



Principal's Newsletter—November 2008

Responding to the NEASC Report



Coffee & Conversation with the Principal

Please come with questions and concerns on December 2nd at 7:00pm to an open forum in the high school cafeteria. After a short update on current events we will discuss the issues of the day. It is a great opportunity to express and listen to a variety of viewpoints.

Last May, the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) appointed a team of seventeen educators to visit Timberlane to appraise our adherence to the Seven Standards of Accreditation. In preparation for this visit the school community conducted an extensive self-study which was made available to the visiting team beforehand. In August we received the final report of the visiting team.



In late October we received the anticipated good news from NEASC that we had earned re-accreditation. Well deserved credit must be spread out among the many constituent groups that make up the Timberlane Education Community: district voters and taxpayers, parents and guardians, booster clubs and organizations, students and graduates, the high school's professional and support staff, district administrators, and the School Board.

Still, there is room for growth and improvement as the NEASC accreditation letter pointed out with its specific recommendations related to the Seven Standards of Accreditation. To address these recommendations in the timely fashion that NEASC expects, a Follow Up Committee was established, currently consisting

of three teachers and two administrators: Sandra Allaire, Terry Littlefield, Dave Morse, Scott Strainge and John Leary. This committee has already met twice in November to assess the progress that has been made since the May 2008 NEASC visitation and to establish a plan to address each of the recommendations fully. A progress report related to the first twelve recommendations must be sent to NEASC by November 2009, and a second report on the remaining recommendations must be completed by November 2010. These challenging recommendations have been gladly accepted by the Follow Up Committee as they offer a blueprint for improvement and a pathway to excellence. As we boldly state in our Mission Statement, we are committed to "continuous improvement".

Mealey's Meals Needs Your Help

Now is a good time to help families who enter the holiday season in a state of economic distress. This year we anticipate a greater need than in the past due to the overall economic downturn. Funds raised will provide gift certificates for local businesses. Last year's fund

raising activities garnered over \$9,000.00. The goal for this season is \$10,000.00. If you can, please send money in the form of a check made out to TRHS and send it to Timberlane High School, 36 Greenough Road, Plaistow, NH 03865 to the attention of Doreen Vasta.

Science Department Attends Conference

Recently the entire Science department attended the New Hampshire Science Teacher Association's conference at Pinkerton Academy. It was a great opportunity for the department to meet and discuss curriculum issues and schedule issues with other science teachers in the state and get training on the latest ideas and technology used in teaching science.

Select Choir, Mr. Harrington to Perform Messiah

December 14 will be a day to remember for the Select Choir and its Director, Mr. Robert Harrington. The Choir will be featured during a performance of the Messiah at the First Congregational Church in Manchester. Mr. Harrington will provide a solo for the event. The program benefits the Union Leader Santa Fund, and the Salvation Army of Manchester. For more information, call the church at 625-5093.

Fall Sports Season a Great Success

The Owls fall athletic season drew to a close last week as the football team lost a heartbreaking 7-6 semi-final game at home to Exeter. It was a successful first season for new athletic director, Angelo Fantasia and new football coach Kevin Fitzgerald. All of the fall teams competed well and we are proud of their efforts. The boys volleyball team, under the direction of Mr. John Dube, advanced to the finals and the field hockey team, coached by Mim Ryan advanced to the semi-finals before losing a

hard fought 1-0 game. It is especially noteworthy that 16 of 17 varsity field hockey players earned academic honors during the first quarter – fourteen of them earned honors with distinction. This accomplishment demonstrates the healthy connection between participation in co-curricular programs and high academic achievement.



“Don’t Drink the Water”

The recent Timberlane Players production of “Don’t Drink the Water” was a tremendous success. It was a thrill for the students to perform for two sellout audiences on Friday and Saturday evenings. Make sure to get your tickets for *What I Did for Love*, this year’s holiday show by calling Diane Rothwell the PAC. Hats off to theater director Mr. Eric Constantineau and the cast!!

Advisory Program Expands in 2008-09

Advisories are a school-wide initiative with the goal of providing the opportunity for students to develop personal relationships with adults and peers alike. Last year, only freshman were involved. The program was expanded this year to include grades 9-11. Seniors can volunteer to serve as mentors to underclassmen.

This daily 22-minute period allows for the development

of adult-student connections that may prevent students from ‘falling through the cracks’, both socially and academically. Teachers and students talk about events happening both locally and globally. For example, the school nurses recently visited all advisory groups to discuss the upcoming cold and flu season, and ways to prevent getting sick. Social topics, such as bullying, cyber-bullying, and

relationships are typical topics of conversation.

With the recent distribution of report cards, most advisory groups reviewed ways for students to create and achieve goals around school performance.

Professional Development Ongoing

Early release and Professional Development Days are tremendous opportunities for teachers, staff and administration alike to develop skills to enhance the learning opportunities of our students. For example—on Nov.

20, TRHS teachers and staff had over a dozen choices of workshops to attend. Each of the workshops helped teachers to further their use of technology in their classrooms. Moodle, NovaNET, Wikis and other tools for the new mil-



The Cast of “Don’t Drink the Water”

lennium were just some of the topics explored. Other days have allowed teachers to work in collaborative teams to share teaching strategies.