

THE MAINE APPRISE

A Publication of the Maine Principals' Association

Volume XXIV, Number 6

February 2016



From the President ...

Marty Bouchard, Principal, Houlton Middle/High School and President of the MPA

For the Love of the Game , or The Game

Where did the days go when you would drive down the road and every other yard would have children outside playing? Come to think of it, I seldom see kids playing in the parks, soccer fields, or recreation departments either. As I ponder the reasons for a decline in student activity there are numerous factors that are at the root of the issue. We can certainly point our fingers to the emergence of the technology age as a prime factor. Whether it be Xbox, PlayStation, iPhone, iPad, iPod, laptops, or technology in general, students are not outside playing or taking part in school activities at nearly the rate they were a couple of decades ago. I do not believe we will be able to harness the evolution of the technology age, therefore I would like to focus on what I believe we can impact as leaders of youth within our communities.

Let me start by saying I am as guilty as anyone when it comes to the direction I pointed my children in when it came to playing their favorite sport. We have traveled all over New England attending soccer, golf, basketball, baseball, softball, and track events. I have worked with hundreds of children in youth programs for the past 15 years or so. During that time inclusion was the name of the game and if anyone wanted to play they were almost always allowed to do so. The emergence of travel teams, leagues, and tournaments across most student athletic activities has created a multitude of opportunities for our students. One would think that would be beneficial to our school athletic programs. I was right there with everyone who insisted traveling around New England to play in leagues and tournaments was the best thing to develop our student athletes in their chosen sport. I have recently come to the conclusion I was very wrong.

I hear almost every day from fellow administrators about the decline in student participation in activities at their school. Many larger schools who used to have freshman and junior varsity programs now have difficulty fielding just a varsity team. The Maine Principals' Association has twice altered their policies to allow for grade 8 students to play on the varsity team at smaller schools to keep programs alive in a variety of sports. The question keeps being asked, "If all of these kids are playing travel sports from the moment they are out of diapers, why are they not playing school sports?" There are many answers to the question I just posed. Some kids may be burnt out, cut when they were young and just gave up, or simply prefer the experience they have with their travel coach more than their school coach.

My opinion tends to lean towards the last reason I wrote, but it has very little to do with the coaches schools hire. I believe kids are playing sports now for the love of **The Game**, and not for the love of the game. When I was a child, I went out into the yard to play, to the park to play, to the rec to play, I went anywhere to play. I went there because I loved the game I was playing. The recent emergence of youth travel leagues and tournaments has kids competing in many more **Games** at younger and younger ages. They do this while having very little practice, preparation, or skill development, if any. That is the way many kids like it because they can get the joy of competition while not doing the skill development work that takes place in practice or while playing

(Continued on Page 2)

MPA SPRING CONFERENCE

Mental Health vs. Mental Illness in Maine: How To Support Our Students and Ourselves with National Alliance on Mental Issues and Spurwink

April 28-29
Samoset, Rockport

Keynote Presentations:

Thursday, April 28—**Brianne Masselli**, Director of Technical Assistance and Evaluation for Youth M.O.V.E. National, *Surviving to Thriving: Overcoming A Trauma-Induced Childhood.*

Friday, April 29—**Jenna Mehnert**, Executive Director, NAMI Maine, *Beyond the Behaviors: Changing Perceptions on Mental Health.*

Sessions Include:

- * **Suicide Protocol - Part I and II**
- * **What's In Their Back Pack**
- * **Networking - Elementary**
- * **Suicide Awareness**
- * **Childhood Trauma**
- * **Networking - Middle Schools**
- * **Self Harm**
- * **Functions of Behavior**
- * **Poverty Comes to the Classrooms**
- * **Networking - High Schools**
- * **Mental Health Supports and Resources**
- * **Trauma Informed Yoga**
- * **Creating A Positive Environment**
- * **So You Didn't Receive A Hard Hat at Orientation**

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July 6-8, 2016 • Gaylord National Resort and Convention Center

MPA to Honor Outstanding Seniors and Award Ten \$1,000 Scholarships

The annual MPA Honors Luncheon will be held on Saturday, April 2, 2016 at the Spectacular Event Center in Bangor.

Each high school principal from an MPA member school names a senior award recipient who is invited to the luncheon and receives the MPA's Principal's Award. The criteria for the award are academic excellence, citizenship, and leadership. Each school defines and interprets these criteria in its own setting.

At the conclusion of the luncheon, a drawing will be held for five \$1,000 Horace O. McGowan and Richard W. Tyler Scholarships and five new scholarships for a total of ten scholarship opportunities! The school's recipient must be in attendance to be eligible.

Information regarding the luncheon has been sent to all MPA member school principals. If you have any questions, please call Patty at the MPA at 622-0217, ext. 30.

From the President . . . (Continued from page 1)

on their own because they love the game.

What experience would you choose, a school team that practices 4 times a week and plays 2 games or a travel team that practices once a week and plays 5 games? If you play for the love of **The Game**, it is a no brainer. So many parents tell me they can't get their child to get off the couch and go practice on a skill, but anytime there is a game they can't get in the car fast enough. So, what can we do? I believe we can educate our local youth leagues and parents about this. We can encourage youth coaches to limit games and practice more. I think a good ratio to use is 3 practices for every game you play. Quite possibly we can use football as a great example. Of all of the sports in Maine, football seems to be quite popular. They play 1 game a week and their practices prepare their athletes for **The Game**. What a great example for us all to use. I know I have come full circle and I plan on doing my part in the Houlton area communities. I hope you will too. Our student athletes and school activities need you to do this also.



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Secretaries' Conference *Maine School Law for School Secretaries*

with Drummond Woodsum's
Ann Chapman and
Jeana McCormick

Wednesday, April 6, 2016
Hilton Garden Inn
250 Haskell Road, Bangor

Thursday, April 7, 2016
Harraseeket Inn
182 Main Street, Freeport

Participants will learn: Record Retention; Student and Employee Records and Confidentiality; Student Attendance and Truancy; Custody Issues; Student Medications and Employee Liability; Volunteers and Visitor Issues; Special Education and ADA Issues; Accidents at School; Student Residency; Child Abuse Reporting; School Financial Accounts; School Health and Safety Requirements; And More!

Click [Here](#) for more information and to register online.

PRincipal Tips

Teaching tolerance is high on most educators' agendas. At the same time, principals should model tolerance for students and staff. Consider this communication-related self-inventory.

- **Do your actions** promote open communication and inspire students and faculty to respect one another?
- **Do you listen** with an open mind to students, parents, and staff of different groups?
- **Do you avoid** saying and writing things that might be offensive to members of other groups?
- **Does your school library** have materials available that promote tolerance?

- **Do you encourage teachers** to have classroom activities that help people get along better?
- **Do you advocate** with elected officials for policy and legislation that promotes the rights and welfare of all children?
- **Do you speak up and take the initiative** to dispel misconceptions, stereotypes, and prejudices among staff and students?

—National School Public Relations Association, PRincipal Communicator, January 2016.

MPA Summer Leadership Retreat

MPA in partnership with Great Schools Partnership will offer the MPA Summer Leadership Retreat at Point Lookout in Northport on June 22-24, 2016.

Click [HERE](#) for more information and to register!

The Maine Apprise is published 10 times a year, September to June, by the Maine Principals' Association.

The Apprise welcomes articles from its members and other representatives of the education community. Please submit them to the editor by the first day of the month preceding publication.

The material published in this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the opinion or views of the Maine Principals' Association.

For advertising or subscription rates, please write or call the address below.

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National Honor Society

Save the Dates—The annual banquet will take place on Thursday evening, March 10, 2016, in Brewer, and the convention will be held on Friday, March 11, 2016, at the University of Maine at Orono.

CALL THE MPA HELP LINE
207-622-0217

We are here to help you and answer questions!

Extensions:

24 = Dick Durost

25 = Mike Burnham

26 = Holly Couturier

41 = Gerry Durgin

22 = Tammy McNear

27 = Diane Patnaude

30 = Patty Newman

Looking Ahead

- * **"National Honor Society"** — The annual banquet will be held on March 10 in Brewer, and the convention will be held on Friday, March 11 at the University of Maine at Orono
- * **"Having Hard Conversations"** with Jennifer Abrams— March 31, MPA Conference Center, Augusta ([Click Here](#))
- * **Secretaries' Conference - "Maine School Law for School Secretaries"** with Drummond Woodsum's Ann Chapman and Jeana McCormick, April 6 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Bangor and April 7 at the Harras-eeket Inn in Freeport ([Click Here](#))
- * **MPA Spring Conference** - April 28-29, Samoset, Rockport
Mental Health vs. Mental Illness in Maine: How To Support Our Students and Ourselves ([Click Here](#))
- * **"Building Supportive, Connected Schools: Preventing Bullying, Preventing Harm"** with Stan Davis, May 10-11, MPA Conference Center, Augusta
- * **MPA Summer Leadership Retreat** with Great Schools Partnership, June 22-24, Point Lookout, Northport. ([Click Here](#))
- * **Special Education Law Summer Institute** with Drummond Woodsum, July 12-15, Thomas College, Waterville ([Click Here](#))
- * **Maine School Law Finance Institute** with Drummond Woodsum, July 10-22, Drummond Woodsum, Portland ([Click Here](#))
- * **Maine School Law Summer Institute** with Drummond Woodsum, July 26-29, Point Lookout, Northport ([Click Here](#))

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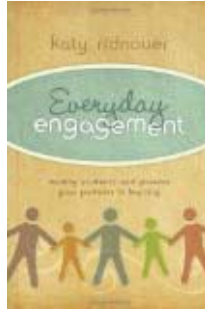
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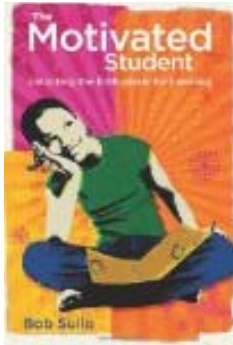
Professional Reading Suggestions

Everyday Engagement: Making Students and Parents Your Partners in Learning. By: Katy Ridnouer (2011).

"In this book, author and teacher Katy Ridnouer focuses on the potentially overwhelming, sometimes puzzling, often delicate work of engaging both students and parents in the pursuit of learning and achievement. Structured around the questions teachers ask themselves about engagement goals and challenges, *Everyday Engagement* offers specific strategies to try in your classroom, with your students, and with their parents that will help you:



- * Connect with students and parents as individuals;
- * Communicate invitations to engagement (and regroup and respond if your initial invitations are rejected);
- * Provide appropriate, ongoing support, and encouragement that will keep students in class, behavior in check, and learning on track;
- * Anticipate and handle setbacks and complications in teacher-student and teacher-parent relationships; and
- * Tap outside resources to extend learning beyond the walls of the classroom."



The Motivated Student: Unlocking the Enthusiasm for Learning. By: Bob Sullo (2009).

"Research has shown time and again that the traditional reward-punishment model does nothing to boost student achievement. In *The Motivated Student: Unlocking the Enthusiasm for Learning*, veteran educator Bob Sullo suggests a different approach: cultivating students inner drive to learn by addressing their essential psychological needs."

Real Engagement: How do I help my students become Motivated, Confident, and Self-Directed Learners? By: Allison Zmuda and Robyn R. Jackson (2015).

"In this book, Allison Zmuda and Robyn R. Jackson explain the four keys to real engagement: clarity, context, challenge, and culture. Their smart, concrete strategies for improving classroom assignments, assessments, and environments will help you create learning experiences that are rigorous, meaningful, and rewarding for your students and yourself."



Observances

- * **February 1-28**
 - National Black History Month
 - American Heart Month
 - Dental Health Month
- * **February 1-5**
 - School Counseling Week
- * **February 1**
 - National Freedom Day
Commemorating the end of slavery on the date of passage of the 13th Amendment in 1865
 - Change Your Password Day
- * **February 2**
 - Groundhog Day
- * **February 8**
 - Chinese New Year
- * **February 9**
 - Safer Internet Day
- * **February 12**
 - Abraham Lincoln's Birthday
- * **February 14**
 - Valentine's Day
 - Autism Sunday
- * **February 15**
 - President's Day
- * **February 17**
 - National PTA Founder's Day
- * **February 18**
 - Ash Wednesday
- * **February 22**
 - George Washington's Birthday
- * **February 29**
 - Leap Year Day

MPA Mission Statement

To assure a quality education for all students, the Maine Principals' Association will:

- (1) promote the principalship;
- (2) support principals as educational leaders; and
- (3) promote and administer interscholastic activities in grades 9-12.

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Featured Regions!

Each month, the *Apprise* is going to feature at least three schools from each of the eight regions in Maine. There are many great things going on in our schools that people don't know about, and it's time THEY ARE spotlighted! The February *Apprise* features the Cumberland Region. Next month we will feature the Northeast Region. If you would like to have your school spotlighted, please send Holly Couturier an e-mail stating your interest and at least one great thing about your school. She will contact you and make arrangements for an hour long visit. During her visit, she will not only speak to you and take a picture of you and the school, she would also like to talk to students in your school and get their perspective of "What makes their school and principal great?" Enjoy!

GRAY-NEW GLOUCESTER HIGH SCHOOL



Gray-New Gloucester High School is a grades 9-12 school with 546 students who are taught by 44 full time teachers, 2 half-time teachers, and ten educational technicians. They have a 26% free and reduced lunch rate and a 23% special education population.

Recognized as one of three International Baccalaureate (IB) Schools in Maine, GNG's fourth year with an IB Program is "expanding, evolving, and improving. The number of juniors enrolling in at least one IB class increased 50% while the number of students raising their hands to take on the challenging IB Diploma Program more than doubled- 114% to be IB Math specific. This greatly exceeded expectations and the staff at the high school could not

be more proud of the students. The school increased IB offerings by adding IB Physics SL and added extra sections of IB English and Theory of Knowledge to meet student demand. The size of the IB classes increases accordingly."

Principal Ted Finn says that he works with some of the most dedicated and supportive staff, school board, and communities of his professional career. "They are all willing to think outside of the box to do what is right for kids."



Currently, as with many other high schools in the state, they are working on creating a differentiated diploma. They are using a hybrid model of proficiency based education (25% based on formative assessments and 75% based on summative assessments). Students receive credit for each quarter.



They are considering moving to a four tiered diploma system. They are looking at offering:

- Standard Diplomas (minimum number of credits);
- Advanced Diplomas (25-27 credits);
- Honors Diplomas (28-32 credits); and
- Career Technical Education (CTE) Diploma (24.5-27 credits).

While they are in the conversation period of this possible transition, Mr. Finn is working closely with the superintendent and school board to get input from all stakeholders so that if and when a decision is made to make a change, they can make an informed decision about what is best for the students of Gray-New Gloucester High School.

Whether it's working to provide special privileges for Juniors and Seniors, or creating a Personalized Diploma Plan for each of the 23 students in the Alternative Program, all who work with Gray-New Gloucester High School make students a priority and it shows!

Contact:

Gray-New Gloucester High School, 10 Libby Road, Gray ME 04039 ~ 207-657-3323
Principal Ted Finn and Assistant Principal Beth Schultz * E-mail: tfinn@sad15.org



Mast Landing School

Mast Landing School is a grades 3-5 school in Freeport, Maine. They house 258 students who are taught by 27 teachers, one regular educational technician and 5.5 special education technicians. They have a 24% free/reduced lunch rate and a 14% special education population.

The tour of Mast Landing was given by three students: 5th grader Kate, 4th grader Chris, and 3rd grader Flynn. These three students are part of the Mast Landing Student Council. They shared the great things about the school and also know the history. Originally built to house three separate schools, or "programs," for all students in grades 3-5 in the town, each of the programs had three separate philosophies of education. Under the leadership of principal, Beth Willhoite, the three separate programs have worked hard to become one school. She worked with the staff, students, and community to keep the "best" parts of each of the three programs so that all students were able to benefit from these amazing, unique

aspects of each of the programs.

My tour guides liked the fact that they have the chance to be in all programs (the three pods of the school kept their names: Spring Hill, Soule, and Harraseeket) but are now broken up by grade. "We get to learn in all of the programs and from all of the teachers. We are pretty lucky." When I asked the students what they thought made Mast Landing amazing, they said, "I love our gym," "I love our two story library," and "I just love everything!"

When asked the same question, principal Beth Willhoite responded, "It's the kids. We've created an environment where kids want to come to school. We believe in giving the students voice and choice and they make the right choices."

Giving the 3rd-5th grade voice and choice was evident during the tour. The entire school has recess at the same time and students have the choice to go outside to play or go to the library and read, play games, or quietly socialize. The librarian, Julia Colvin, states that this time is "remarkable for helping the students' creative juices."

The staff at Mast Landing work hard to make sure the students have the opportunity to be in a leadership role. This includes the mentor program (5th graders are trained to mentor third grade students and 4th graders are future mentors. The Student Council regularly work on issues that improve the school. They help to manage school-wide programs, such as the Recycling Program, and help to solve student issues, including playing fair during football. There is also a Civil Rights team that meets on a regular basis.



The student groups meet in the Activity Room – a room that has been designated for students and classes to use for movement breaks throughout the day. They have pingpong tables, Wii fit/dance, darts and fitness equipment. Students can also earn additional time in the Activity Room.

If you want to see an ideal model for including student voice and choice at the elementary level, I highly suggest that you visit this amazing school!

Contact Information:

Mast Landing School, 20 Mollymauk Lane, Freeport, ME 04032 ~ 207-865-4561
Principal Beth Willhoite
E-mail: willhoiteb@rsu5.org

Mt. Ararat Middle School

Mt. Ararat Middle School is a grades 6-8 middle school in Topsham, Maine. 565 students are taught by 59 teachers and 17 educational technicians. They have a 35% free/reduced lunch rate and a 19% special education population.

I had the distinct pleasure of meeting with three 7th grade students: Elsa, Hannah, and Nolan. These students were able to accurately describe the climate and culture of Mt. Ararat Middle. "We are a community. Everyone works together and we depend on each other. If we aren't in each other's classes, we find a way to get to know each other. We may have a lot of kids in the school, but our teams are small and we get to know everyone on our team."



"We really like proficiency based learning. We have targets that let us know what we are supposed to learn but PBE allows us to use our creativity to demonstrate what we are learning in our own way. The teachers try their best to keep up with our individualized projects. They like to help us learn – they have fun helping us with our discovery learning."

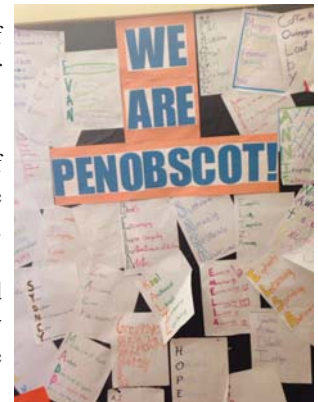


The teams the students spoke about are ten different groups all named after Maine Rivers. Most of the teams are grade-specific; however, there is one multi-graded team to help support the number of students. "This helps to build positive relationships with students," says Principal Josh Ottow (2015 Assistant Principal of the Year), "We have a hard working staff who hold the students to high expectations. We always want to improve our own skills for the kids."

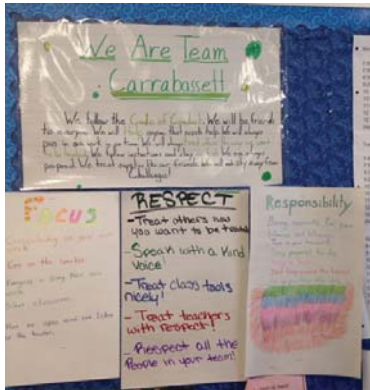
All of the teachers at Mt. Ararat Middle school are involved with multiple professional learning opportunities and common team time devoted to student support. The staff embrace working together to learn and discuss student growth. If there is a need in the building, the staff will find a time to get together to work collaboratively and find a solution to best meet students' needs.

Assistant Principal Megan Hayes Teague agrees, "Our entire district is collaborative. A lot of the issues we deal with are the same for grades 6-12 and we work on these issues together in order to best support the kids."

There is a comfortable flow to this school. From the cascading staircase to the overall feeling of being welcome when you walk in the door, Mt. Ararat Middle School works hard to individualize instruction, maximize potential, and prepare all of their students to become independent learners.



I highly suggest if you are in the Topsham area to stop in and visit this beautiful school and see student-centered, proficiency based learning effectively being used at the middle school level. You will be glad you did!



Contact Information:

Mt. Ararat Middle School, 66 Republic Ave, Topsham, ME 04086 ~ 207-729-2950
Principal Josh Ottow and Assistant Principal Megan Hayes Teague
E-mail: ottowj@link75.org

MPA Photo Album



Great Beginnings ~ Session III
January 29, 2016



Leadership Maine: ELE Program
January 15, 2016

