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## **District Updates**

### **Remote Learning is Upon Us!**

- With the arrival of the coronavirus pandemic, the district is undertaking a new approach to instruction! Remote learning is the new normal as all districts across New Jersey and the United States determine the best way to meet student needs while also providing appropriate social distancing to slow the spread of the novel coronavirus.
- MPS planned for this transition by closely watching the news and anticipating the potential effects of the spread of the virus. Through the use of regular administrative meetings and time set aside for staff collaboration and planning, all students began remote learning on Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>.
- This has truly been a collaborative effort within the school community:
  - Instructional staff and related services providers throughout the district have been working diligently to explore new technologies as the transition to distance learning continues.
  - Our administrators and instructional coaches **Ms. Emann**, **Ms. Smith**, and **Ms. Snider** have helped lead planning and have been gathering resources for staff and students.
  - Our technology department has been supporting families through tech support and device distribution under the leadership of **Mr. Lapierre**.
  - Our facilities staff has been busily caring for our buildings and moving forward with new projects under the guidance of **Mr. Zulla**.
  - Our food services staff has been supporting families in need through daily lunch distribution.
  - Our parent community has provided helpful feedback and ongoing encouragement to ensure that staff feel supported.
  - And many of our software providers have provided free access and tech support during this challenging time!
- Plans for remote learning, as well as community messages from **Mr. Schwarz**, have been placed on a special page on the district website. Please follow the links below for more information.
  - [Extended Closure Main Page](#)
  - [District Remote Learning Plan](#)
  - [Links to School-Based Plans](#)
  - Additional Resources
    - [MPS Extended Closure FAQ](#)
    - [Communications from Mr. Schwarz](#)
    - [Technology Resources](#)

### **Community Curriculum Forums**

- Mr. Ross held the first Community Curriculum Forum on 2/26, which focused on Humanities. Accompanying him in the presentation was **Ms. Emann**, K-8 Humanities Coach. The Community Curriculum Forums serve as a way for the community to engage with district leaders on K-12 content programming in order to better understand the district's approach to teaching and learning. The Forums will resume as remote events, with the next meeting (TBD) focusing on STEM in MPS.

### **Profile of the Graduate Updates and Sessions**

- Mr. Schwarz and Mr. Ross co-hosted a Profile of the Graduate vision-setting session on 3/11 as part of a Superintendent's Coffee event. The Profile of the Graduate work is being undertaken among all stakeholder groups in MPS and seeks to define the ideal characteristics and attributes of a graduate of Madison Public Schools. A second interactive Profile of the Graduate session will be held as a remote event, with more information to follow.

### Madison STEAM Academy

- The Madison STEAM Academy for the summer of 2020 has launched and the informational website is now live ([www.madisonpublicschools.org/steamacademy](http://www.madisonpublicschools.org/steamacademy)). The STEAM Academy is planned to run at Madison High School from July 6th through August 7th and will be open to students entering grades 3-12 during the 2020-2021 school year.

### 2020 Visual and Performing Arts Summer Program

- The VPA Department is pleased to announce the details for the 2020 Summer Program. All classes are planned to meet at MJS between 9:00 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The program will include instrumental music, guitar, visual art, and vocal and musical theater classes. Scheduling will be flexible to allow most students the opportunity to take multiple classes if they so choose.

### Black History Month, February 2020

- February was Black History Month and it was celebrated throughout MPS in a variety of ways. Students engaged with a variety of themes related to African-American culture and history. Some highlights include a focus on black authors, history discussed through biographies of prominent historical figures, studies of African-American leaders throughout US history, discussions around affirmative action and related public policies (redlining, housing covenants), civil rights, and South Africa and Apartheid.

### Women's History Month, March 2020

- March is Women's History Month and staff and students have been celebrating it in spite of the disruption to learning. Some highlights from the work included study of social reform movements, suffrage, women writers and feminist literature, speeches and female voice, and biographies of famous women throughout history.

### All-City Strings and Orchestra Concert

- The All City Strings and Orchestra Concert was held on 3/11 at MJS. The concert featured the district's top 5<sup>th</sup> grade instrumentalists as well as selected 6th graders who comprise these honors ensembles.

### Census Statistics in Schools Week

- The US Census 2020 "Statistics in Schools" week was highlighted across the district during the week of 3/9 and 3/16. "Statistics in Schools" is designed to engage students and families in promoting the census to ensure that all residents are counted in Census 2020.

## School Updates

### Madison High School

- The Madison High School Robotics Team was part of the winning alliance at the First Robotics Northwest League Tournament!
- Amazing performances of *Hello Dolly* at MHS! Sold out crowds every night. Congratulations to the cast and crew, **Mr. Spence** and **Mr. Malloy**.
- Honors/AP art students participated in the Memory Project, in which HS students create portraits for underprivileged children from around the world. MHS students have participated in the program for the last several years through a generous from the MEF. This year the portraits were delivered to students in Nigeria. See the link below to view a video of the students, the children, and the works of art that were created. <https://memoryproject.app.box.com/v/HeatherSokolowski/file/626738690351>
- MHS Guidance
  - Guidance ran its *College Admissions - Part One* presentation on 3/3 with a good turnout. **Ms. Mazak** and **Ms. Internicola** answered parent questions regarding testing and college admissions. *College Admissions - Part Two* is tentatively scheduled for 4/16 but may be rescheduled.
  - Guidance hosted an ASVAB assessment for 11<sup>th</sup> grade students who needed to meet a graduation assessment requirement. Twelve students passed the assessment during the session.

- Our 12<sup>th</sup> grade students have been meeting with counselors to share college acceptance news. Some commitments include Boston College, Marist, Johns Hopkins, Cedar Crest, William & Mary, Saint Michael's, Hobart and William Smith, Lehigh, Tulane and many more!

#### Madison Junior School

- Elisabeth Bostwick returned to MJS on 2/18 to provide staff training on building a culture of empowerment in the classroom. Ms. Bostwick presented three topics during the day: problem-based learning; choice boards; and engagement strategies. Thank you to the MEF for supporting her visit.
- On 3/8, the MJS Unified Sports Club participated in the Special Olympics Unified Bowling Cup Tournament. Two teams of students competed against approximately 20 other schools and MJS teams took 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> place in their division. All students received a medal and it was a fun day for everyone.

#### Central Avenue School

- CAS hosted a series of Sprit Days for students during the week of Dr. Seuss's Birthday:
  - 3/2 – *Cat in the Hat* – Wear Crazy Hats (Dr. Seuss's Birthday!)
  - 3/3 – *Green Eggs and Ham* – Wear Green
  - 3/4 – Wacky Wednesday – Mismatched Clothes, Polka Dots, Tie Dye
  - 3/5 – *Oh! The Places You'll Go!* – Wear a shirt that represents somewhere you have gone!
  - 3/6 – *Fox in Socks* – Wear Crazy Socks!
- Throughout March **Mr. Liss** served as a mystery reader and read the book, *The Invisible Boy*.
- CAS took part in the annual Reading Train on 3/2!
- **Dr. Klurfield** posted in our newsletter about a fun contest for students – The Box Float Contest!

#### Kings Road School

- **Mrs. Nicolette** and **Mr. Levine** welcomed a guest speaker from the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society to speak to the fourth grade members of the KRS Leadership Academy about the Pennies for Patients service-learning program.
- The *One Book, One School* unveiling assembly was held on 2/28. **Mrs. Sims** facilitated the event, which included the school community along with officers from the Madison Police Department.
- **Mr. Ross** and **Dr. Koop** attended the KRS PTO meeting on 2/26 to discuss standardized testing and the Profile of the Graduate work being done in the district.
- The KRS Data Team convened with grade level teams to analyze STAR data and discuss interventions.
- On 3/6, KRS/TJS Media Specialist **Mr. Paradiso** conducted a book tasting event for students. The day concluded with a parade of Dr. Seuss floats, which were constructed by the classes.

#### Torey J. Sabatini

- The TJS media center is officially open for students! Construction has been completed and students began taking classes there in February. Students have enjoyed using the newly renovated space and love taking out the many new books that the library has to offer.
- The new STEAM space at TJS is also officially open! Students were able to engage in the space for both technology and STEAM classes. STEAM is an educational approach that fuses science, technology, engineering, art, and math to guide students in inquiry and critical thinking. The space was designed to meet the needs of all students while providing the best possible learning environment, and includes numerous flexible seating options to allow students to work comfortably throughout the space. We hope this space allows students greater freedom and flexibility to imagine, create and work together.
- The PTO brought an Irish dance cultural arts assembly to TJS on 2/28. World Champion Irish dancers Darrah Carr and Niall O'Leary, who have graced stages across the world, visited and interacted with students. It was an exciting assembly for all!
- During the week of 3/2, students participated in Read Across America Week organized by Library Media Specialist, **Mr. Paradiso**. With the support of the PTO, who funded many new books for the library, students in grades 2-5 participated in a Book Tasting where they got to sample these new books! Other events included Dr. Seuss Stations, a schoolwide reading train where each class displayed a Dr. Seuss inspired float for an indoor parade, and several spirit days! It was an exciting event for all!