



# Mt. Ararat High School

OCTOBER 2017

EMPOWERING

ALL TO

GROW

LEARN

EXPLORE &

SOAR



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## From the Principal

We are halfway through the first quarter and progress reports have been published. There has been much excitement with Spirit Day and our Homecoming events. We are also beginning to close out the fall athletic season with seniors being recognized at final regular season home contests. For our senior parents and students, these events mean that the high school days are numbered and the future is growing near. As we settle into the school year, please plan to check in regularly with your child to monitor academic and social progress. If you have concerns based on the progress report, please contact your child's teacher.

### Thinking Before Speaking...

I want to let you know that I am very concerned about a few recent situations reported in our school of students using language that targets an individual's race, gender, or ancestry. Each situation has been investigated and addressed, but at this point I feel there is a need to enlist student and parent support with the hope that, as a community, we can eliminate this behavior. MTA should be an environment where everyone feels emotionally and physically safe and language that targets a person based on their race, gender, ancestry, religion, or any other personal characteristic can impact that sense of safety. I know young people are social by nature and they are constantly studying and trying out different behaviors, behaviors they observe on the big screen, in adult settings, or online, and so forth. Sometimes the behaviors they latch onto (language, gestures, and so forth) can be very offensive to others. When teens are engaged in social moments they may not be aware of the impact their words have on others but it is common for people who hear this language to be deeply offended or impacted. Words that target a person's core, whether used to lash out in anger or used in an attempt to entertain peers are not welcome in our school. It is always my hope that each child in our school have a positive experience and feels safe in our community. As always, thank you for reviewing the newsletter and supporting your child(ren) as they strive to succeed.

Respectfully,

Donna F. Brunette, Principal

## **Attendance – It is Being Present and So Much More**

As a new school year begins, so do the routines across the country, such as taking daily attendance. Taking attendance is a way of checking to make sure every student has arrived, and is present for the day. Records are kept for each student and patterns of absences are tracked.

Most people know that the more days a student misses, the greater the risk for the student falling behind academically. In fact, students who miss 2 or more days a month throughout the year are likely to end up testing a full grade level below their peers who attend school regularly. What people fail to recognize about school attendance is the impact it has on a student's emotional level. Students want to be part of their school community, to feel they are part of the whole group. Staying at home isolates students from that sense of belonging.

There are definitely days when students run fevers, are contagious and need to stay home until they are well. But, there are days when going to school may provoke feelings of anxiousness. This is normal and there are school staff trained to help. But we cannot help if you keep your child at home. This year, encourage your child to attend school every day. In the wise words of Olivia Kierstead, age 17 from South Portland High School and winner of the Maine Count ME In Attendance Matters Poster Contest, "Attending School Is the First Step to Unlocking the Key to Your World."



## **News from the Interact Club**

The Interact Club has collected \$250 for Stu Palmer's family and other families whose lives have been affected by Hurricane Maria. A friend of the Palmer family will be traveling to Puerto Rico this week and is taking these funds to benefit the aid efforts.

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On October 19th, the Interact Club will receive 300 pumpkins for the school to carve for Camp Sunshine. Our pumpkins will form the Glow Heart Tower and be among the 10,000 jack-o-lanterns on display at L.L. Bean for the Camp Sunshine Pumpkin Festival.

# French Exchange

On Friday, October 13, 16 students from Nancy, France will be attending MTA until Wednesday October 25. They will be accompanied by three French teachers. During their stay with us they will experience American classes, take field trips to Maine sites and activities, watch our games and live Midcoast life with their host families. Kudos to the families who are hosting these students. Please join them in extending a warm welcome to our visitors. If you have a chance to meet any of the students, see what you can find out about their school, town (Nancy) and country.



Flu is officially in Maine and now is the time to make sure you and your family do not catch it... **CHANS will be hosting a Community Flu Clinic for all MSAD#75 families on Saturday, October 21st from 9-12 and Tuesday, November 29th from 4-6 at the Middle School cafeteria. The clinic is free, so don't miss it!**

## Freshman Class Information

On Wednesday, October 11, 2017, the freshman class will travel to Camp Ketcha, located in Scarborough, in order to participate in an adventure challenge program. We are excited to provide this opportunity to students who, under the supervision of a professional staff, will engage in low ropes and team building activities, which promote problem solving, communication, cooperation and respect. A permission slip, medi-

cal questionnaire and gear list was sent home with students on Monday, September 25<sup>th</sup>. Please ensure your student returns the requested forms to his/her Advisory Teacher A.S.A.P. Please note there are no other activities planned for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students on October 11<sup>th</sup>. Students should dress for the weather as this is a rain or shine event. If you would like to learn more, please visit [www.campketcha.org](http://www.campketcha.org) or contact Alison Pols at 729-2951.

Beyond the flu shot, adequate sleep--at least 9 hours for teenagers!-- are crucial to maintaining a healthy immune system. Wash hands frequently with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, avoid touching the eyes, nose, and mouth, and sneeze or cough into the upper arm or a tissue to minimize the spread of germs. Please also remember that if your child is sick with a **fever or vomiting** he or she needs to **stay home from school for at least 24 hours after the vomiting stops or the fever goes away.** Finally, if you have not yet turned in health questionnaires or annual care plans (signed by the doctor) for those with asthma, anaphylactic allergies, or seizures, please do so today. All forms are available on the Health Office webpage or through my office. Thank you and as always, please feel free to contact me (ext. 264 or [changa@link75.org](mailto:changa@link75.org)) with any questions or concerns.

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### Class of 2021

Please join our Facebook page and stay in touch! [MTAClassof2021](https://www.facebook.com/MTAClassof2021) If you are not receiving emails from me, please let me know and I will add you to the 2021 address book! ([messiere@link75.org](mailto:messiere@link75.org))

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## Fueling Our Schools Fundraiser

The Irving Circle K in Topsham is sponsoring Mt. Ararat with a program that will give our school \$ .10 per gallon sold on **Thursday, November 16 from 3:00 p.m. — 8:00 p.m.** All money raised will support activities, recognitions, and events for students and staff. Please remember to write your name on your receipt and turn in to the Main Office for a chance to win prizes.

## PSAT Exam

On October 11<sup>th</sup>, all 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will take the PSAT, the preliminary SAT. The PSAT is a trial run for the SAT which juniors will take in the spring. Students will be able to access their test results electronically through the College Board in late December. In January, advisors and teachers will review results with students so they can access areas of focus for additional study as they prepare for the SAT. In addition, some students who receive the highest scores may be recognized as a National Merit Scholar with the potential of winning scholarship money.



## MTA Food Pantry

MTA has a food pantry which can be accessed through our Counseling Office to support students who are in need of support with this very basic need. Donations of snacks are provided through the Midcoast Hunger Prevention Program and other resources. For parents who would like to donate to support purchasing goods for the pantry, please send donations to the attention of Deb Ludwig.

### Student Accident Insurance

**Any parent interested in the MSMA student accident insurance plan can request a brochure/ registration form through the MTA main office or this same document is available online through the District webpage (<http://link75.org/district/>)**

# Hannaford Helps Schools

## Hannaford Helps Schools - Help Your School - Here's How!

MTA is enrolled in the Hannaford Helps Schools program through the Topsham store and when you shop, you can help raise funds for our school. How does it work? Throughout the store specific products are marked as Hannaford helps items and for every 4 qualifying Hannaford Helps Schools items a customer buys at any Hannaford, the customer will receive a printout for 3 school dollars at the register. This means that:

- 4 Hannaford Helps Schools products purchased = 3 school dollars
- 8 Hannaford Helps Schools products purchased = 6 school dollars
- 12 Hannaford Helps Schools products purchased = 9 school dollars
- 16 Hannaford Helps Schools products purchased = 12 school dollars

Note: All products must be purchased in a single transaction. There are over 1500 products in the store marked to be part of this program this year. Please look for the Hannaford Helps shelf tags in-store to quickly find participating products.

When you earn a school dollars printout at the register please take the printout to the Topsham Hannaford store; if you shop locally you will already be there. Place the printout in the appropriate slot (Go MTA!) in the Hannaford Helps Schools collection tower located at the front of the store.

The Hannaford Helps program runs from Aug. 27, 2017 - Dec. 2, 2017. In the spring, our school will receive a check for the total number of school dollars inserted in our school's slot. Hannaford donates \$1,000 to the school that earns the most school dollars at each store!

Thank you to those who have donated to our school through this program in previous years. Our school has been the recipient of school dollars and funds are used support activities for students and teachers at the high school. The following website provides detailed information: [hannaford.com/helpschools](http://hannaford.com/helpschools).

## Dates To Remember

Wed., October 11

9th Grade to Camp Ketcha; 10th & 11th Grade PSAT's; 12th Grade Senior Symposium (SMCC—Brunswick Campus)

Mon., October 16.....Picture Retake Day

Sat., October 21.....Community Flu Shot Clinic (9:00 a.m.—12:00 p.m.)

Fri., November 3.....Last Day of First Quarter