conflict Resolution Team led by **Ms. Marotta** and **Ms. Nering** are making Black History Month cards (similar to baseball cards) to display in the cafeteria along with the MLK display. In 7th grade science students are exploring the contributions of famous African-American scientists and students will create a “TIME Person of the Year” magazine cover and interview spread about their chosen scientist.
- At the K-5 level, students will be reading biographies and other texts in ELA, exploring historical contributions through social studies and STEAM/Technology lessons, learning about African-American artists and drumming in music classes, and studying African artwork and masks in art classes.

- **Recognizing Matt Platkin, MHS Graduate and NJ’s Next Attorney General**

- Madison Public Schools is excited that New Jersey’s next Attorney General, Matt Platkin, is a 2005 graduation of Madison High School. Mr. Platkin earned his BA and JD from Stanford before embarking on his career in the law and public service. In 2005, Mr. Platkin earned the recognition of Salutatorian of the graduating class and [spoke at graduation](#) to his fellow students. This [article](#) highlights some of the local reaction regarding Mr. Platkin’s appointment and background. We at MPS wish him the best in his new role!

- **SEL Presentation with Dr. Maurice Elias**

- On January 27th, Dr. Maurice Elias, a Professor in the Psychology Department of Rutgers University, presented to elementary parents on “Social and Emotional Learning in the Elementary School Setting.” The event was organized jointly by the PTOs of CAS, KRS, TJS. Dr. Elias, who also runs the Social-Emotional and Character Development Lab (www.secdlab.org) and serves as the Co-Director of the Rutgers-based Academy for SEL in Schools, presented on a range of topics such as emotional regulation, navigating peer conflict, and resiliency. He also answered questions from the community on these and other SEL topics. [A recording of the event can be found here.](#)

School Updates

Madison High School

- The MHS Key Club was a huge part of the 21-22 Students Change Hunger campaign, collecting 4,116 pounds of food and raising \$8,370. These resources will provide more than 28,542 meals to neighbors experiencing food insecurity. We are also pleased to announce that the Key Club is the winner of two awards: *Division 5 Most Meals Donated* and *CFBNJ Overall Most Meals Donated*. Congratulations to everyone who was involved!
- Senior **Mariana Ospina Agudelo** has been nominated as MHS's Unsung Hero. This recognition, sponsored by the Morris County School Boards Association, is awarded to a member of the 12th grade who makes outstanding contributions to their school and community but who may be overlooked. Mariana arrived at MHS two years ago as a native Spanish speaker, and during her short time in the district she has made tremendous progress with her English language skills through her strong work ethic and drive. She plays a crucial role in helping new students from Spanish speaking countries integrate into the district by giving up her free time to assist students with their course planning, providing translation services, leading tours, setting up Google accounts, taking notes, and explaining the daily bell schedule. Mariana also helped start the Hispanic Heritage Club and recruited other Hispanic students to join to provide a place where they can feel embraced. In so many ways Mariana goes above and beyond the expectations of a student. Her presence alone is truly a source of comfort for so many as they adapt to their new school and community. MHS is so fortunate to have a student that so willingly and selflessly strives to make others feel welcome.
- Congratulations to seniors **Artha Abeysinghe** and **Skylar Walters** for being selected as candidates for the United States Presidential Scholars Program. This program recognizes the accomplishments of some of our nation's most distinguished graduating seniors chosen for exceptional scholarship, leadership, and service to school and community. 161 US President Scholars are chosen annually. Good luck to Artha and Skylar moving forward!
- Congratulations to senior **Skylar Walters** who was named a Regional Finalist for the [Coca-Cola Scholars Program](#). 250 US high school seniors received this honor from over 68,000 submitted applications. Skylar was selected for her academic excellence, leadership, and service as demonstrated in school and community activities. 150 Coca-Cola scholars will be named in March to receive a \$20,000 scholarship and participate in the Coca-Cola Scholars Leadership Development Institute facilitated by program alumni. Good luck to Skylar in the next round!
- The AMC 10 and AMC 12 Math contest results are in. Congratulations to **Karen Wu, Jacob Jordan**, and **Arhan Menon** for earning the top three scores on the AMC 12. Congratulations to **Tom Yao, Daphne Rodas**, and **Jacob Graham** for earning the top three scores on the AMC 10. Thank you to all students who participated in the AMC contests this year!
- The AMTNJ High School Mathematics Contest took place on January 19th. The top scoring students who will represent MHS are **Artha Abeysinghe, Nicholas Modi, Graham Bradshaw, Anuthra Abeysinghe, Quinn Cullinan**, and **Kathryn McElvany**.
- Seal of Biliteracy Testing for Level V World Language students occurred on December 9th and 10th. Students earn the Seal on their MHS transcript by demonstrating a high level of proficiency in speaking, reading, comprehension, and writing in two or more languages. Congratulations to the following students who achieved the Seal of Biliteracy:
 - Chinese:
 - **Saatvik Sharma, Mark Su**
 - French:
 - **Morgan Araya, Juan Cadavid, Elise Hart, Jacob Jordan, Orla Maxwell, Elisabeth Wielandy**
 - Italian:
 - **Logan Bilello, Evan Katz, Chloe Niceberg**

- Spanish:
 - **Amanda Beneventano, Anabel Brush, Shea Byam, Ruari Callaghan, Kay Chase, Melanie Davidson, Cassandra Davidson, Daniela Estevez, Diego Estevez, Sofia Garcia Morales, Paul Giglio, Catherine Gregory, Isabella Guarino, Mateo Guevara, Todd Hanson, Doyle Keane, Yeongjin Kwon, Isabella Lord-Martin, Kathryn McElvany, Gavin Mock, Valentina Ocampo, Erin Scheier, James Weller**
- MHS Guidance
 - MHS Guidance will be hosting a 10th Grade Information Night on February 16th.
 - MHS will be offering the In-School SAT for interested 11th grade students on March 2nd.
- MHS Athletics
 - Congratulations to **Victoria Brosie** (12th grade) who has been selected as the MHS representative for National Girls and Women in Sports Day (NGWSD). Each year high schools from across the country select one female that embodies the true characteristics of sports performance and leadership qualities. February 2nd will mark the 36th Annual National Girls & Women in Sports Day. This celebration inspires girls and women to play and be active to realize their full power.
 - Congratulations to **Connor Gilfillan** (12th grade) who is being honored by the Greater Morris County Chapter of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame at a dinner on March 31st. Seniors from Morris, Sussex, and Warren Counties high schools will be honored at the event. Connor was selected by the Athletic Department as the MHS representative for not only his football ability but also for his outstanding academic performance, school leadership, character, and citizenship.

Madison Junior School

- On January 31st MJS staff worked collaboratively in their subject areas of Humanities, Math, and Science, to analyze the results of this fall's Start Strong Assessment. Special thanks is owed to Instructional Coaches **Ms. Emann** (Humanities) and **Ms. Smith** (Math/Science) for putting together the thoughtful and data-rich documents used by teachers to analyze the results. Teachers will be using this information to support future learning in their classrooms.
- Congratulations to the MJSAO Boys and Girls Basketball teams on their 2021-2022 seasons. A big thank you to coaches **Mr. D'Agostino** and **Ms. Chupp**, and a big cheer for MJSAO Director **Mr. Rossi** for his work. The MJS community is looking forward to our upcoming volleyball season and cheering on our Boys and Girls Volleyball Teams this coming winter!
- All MJS students will join together to read one book from the Jason Reynolds "Track" series and participate in book-related cross-curricular activities. Students will pick the book of their choice from the four-book series and join the whole school in reading about four wonderful characters who all happen to be on the same track team.
- To celebrate the Week of Gratitude in February the MJS 8th grade peer leaders will join their 6th grade advisory partners to lead the weekly lesson. Peer leaders will work with 6th graders on the power of one little word and how our words hold such great meaning.

Central Avenue School

- The elementary schools celebrated Valentine's Day on February 14th with class parties and the exchanging of cards. What a great day to celebrate love and friendship!
- CAS celebrated the Lunar New Year by having students cycle through stations focused on Chinese Culture and the Lunar New Year!
- CAS Peer Leaders led random acts of kindness (RAOK), making posters to hang around the school and sharing Kindness poetry throughout the week. This and other activities are taking place during "Random Acts of Kindness Week," which began February 13th.

- The CAS Multicultural Club has been delivering inspiring messages about Black History Month and is developing ways to continue to celebrate our differences at CAS! These include posters, music, and announcements highlighting different cultures.
- On February 14th, CAS students took part in the Art of Inspiration assembly. Addressing thousands every year, the Art of Inspiration assembly influences audiences and uses their imagination to discover their originality and celebrate their differences.

Kings Road School

- The cast have begun rehearsing for the school musical *Frozen*! Music Teacher Ms. McEachern and Art Teacher **Mr. Thompson** will be directing a talented student ensemble of cast and crew. We cannot wait to see the performance on May 5th!
- Reading Specialist **Ms. Sims** is busy working with the wonderful KRS PTO leadership team to bring “One School/One Book” back to KRS. The committee has selected a title, which is under lock and key until the official unveiling!
- The elementary schools celebrated Valentine’s Day on February 14th with class parties and the exchanging of cards. What a great day to celebrate love and friendship!
- As a follow-up to the creation of the KRS Mission, Vision, and Core Values, the KRS teachers worked in PLC teams to identify the professional actions and activities related to each statement.
- Last year the entire KRS student body participated in a Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament. For the 2021-2022 school year there is a new event: “One Pin Bowling.” All students will participate in “Round 1” with their class during PE. The class champion will go on to the round of 16 where they will compete against other class champions. There will also be a few “wild card” opportunities. Eventually, the field will be narrowed down to the final two students. The rules and guidelines of the competition will be explained to the students in their PE class. Last year the Rock, Paper, Scissors tournament brought a lot of good-natured levity to the winter months. We hope to repeat that spirit this year. Thank you to **Ms. McEachern** for putting together [this wonderful video](#) about the event.
- The KRS 2nd grade classes learned about the Winter Olympics by coloring the flags for every participating country, which are displayed magnificently in the hallway outside the 2nd grade classrooms.
- The 100th Day of School was celebrated on February 7th. Activities included students collecting and counting 100 items, students dressing like they were 100 years old, and KRS staff wearing special shirts celebrating the 100 days.

Torey J. Sabatini

- The elementary schools celebrated Valentine’s Day on February 14th with class parties and the exchanging of cards. What a great day to celebrate love and friendship!
- The 100th Day of School was celebrated on February 7th. Activities included students collecting and counting 100 items, students (and staff) dressing like they were 100 years old, and several staff wearing special shirts to celebrate being 100 days smarter.
- The TJS Mission/Vision Committee has met several times to outline a process for writing our very own school mission and vision statements as well as identifying core keywords. Committee members include **Ms. Garcia, Ms. DeMarco, Ms. Kennedy, Ms. Madden, Ms. Stockdale, Mr. Thompson, Ms. D’Amico, and Ms. Lade**. Students were involved in the process as several classes helped brainstorm core keywords. TJS Faculty and staff also voted on their top choice of keywords before drafting a mission statement in small groups at the January 31st faculty meeting. The committee is looking forward to the continued work of drafting our mission and vision statements.
- The TJS ScIP Committee met to plan out an engaging faculty meeting agenda for February 14th. Staff members will participate in three choice workshop sessions led by their colleagues. Topics range in the category of Social-Emotional Learning as well as Instructional Best Practices. Staff members presenting workshops are **Ms. Madden, Ms. D’Amico, Ms. Cancelliere, Ms.**

Bletcher, Ms. Stockdale, Ms. LoBrace, and Ms. Kennedy. The staff is looking forward to learning from their colleagues!

- The TJS Souper Bowl is well underway and so far we have collected 1,878 cans and boxes of food to donate to the Interfaith Food Pantry! Thank you to **Ms. Bletcher** and **Ms. Lade** for working with our **Fifth Grade Peer Leaders** to implement this school-wide initiative.
- This month teachers at every grade level and across all special area subjects are conducting lessons in their classrooms focused on the achievements of African Americans. From read-alouds to biographical texts, to research, Newsela articles, and more, students are learning about a variety of African American people from long ago and present-day and recognizing their central role in U.S. history.