

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**OF THE**  
**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**  
  
**AND THE**  
**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF**  
  
**OF THE**  
**STOUGHTON PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**TOWN OF STOUGHTON**  
**STOUGHTON, MASSACHUSETTS**

**For the Year Ending 2017**

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## **The Annual Report of the Stoughton Public Schools**

**Dr. Marguerite C. Rizzi, Superintendent**

**I**t is with great pleasure that I offer you the Annual Report of the Stoughton Public School District for the year of 2017. Inside you will find individual detailed reports from the principals, administrators and teachers who come to work every day, determined to make the education they offer to our students the very best that it can be. We strive to make the district better every day. We have worked hard to keep our class size reasonable so that every child can get the attention they need from their teachers. We are on the forefront of educational technology, ensuring that every child has access to computers as often as they need them in every class at every grade to promote digital literacy that is so important in the work world today, and such a central part of State testing. With the hardware and internet access in every building, teachers can bring the whole world into the classroom to be part of the curriculum.

**W**e focus on the teaching of writing, because it is an invaluable skill, and because it promotes the development of higher order thinking. Writing actually makes one a better thinker. We have introduced coding and pre-engineering at all levels because these things also promote the development of thinking, and problem solving, as well as the kind of team work you now find in most professions.

**W**e have developed, thanks to the generosity of Town Meeting over the years, a series of before and after school, and vacation offerings that are designed to help students who are struggling with any portion of the curriculum, and also to offer enrichment for those who want extra challenge and depth of exposure.

**W**e have 3 Level 1 schools, a designation most often associated with wealthy districts, which is a credit to the hard work of our students, teachers, and administrators. Level 1 is only granted to the top 20% of the schools in the State, and so we are very proud of these schools and the work they have done.

**W**hile we continue to do well on the standardized measures that the State sets, we also offer a rich and varied curriculum that includes art, music, computers, world languages, physical education, and social and emotional education. All of these areas of study work together to develop a curious, well informed, and critical mind, and a lifelong love of learning.

**W**e appreciate that it is necessary to get the most possible use out of every dollar that the town is able to provide, and we do that every day, using all of our combined expertise and commitment. We hope you enjoy this year's report.

**Stoughton School Committee**

**Molly Cochran - Chair**

**T**he Stoughton Public Schools serve over 3,800 students at the Edwin A. Jones Early Childhood Center, five elementary schools, the O'Donnell Middle School, and Stoughton High School.

**T**he District is committed to providing a stimulating, supportive, and academically rich environment that is designed to help each student to thrive and succeed. Student well-being, achievement, and fulfillment of each student's full potential are the cornerstones of the District's mission.

**T**he District embraces the wide diversity of its student population, and seeks to foster appreciation for cultural differences. Parent engagement is important to the schools' success, and the district undertakes outreach and family programming to ensure parents are fully involved in their children's school experience.

**T**he District's programming includes specialized, in-district services for students with special needs; after-school enrichment programs designed to assist students who benefit from additional resources and attention; and summer programs. At the high school, students may take honors and AP courses to enhance their education and expand their college opportunities.

**T**hrough the Stoughton Public Schools, students may participate in a wide array of extracurricular activities, including award-winning music programs, athletics, art, drama, and other clubs.

## **Deputy Superintendent's Report**

**Provided by Jonathan Ford, Deputy Superintendent of School**

### **School Committee Policy Manual Review and Update**

In 2016, the Stoughton Public Schools, working in conjunction with the Massachusetts Association of School Committees (MASC), developed and implemented a new School Committee (Committee) policy manual. Since the time the policy manual was adopted, there have been changes in both state and federal laws and regulations, new statutory requirements for the Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest Law, updates to MASS Core, MSBA regulations, and educator evaluation regulations. Accordingly, the School Committee established a working group, comprised of two Committee members and the Deputy Superintendent, to review and potentially update policies related to these changes.

Overall, seventy-six (76) policies were reviewed and/or updated by the Committee. To ensure complete transparency for the community, following each review session of the working-group, the Committee provided an informational notice and conducted a public discussion of each policy, before voting its policy recommendation during an open session of School Committee.

### **Public School Coordinated Program Review Results**

Every six years, a five-member Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education team visits Stoughton Public Schools to evaluate the implementation of criteria in the program areas of special education, civil rights and other related general education requirements, English learner education, and Title I. The team reviewed extensive written documentation regarding the operation of the district's programs, together with information gathered by means of the following Department program review methods:

- Interviews of 11 administrative staff.
- Interviews of 57 teaching and support services staff across all levels.
- Interviews of two parent advisory council (PAC) representatives.
- Interview of one English learner education parent.
- Interviews as requested by persons from the general public.

- Student record reviews: Samples of 41 special education student records and 27 English learner education student records.
- Surveys of parents of students with disabilities: 54 parents of students with disabilities were sent surveys that solicited information about their experiences with the district's implementation of special education programs, related services and procedural requirements. Twelve of these parent surveys were returned to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for review.
- Surveys of parents of ELE students: 25 parents of ELE students were sent surveys that solicited information about their experiences with the district's implementation of English learner education programs, services, and procedural requirements. Eight of these parent surveys were returned to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for review.
- Observation of classrooms and other facilities. A sample of 21 instructional classrooms and other school facilities used in the delivery of programs and services was visited to examine general levels of compliance with program requirements.

The results of the review were as follows:

### **Special Education**

Number of Criteria Evaluated: 56

Number of Criteria Fully Implemented: 55

Number of Criteria Partially Implemented: 1

Number of Criteria Not Implemented: 0

Notes: The criterion that was identified as partially implemented was determined to be fully implemented after the District submitted an updated version of its procedures pertaining to Independent Education Evaluations.

### **Civil Rights and Other Related General Education Requirements**

Number of Criteria Evaluated: 26

Number of Criteria Fully Implemented: 25

Number of Criteria Partially Implemented: 1

Number of Criteria Not Implemented: 0

**Notes:** The criteria that was identified as partially implemented was determined to be fully implemented after the District submitted an updated Bullying Plan in which District's definition of "aggressor", which was originally found only in the definitions section, was inserted into the body of the plan.

### **English Learner Education**

Number of Criteria Evaluated: 18

Number of Criteria Fully Implemented: 15

Number of Criteria Partially Implemented: 3

Number of Criteria Not Implemented: 0

**Notes:** The criteria that were identified as partially implemented were determined to be fully implemented after the District submitted updated program documentation that reflected recent changes in DESE guidance related to the identification, assessment, placement and reclassification of the English learners.

### **Title I**

Number of Criteria Evaluated: 24

Number of Criteria Fully Implemented: 24

Number of Criteria Partially Implemented: 0

Number of Criteria Not Implemented: 0

**Notes:** All criteria were found to be fully implemented.

### **District and School Extended School Year Programs**

**O**ver the past several years, the District has been focused on implementing an inter-related set of high impact extended school year programs. The final components will be implemented this

summer (2018) and represent a complete continuum of support, beginning in preschool and extending to the high school. The plan progression was originally laid out beginning with the July 2013 – June 2015 Triennial District Improvement Plan, and will be brought to completion within the subsequent July 2016 – June 2019 Plan. It is important to note that the vast majority of funding utilized to provide the various extended school day programs is provided through Federal grants, which include Title IA, Title IIA, Title III, and Title IV.

The current extended school year offerings, all of which are free of charge to children enrolled in the Stoughton Public Schools, area as follows:

**Pre-K to K Summer Transition**

**Program**

Students: Incoming Kindergarten

Number of Students: 30

Teaching Positions: 4

Duration: 5 Weeks (~20 Sessions)

**Knights of Summer Program**

Students: Incoming Grades 2 – 5

Number of Students: 240

Teaching Positions: 26

Duration: 5 Weeks (~20 Sessions)

**Spring Break STEM Camp**

Students: Grades 2 – 5

Number of Students: 240

Teaching Positions: 24

Duration: 4 Days

**K to Grade One Summer Transition**

**Program**

Students: Incoming Grade 1

Number of Students: 40

Teaching Positions: 4

Duration: 5 Weeks (~20 Sessions)

**Winter Break Humanities Camp**

Students: Grades 2 – 5

Number of Students: 240

Teaching Positions: 24

Duration: 4 Days

**Transition to Sixth Grade Boot Camp**

Students: Incoming Grade 6

Number of Students: 90

Teaching Positions: 21

Duration: 3 Days

**OMS School Summer STEM Program****Transition to Ninth Grade Boot Camp**

Students: Incoming Grades 6 – 8

Students: Incoming Grade 9

Number of Students: 150

Number of Students: 90

Teaching Positions: 10

Teaching Positions: 12

Duration: 5 Weeks (~20 Sessions)

Duration: 3 Days

The District will not be adding any additional extended school year programming during the FY19 school year. This is due to the fact a complete program review will be conducted during FY19. The review process will be focused on program effectiveness and efficiency, and include conducting an updated needs assessment prior to the start of the review.

**Trauma Informed Classroom Professional Development**

The effects of childhood trauma have been shown to have a direct and potentially overwhelming impact on the ability of children to learn. In order to begin the process of building trauma informed classrooms across the District, the Superintendent created a Trauma Taskforce in the spring of 2016. A direct result of the task force was the development of focused full-day professional development opportunities, provided to the faculty during the FY17 and FY18 school years. The offerings included the following workshops:

***Developmental Trauma*** (November 2016)

*This workshop will focus on the global impact that chronic traumatic stress has on the developing child. Research and clinical practice has helped clarify the expansive effects of chronic trauma, often referred to as the “Seven Domains of Impairment” (The National Child Traumatic Stress Network). The workshop focused on the study of the seven domains with an eye towards their application for educators, noting the specific and often innovative strategies necessary to help children and adolescents succeed at school. Through a mixture of didactic teaching, clinical vignettes, videotape and audience activities, participants increased both their theoretical understanding of complex trauma and their confidence in working with a broad variety of youth impacted by traumatic events.*

## **Reducing Anxiety in the Classroom** (November 2017)

*With up to one in four children struggling with anxiety, this workshop focused on providing an effective and easy-to-implement toolkit of strategies that have been shown to be effective. Through the use of case studies and examples of common challenging situations, the participants learned easy to implement preventive tools and interventions for reducing anxiety, increasing self-regulation, accurate thinking, and self-monitoring.*

To complement the professional development, the District has partnered with Lesley University to provide a 12 credit graduate certificate program built around effects of trauma and its impact on learning.

The program consists of four, three credit graduate courses, which are provided sequentially. The entire program is available to all faculty and staff members, and will take place over a period of just under a year.

The four courses that make up the certificate program are as follows:

### **Course I: The Impact of Trauma on Learning: An Overview**

*This course examines the impact of traumatic experience on student learning (academic and social/emotional) and provides a structured approach to individual and school wide interventions. The biological, environmental, and sociocultural aspects of traumatic experience will be presented, and participants will analyze the effects of their work with students impacted by trauma on their own well-being (secondary trauma).*

### **Course II: The Impact of Trauma on Learning: Classroom & Student Supports**

*Trauma affects self-regulation, social skills and a child's sense of health and well-being, along with interfering with more traditional academic skills that require language, memory and executive function. This course will address ways to promote these non-academic and academic competencies for students impacted by trauma, including which competencies can be incorporated into the learning flow (as they benefit all children) and which are best taught with an individual support plan.*

### **Course III: The Impact of Trauma on Learning: Creating Trauma-Sensitive Schools**

*This course is designed to expand knowledge of trauma, its impacts, and the process for building trauma sensitive environments through examination of the underlying change theory, processes, and tools needed to establish trauma sensitivity. Participants demonstrate their understanding by either developing a plan for guiding the creation of a trauma-sensitive school or conducting research grounded in trauma-informed inquiry.*

### **Course IV: The Impact of Trauma on Learning: Action Research & Seminar**

*Students demonstrate their understanding of the attributes of trauma sensitivity by working together to design and conduct research that assesses the outcomes of efforts to improve trauma sensitivity in the classrooms, schools, or other learning environments.*

### **Humanities Curriculum January 2017-January 2018**

*Contributed by Ashley Goldstein and Eileen Sprague, Humanities Curriculum Specialists*

English Language Arts (ELA), World Languages, and History/Social Studies departments throughout the district work hard to ensure that students experience a rigorous curriculum that promotes college and career readiness. Administrators, teachers, students, and the community continue to work collaboratively to maintain the Stoughton Public School's status as a strong curriculum leader of the Commonwealth. The partnerships with parents, the community, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and professional development providers help to maintain high expectations for teaching and learning and increase student achievement.

This year, Stoughton was the first district in Massachusetts to implement the Scholastic Leveled Bookroom 4.0 in all five elementary schools. This educator resource partners with the curricula to combine popular picture books, chapter books, and short texts that stimulate student interest. It contains custom options, digital management tools and world-class instructional materials to assure teaching success. With this bookroom, educators have access to 4,080 brand new authentic and diverse books with tools to help scaffold lessons, highlight key vocabulary and improve comprehension skills. Educators have found it an invaluable addition, addressing new concepts like innovation and technology, while instilling the love of reading. These leveled books support each

child in the classroom and allow for small group instruction while students learn to become independent readers and thinkers.

Through the acquisition of the bookroom resources, the district developed a partnership with Scholastic's Research and Analysis Team. The district was chosen to participate in the *Summer Reading Spotlight Research Study*. The purpose of this study was to help Stoughton Public Schools and Scholastic learn more about summer reading activities and how reading during the summer can help students during the school year. All five elementary schools participated at no cost to students/families. Scholastic provided ten, individually and personally selected, free books to every kindergarten through fifth grade student in the district. Family Literacy Nights, sponsored by Scholastic, were held at each school to provide tools and resources to families so they can support learning at home. All families that attended the events went home with an additional three free books.

Educators in grades four and five implemented a new, research-based literacy unit titled, *Building a Classroom Community through Literature*. These units address and allow students to practice Social Emotional Learning concepts such as recognizing aspects of themselves in texts (self-awareness), struggling productively with challenging texts (self-management), tailoring language to audience and purpose (social awareness), grappling vicariously with choices faced by others (responsible decision making), and collaborating respectfully with diverse peers (relationship skills). Through the completion of these units, educators and students gain a more comprehensive understanding of Social-Emotional Intelligence: the ability to understand ourselves and other people, and in particular to be aware of, understand and use information about the emotional states of ourselves and others with competence.

Secondary level departments embarked on a professional development journey with exciting, reputable organizations *Facing History and Ourselves* and *Primary Source*. *Facing History* believes that integration of the study of history, literature, and human behavior should be combined with ethical decision making and innovative teaching strategies. Through the use of these resources, teachers effectively promote students' historical understanding, critical thinking, and social-emotional learning (SEL). With the use of *Facing History* resources throughout the curriculum, students are able to engage in important SEL experiences that encourage them to build empathy, set positive goals, and acquire the necessary skills to manage their emotions inside and out of the

classroom. This ongoing professional development allows educators to consistently address topics like: democracy, civic engagement, justice, human rights, religious intolerance, race, and discrimination. By embedding civil discourse about current events into Stoughton's curricula, students consider their roles as citizens in a democracy and their responsibilities as civic participants.

*Primary Source* is another professional development organization that supports the creation of global citizens within the walls of the Dr. Robert G. O'Donnell Middle School. Their professional development supports a social justice approach to curriculum and instruction. *Primary Source* encourages teachers to create meaningful learning opportunities that explore cross-cultural perspectives, draw from international examples, and encourage analytical thinking about global issues. Throughout these sessions, educators learn strategies that help students investigate their world through diverse global sources by using a wide range of informational texts for theme-based, inquiry-driven learning.

**A**cquiring a high level of English literacy has the power to transform the future for students, families and the community. The Stoughton Public Schools has continued to revise and update the Writing Toolkits for students in Grades 2-12. The toolkits provide teachers with tools to model and teach students how to be strategic, applying metacognitive and metalinguistic skills. To prepare the students for the 21st century, the Writing Toolkits make the connection between listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and visually representing - developing all of their language skills simultaneously. The first four have traditionally been considered to be the language arts; however, since visual media have become more important in everyday life, viewing and visually representing have become more important as means of communicating.

**H**umanities teachers focus on developing students into critical thinkers who can analyze, articulate, and create. The continued effort to create rigorous curricula and the commitment to assess students at a higher level has placed Stoughton Public Schools on the path towards continued academic success. With valuable professional development opportunities, collaboration, curricula, assessments, and community support, students engage in challenging learning experiences that promote growth, innovation, and excellence.

## **Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Curriculum**

*Contributed by Mrs. Teri Fleming & Mrs. Jamie Hulbig, STEM Curriculum Specialists*

Consistency and rigor have been the key components of the STEM educational programs throughout the district, which include the disciplines of Science, Computer Technology, Engineering and Math. Through the combined efforts of our hard-working students, their supportive families and community, and the dedicated and innovative teachers and administrators that serve at each and every grade level, students in the Stoughton Public School System consistently meet high standards for academic excellence as they develop the knowledge and skills necessary to be successful 21st Century citizens.

### **Curriculum and Assessment**

Elementary students expanded their exposure to robotics instruction to include classroom lessons aligned to Earth, Physical, and Life science concepts. Through the use of *LEGO WeDo 2.0* products, students are able to model reality, conduct investigations, and use design skills. After students build with the LEGOs in a structured or open design, they program and code the robot to follow a set of commands. This computational thinking allows students the opportunity to support problem solving across disciplines and see the relationship between academic subjects. Students work collaboratively with projects and different strengths are able to shine. Students learn how to express themselves and listen and relate to others, which are valuable life skills. This robotics instruction carries into middle and high school where students use *LEGO Simple and Powered Machines* as well as *Mindstorm EV3*'s. Through the STEM classes students are challenged to explore pneumatics and solar energy through the *LEGO* expansion sets. This vertical articulation allows students in grades 1-12 to use science, technology, engineering, and mathematic skills to program robots and other creations. Throughout our strong partnership with LEGO, Stoughton Public School students were invited to participate in a photo and video shoot to capture student learning and engagement while highlighting the importance of curiosity and learning from mistakes. The photos taken at the Jones Preschool, Dawe Elementary School, and O'Donnell Middle School are currently being used on the Lego Education website ([education.lego.com](http://education.lego.com)) and may be used in print material and on LEGO social media channels.

**M**athematics continues its implementation of the K-12 Pearson enVision Math 2.0 program. The middle school continues to meet student needs by addressing prerequisite skills needed to be successful for each unit. A focus on vocabulary and speaking the language of math accurately is used to assist students learning English and reinforces foundational understandings for all students. Middle School and High School mathematic teachers have used *Three-Act Modeling* tasks to represent a problem situation, propose a solution, and test to verify the appropriateness of math models. Students are viewing one question in multiple different ways by using one well-selected problem to compare and contrast solution paths. By doing this, students have the opportunity to grow connections among ideas while fostering understanding and creativity. This kind of math inspires students to be problem solvers, creators, debaters, authors, and question seekers to value the “why” behind math instruction. Elementary students practice this type of problem-based learning through the *Solve and Share* portion of a lesson where ideas to new content are purposefully connected to prior knowledge. Curriculum common assessments for all grade levels are administered on SchoolNet. Within the curriculum, all formative assessments are available using the technology enhanced equation editor calculators that are seen on state assessments. As the year progresses, staff continue to embrace the heightened rigor and adherence to the standards that the curriculum provides.

**N**ew Science curriculum is in the initial implementation year from grades 6-10 with the exception of Biology. The state has pushed the transition of the new standards for testing purposes. The recently written curriculum for Earth, Life and Physical Science is in the first full year of implementation with time being spent revising units for vertical alignment of vocabulary by unit. Additional time is being spent on adherence to formal lab writing appropriate to the grade level. The goal for this school year is to increase the inquiry level of the labs and lab writing to encompass student research autonomy and analysis - this sets the students into the mindset of being a scientist. All high school courses continue focusing on the Science and Engineering Practices to develop Inquiry-Based Units that build on prior experiences and progress to more technical and sophisticated applications to the natural and designed world we live in. The Engineering Design Process has placed a new focus for the classroom instruction to incorporate mathematical reasoning when solving real world application problems. Elementary is completely aligned in Physical Science with teacher units written at each grade level K-5. Collaboration among other Massachusetts school districts has indicated that many

elementary levels are adjusting to the new standards by writing their own curriculum embedding resources within. The elementary units include support from Discovery Education Techbook and Science A-Z, both district digital subscriptions. The units also include Elementary is Engineering Units designed by the Museum of Science. These hands on engineering design challenges complement the science topics and develop creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving skills.

**D**igital Literacy and Computer Science continues to be a blended process. The classrooms from K-8 are one-to-one allowing the daily use, instruction, and practice to occur in the classroom. Digital Literacy and Computer Science (DLCS) knowledge, reasoning, and skills are essential both to prepare students for personal and civic efficacy in the twenty-first century and to prepare and inspire a much larger and more diverse number of students to pursue the innovative and creative careers of the future. The abilities to effectively use and create technology to solve complex problems are the new and essential literacy skills of the twenty-first century. There are four strands; two of them are continually reinforced in the classroom: Digital Tools and Collaboration focusing on research and collaboration, and Computational Thinking focusing on using computer algorithms and data to model situations. Computing and Society and Computing Systems are the focus of technology classes throughout the district. As the Digital Literacy and Computer Science Frameworks are grouped in grade spans (K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12), technology teachers along with classroom teachers worked collaboratively to identify which grade level(s) each standard is addressed along with curriculum connections across all disciplines. Through a combined effort, all DLCS standards are addressed throughout students' educational careers.

**T**he Department of Elementary and Secondary Education has released test specifications, design information, released items from the spring 2017 assessment and some scoring exemplars at all levels 3-10. All mathematics tests are aligned to the 2017 Massachusetts Mathematics Frameworks. Science grades 5 and 8 are assessing on an overlap of 2001/2006 and 2016 Science Technology and Engineering Frameworks. Grade 10 Biology is still assessing on 2001/2006 Frameworks. Assessments include both common and matrix questions and are comprised of multiple choice, multiple select, technology enhanced and constructed response questions. Common questions count toward a student's score, while matrix questions consist of both field-test and equating questions and do not count toward a student's score. Grade 10 mathematics and science will be taking the Legacy test this year with a move to the Next Generation test occurring in 2019 and 2020. Student results on

Next Generation MCAS tests are reported according to the following achievement levels: Exceeding Expectations - students demonstrate mastery of the subject matter. Meeting Expectations - students met grade-level expectations and are on track to succeed in the current grade in this subject. Partially Meeting Expectations - student may need additional academic assistance to succeed in this subject, this may present as after-school help, time during the school day or additional at home time spent on learning. Not Meeting Expectations has replaced Warning/Failing - students did not meet grade-level expectations and it is necessary to determine the academic assistance and/or additional instruction the student needs to succeed in this subject. The general and content-specific definitions are meant to help teachers, students, parents, and others understand the meaning of the MCAS results.

**T**eachers of students in grades 3-12 administer benchmark assessments periodically throughout the year that give teachers immediate feedback on how students are meeting academic standards. This allows student growth to be measured and curriculum to be designed to meet student needs. Students are taking assessments online through SchoolNet utilizing the Test Nav platform, identical to MCAS. At the elementary level, customized assessments from the enVision Math program were created to streamline the assessments based on content similarities. Middle School and High School departments have created effective assessments aligned to learning standards using SchoolNet. This consistent exposure allows students to increase digital literacy while also utilizing digital features of the equation editor to write a constructed response to a multi-part item that includes calculations and explanations to a problem or set of problems. Teachers at all levels are working on taking advantage of the reports in Schoolnet which include item analysis, standards performance, skills analysis, and individual student profiles. Training around SchoolNet continues to strengthen teacher understanding as data driven conversations among grade levels and/or departments continue to support teaching and learning.

### **Professional Development**

**T**he Curriculum Team provides learning opportunities for the staff with a focus on improving instructional strategies and creating positive learning environments for student achievement. Educators in the departments of Computer Science, Mathematics, and Science, Technology and Engineering have attended conferences and workshops to advance their knowledge in their content area. Collaboration continues as they share materials collected and embed them into their daily practices. Staff have had on site training from leaders in their content area on Early Release days,

Full Day PD and on district provided Release days. The Professional Learning Community building blocks encompass the belief that all students can learn based on their ability, if they take advantage of the opportunity to learn.

**T**he focus for elementary classroom and special education teachers as well as support staff, speech and language pathologists, and occupational and physical therapists is Guided Instruction. Teachers participate in conversations and blended learning experiences that provide strategies to engage learners where they are, and develop/build a shared understanding that an elementary classroom has mixed readiness levels, interests, and learning preferences. Discourse has focused on research based practices that allow educators to develop a set of beliefs and principles centered on teaching and learning and providing a framework for responsive teaching. Educators have worked on deepening understanding of the guided reading structure and how that connects to mathematics instruction. Rather than focus on the specific curriculum guide for mathematics instruction, educators learn how to partner with the curriculum and plan a guided math structure that includes working with students in small groups. This allows students the ability to receive targeted instruction to develop as confident, proficient, flexible mathematicians in a supportive and scaffolded environment. Working collaboratively, educators discuss, practice and plan with the goal of maximizing the capacity of each individual learner by teaching in ways that help bridge gaps in understanding and skill.

**P**rofessional development for the secondary level is working to embed student discourse opportunities throughout the units. Part of the rigor being developed within every content area is geared toward challenging students with real world application problems in order to build their comprehension and ability to identify viable solutions. When engaging students in content specific discourse, teachers introduce new concepts and provide students with real world problems to solve collectively. These problems require high cognitive demand, rich context, and multiple opportunities for solutions. Students are expected to draw from prior knowledge to develop problem-solving strategies then to explain and justify their solutions through example, experiment and research. Teachers help facilitate discussions about student contributions by asking open-ended questions that encourage students to think critically about their approach. They also encourage other students to ask questions of their own. These questions scaffold students' engagement with the task, shape the nature of the classroom environment, and create opportunities for learning at a high-level. The goal of this discourse is to (1) transition from teacher as the sole questioner to teachers and students as

questioners, (2) encourage students to explain and support their reasoning, (3) allow students' ideas to influence the direction of the lesson, and (4) promote student responsibility for learning and evaluating their progress and the progress of others .

**S**TEM education continues to capture three goals that reflect the types of intellectual capital needed for the nation's growth and development in an increasingly science- and technology-driven world. These goals are to increase advanced training and careers in STEM fields, to expand the STEM-capable workforce and to increase scientific literacy among the general public. These three goals are not mutually exclusive. They are broad long-term goals with numerous intermediate goals encompassed in the classroom. These intermediate goals are the building blocks for the STEM curriculum at the secondary level including learning STEM content and practices, developing positive dispositions - within all student groups - toward STEM, and preparing students to be lifelong learners. The students, educators and administrators in the Stoughton Public Schools will continue their pursuit of excellence in STEM education and embrace the challenges presented in this evolving field of study.

### **The Special Education Department**

**Provided by Heather Tucker; Administrator of Special Education**

**T**he Special Education Department successfully completed the Coordinated Program Review (CPR) per the final report received in June of 2017, issued by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The process began in December; DESE sent a team to the district as part of the on-site file review, post review of the district self-assessment, which occurred in May of 2016. In January, DESE came back to conduct interviews with parents, teachers, paraprofessionals, and administration. Out of 58 standards, many with multi-layered components, there was only one partial compliance for a minute detail in a written procedure. The department was able to rectify this and not require a corrective action plan or progress monitoring. This level of success is considered an exemplary feat considering the detail and complexity that encompasses the Coordinated Program Review Process. Congratulations to our Special Education Staff at all levels for this extraordinary achievement.

**A**s a result of the self-assessment from May of 2017, the district identified 'Writing Better Individual Education Programs' (IEPs) as the theme for the professional development plan for the

school year. This focus for professional development divided the IEP writing process into a 5 module series. Each portion of the IEP was examined to identify district strengths and to develop consistency and commonality within the practices and language used. The educators now have a set of written resources to use to write IEPs of high quality within compliance of the regulations.

The educators also left the training series with the ability to self-assess their current IEPs for compliance. Having IEPs written in a format that better represents student strengths and needs, supports better implementation in the classrooms. The greater clarity within the written document demonstrates how the Special Education Department leveraged student strengths and interests while addressing student challenges. Parents receive a document that clearly embodies their student in written form.

The Stoughton Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SSEPAC) continues to be an important advisory committee to the Special Education Department. The Administrator of Special Education and the SSEPAC President meet monthly to work together to share information, to address questions, and to plan for upcoming events. The annual budget presentation was held in October. The Administrator of Special Education reviews the previous year's budget outcomes, the fiscal year grant allotments, and seeks input for budget planning. The parents have the opportunity to ask questions and gain insight related to the process. Most importantly the parents identify areas within special education that need to continue to develop and grow to best meet their students' needs. The Stoughton SEPAC and the Easton SEPAC collaboratively presented Basic Parental Rights. The Special Education Administrators shared the DESE formulated training. Parents then had the opportunity to share ideas and resources with one another from the perspective of their individual communities. The year ended with a presentation from Stoughton educators at the elementary, middle and high school levels on Inclusion Programming.

The Special Education Department continues to renew its commitment to the families and students with special needs by being a resource in many different ways. The 'Writing of Better IEPs' provides staff and parents an opportunity to create a document that best represents a student's strengths and needs. The general education staff appreciates the commonality in language within the document to better assist in accommodation implementation within the classroom. The general education staff and parents use this commonality in IEP language to facilitate stronger

communication related to the student disabilities. The SSEPAC is an invaluable resource for the Special Education Department and vice-versa, through regular communication and presentations. As a reminder to families and the community, the special education website is an additional resource for everyone. As the department receives local area opportunities for students, parents and even siblings of students with special needs, the Opportunities and Resources sections are continuously updated. Please visit: <https://www.stoughtonschools.org/district/special-education>. The Special Education Department looks forward to continuing to develop and implement practices to support individuals with disabilities to reach their potential and achieve their academic, employment, and community related goals.

### **Information Technology Department**

**Ryan McGee, Ed. D., Administrator of Educational Technology**

In 2017, the Technology Department provided Stoughton Public Schools Stakeholders with exceptional technology support. The year has been a highly energized year with many technology accomplishments reaching all of our students, teachers and staff.

The Technology Department has helped in the successful implementation of several new **software systems**:

- AESOP- Implemented along with the Business Department to help the schools with Substitute Teachers and provide a system for tracking attendance.
- SwiftK12- A new auto call system that is integrated with our student information system which allows easier access to send district wide alerts, global text messaging, and online report cards improving communication with Stakeholders.
- Eduvision- Software being implemented which allows morning announcements to live stream from an iPad into elementary classrooms. The Eduvision software will provide Parents / Guardians a place to see recorded messages once the implementation is completed.
- Online Textbooks- Assisted in the implementation of online textbooks with the Curriculum Office to improve access to digital resources through technology.
- Assisted in the transition to an online WIDA assessment system for ELL learners.

The Technology Department completed summer projects that are aligned to our district goals as stated in the July 2016- August 2019 Triennial District Improvement Plan. The **summer projects included:**

- Acquiring ERate Grant to cover 60% of wireless upgrade costs, increased internet connection speeds in each of the seven schools, and core server switch upgrades.
- Upgrading the Wireless systems in the Dawe, Hansen, West and Gibbons to accommodate “Online Instruction and Testing”. Each classroom now has a wireless access point for full wireless coverage. The South, OMS, and Jones are expected to be upgraded the following year.
- Increasing internet bandwidth connection speeds in each school building with dedicated internet modems.
- Implementing district level cache servers, backup solution, server configurations, and server maintenance to ensure proper operation of the district technology environment.
- Deploying Chromebooks to the OMS, SHS English Language Arts, SHS History, and World Language classrooms.
- Launching new laptop technology to SHS Math and SHS Science teachers. These laptops provide essential mobility for the transfer of these devices to the new high school building once completed. The laptop technology allows for projection onto an interactive Smart Board Projector system with ease. The laptops are configured to use the latest Google technology for cloud computing.
- Updating online report cards with the help of the Curriculum department. The Technology Department implemented new SwiftK12 software allowing the report cards to transmit securely to Parents/Guardians. Use of the new system elicited positive feedback.

The Technology Department had the pleasure of working with the Community Relations Specialist, Jeanne Ostroff. Jeanne updates Stoughton Public Schools social media for the District, as well as the District websites.

- **Websites** are full of updated photos, news, information, and more.

- **Facebook-** *Stoughton Public Schools* is a resource for parents and extended family to see news and information about SPS News and events including programming during and after the school day.
- **Facebook-** *SHS Building Project* provides information on the SHS building project but not SPS news and events.
- **Twitter-** *@StoughtonPS* is a Stoughton High School students and staff communication tool for athletics, the arts and SHS events.
- **Instagram-** *Stoughton Public Schools* is focused on providing information to students in the O'Donnell Middle School, and Stoughton High School.

### **Training:**

The IT Department offered a variety of trainings in 2017. Members of the school staff joined to learn about Google, AESOP, SwiftK12 and other district technology. The Technology department will continue to support the deployment of MCAS Online testing and training for staff.

### **Help Desk 2017**

The Stoughton Technology Department consists of Ryan McGee, Technology Director; Robert King, Deputy Technology Director, Trish Shropshire, Deputy Technology Director; Municipal Dianne Dolan, Data Management; and Information Technology Technicians; Robert Dexter, Anthony Phippen, Anthony Thai, and Christopher Burrill.

### **Stoughton High School**

#### **Juliette Miller, C.A.G.S, M.Ed., Administrative Principal**

On June 15, 2017 the Town of Stoughton officially celebrated the Ground Breaking for the new Stoughton High School. With the initial action for a new high school project beginning in 2010, this was a long time coming. Joined by our state legislators, selectman, town and school officials and several honored guests, the ceremony took place on a beautiful sunny day on the Anthony L. Sarno Football Field. Since then, the project has been unfolding daily. Compass Project Management and Consigli Construction continue to manage the project in partnership, with the High School Building Committee and high school community, directly to ensure the safety of all those in and around the site, minimize disruption for students and staff, effectively communicate with school administration,

offer learning opportunities for students in the classrooms, and stay on schedule and on budget. Ms. Jeanne Ostroff maintains a Facebook page and a website (linked to the high school website) for the new high school building project. These social media sites are regularly updated with upcoming building meeting agendas, information discussed in the meetings, photos, diagrams, timelines etc. related to the progress of the high school building project. Information about the project can be found at the High School Building Project link located on the Stoughton High School web page at <http://shs.stoughtonschools.org/>. We are very excited about the construction of a new facility and extremely grateful for the support of the town in this endeavor.

As we prepare a new facility for our already state of the art programming, Stoughton High School continues to see improvement, high achievement in and out of the classroom and outstanding performance on the field and stage. We continue to break new ground in the areas of programming, class offerings, instructional techniques, assessments and educational opportunities for both students and faculty. Through professional development and collaboration, we continue to grow our knowledge of effective instructional practices, incorporate real world learning into the classroom and bring new opportunities and information to our students. As a result, our students receive a top notch 21<sup>st</sup> century learning experience and are competitive in their pursuit of college and/or career.

As is the case in all of the District's schools, the high school leadership team has reviewed data made available by the State and College Board and is using the information provided to drive professional discourse within the high school, target areas for improvement, and ultimately increase student achievement. Further, Stoughton High School implemented SchoolNet, an online platform designed to help educators innovate the way school districts gather and use data to support student success and improve teaching and learning. Therefore, we have access to data which includes but is not limited to Advanced Placement (AP) scores, SAT scores, MCAS performance data, data specific to high school courses, discipline statistical reports, etc.

High School departments, under the leadership and guidance of the district curriculum coordinators, Ms. Ashley Goldstein and Mrs. Teri Fleming, have created common course assessments on SchoolNet in the English, Mathematics, History, Science and World Language departments. Students enrolled in common courses, for example Algebra I, English 10, World History, and Spanish II, take common assessments at a minimum, at mid-year and final exam times. Several departments have begun to create other common formative assessments, taken periodically

throughout the year. Each standards aligned assessment created requires students to access higher order thinking skills and can be administered either online or as a paper-pencil test. Teachers are then able to utilize SchoolNet to compile the assessments results into user friendly reports, which they can then break down further to analyze course, class and individual student results. This analysis is then the foundation of discussion around best practice and the basis for revision to curriculum, instruction and assessment. Combined with our professional development offered to all teachers in the area of Differentiated Instruction, teachers are armed with the necessary information and tools to be able to design lessons to address the needs of all students and ultimately making the curriculum accessible to all students.

An analysis of our Program of Studies, student needs and extra-curricular offerings outside of the classroom, was completed in the winter/spring of 2017. This analysis led to the development of several new courses and additional learning opportunities outside of the classroom. An Advanced Placement (AP) Government and Politics course was added in the History department. The United States *Government* and Politics course is a rigorous, college-level class that provides an opportunity to gain skills colleges recognize. In the course students will study constitutional underpinnings, civil liberties and civil rights, political culture and socialization, citizen participation and influence, political institutions and policy making that are the foundation of modern U.S. government and politics. Three new English courses were added; Altruism & Love through Literature, Recognizing Literary Patterns and Graphic Novels. The traditional freshmen Science course received a new course title, Exploration of Natural and Applied Sciences, after it was revamped to better align with the new Science Standards and prepare students for the science MCAS. There has been a strong interest for American Sign Language to be added as a World Language offering. We hope to make this course a permanent addition to our bursting Program of Studies. Outside of the classroom we are completing the process to add a National Honor Society in Business and a National Honor Society in Art. The addition of these offerings will provide the opportunity to recognize the individuality of each of our students who have a strong interest in and talents in these two content areas. In September 2017, thirty students, who had applied and were selected, were trained over three days by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to be Ambassadors for the World of Difference Program. The program and its resources are designed to help participants recognize bias and the harm it inflicts on individuals and society, build understanding of the value and benefits of diversity,

improve intergroup relations and confront racism, anti-Semitism and all other forms of bigotry. The student Ambassadors will be unrolling programming to students during the time set aside for our Advisory period beginning January 2018. Stoughton High School is proud of the ample and various opportunities students have for learning, discovering their talents and passions and receiving an overall well-rounded education.

As Massachusetts moves towards a new state assessment, which will ultimately be administered online, we continue to prepare our students in a variety of ways. Our fully aligned curriculum is regularly revisited as new MA standards are adopted/implemented, our in house assessments are analyzed, and teachers share best strategies. Our students regularly use Chrome Books in each of their classes and for some assessments in order to prepare them for online high stakes tests. Our efforts can be seen in our 2017 MCAS results. SHS students performed at high levels; 98% of grade 10 students passed the ELA MCAS, 93% of grade 10 students passed the Math MCAS and 98% of students passed the Science Technology Engineering (STE) MCAS. Further, our students outperformed the state in all areas.

Stoughton Public School's Science Technology Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) Curriculum Administrative Supervisor Grades 6-12, Ms. Teri Fleming, and the Humanities Curriculum Administrator Supervisor Grades 6-12, Ms. Ashley Goldstein, have worked diligently to build relationships with the high school faculty, working with them on analyzing data, creating goals and action plans, providing the departments and individual teachers with curriculum and instructional support, as well as bringing high quality programming, professional development and resources to the faculty and students of SHS. Of particular note, is the recently established relationship between SPS and Facing History and Ourselves. This organization, "through rigorous historical analysis combined with the study of human behavior, heightens students' understanding of racism, religious intolerance, and prejudice; increases students' ability to relate history to their own lives; and promotes greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities in a democracy" (Facing History and Ourselves website). We have hosted several guest speakers from this organization to bring small group, first person perspective presentations to our students. Additionally, the faculty has access to numerous curriculum and instructional supports and resources through the organization. Ms. Teri Fleming has implemented a pilot program among our Science Department for the online resource, Defined Stem, which seeks to provide teachers with lessons that are engaging and relevant,

cross-curricular, focus on 21st century skills, differentiate learning, incorporate non-fiction reading and writing and provide an authentic assessment of their students understanding. It is a powerful online tool which incorporates performance tasks built upon the Understanding By Design (UBD) framework and presents a real-world problem within the context of a career/industry. The culminating activities that the students produce are the products that are based on the goal of the task. Each task contains between five to eight products that represent cross curricular topics.

**W**e continue to support our grade 9 students with the goal of reducing grade 9 retention rates and further reduce drop-out rates, through our mandatory extended school day for all grade 9 students who are failing two or more of their classes at term midpoints or at the end of the term. In addition, we piloted a 9<sup>th</sup> grade “boot camp” in August 2017. Approximately 30 ninth grade students participated in a one-day orientation program at the high school. They participated in games, activities, heard from a variety of speakers and were provided with lunch. Parents and guardians joined their students at the end for a brief welcome and presentation by administration. Boot camp focused on the areas typically difficult during transition from 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> grade, including but not limited to, the high school bell schedule, the high school building, lockers, identifying resources and supports in the building and extra-curricular offerings. Based on the evaluation of the program, we will look to expand the boot camp to allow more student participants in the summer of 2018. With the combination of these two programs, we expect to see a reduction in our grade 9 retention rates. Grade 9 performances are one indicator of overall student success and high school completion. It is critical for our students to recognize early on in their high school career the value of a high school education.

**O**ur third annual Scholarship Knight was held in June of 2017. The evening program is designed to honor all our graduating scholarship recipients. Scholarship donors were invited to attend and present their scholarship. We were honored to have so many of our donors attend and award their recipients. Often these scholarships are created in memory of a loved one or cherished community member. A small reception followed the program providing our recipients and donors an opportunity to meet. In 2017, a total, of ninety-three scholarships were awarded to 223 recipients. A total of approximately \$154,000 was awarded to the students of Stoughton High School. It is through the generosity of our scholarship donors, many of whom live and/or work in Stoughton, we

are able to provide these financial opportunities to our students as they continue their education beyond our doors. We are grateful for these partnerships.

**F**aculty, staff and administration at Stoughton High School work to improve their practice each year. Through our School Improvement process, the community, including faculty, parents and students, has identified areas to focus on in the 2017-2018 school year in order to continue to grow and perform at high levels. Therefore, in 2018, we will focus on the following.

- Provide professional development focused on increasing the cultural proficiency of the administration, faculty and staff.
- Increase the median student growth percentile (SGP) by 3-5% in core content area writing that aligns with high level MCAS and MA content area standards, as determined by the average item score on Open Response, Short Answer and Essay questions.

### **English Department**

**2**017 was a great year for the English Department at SHS. Our sophomores continue to excel at the ELA MCAS, which is a graduation requirement. 50% of sophomores earned an Advanced rating and 44% earned Proficient. Only 4% of sophomores earned a Needs Improvement. Overall, 94% of sophomores were Proficient or higher. We beat the percentage of students who earned Proficient or higher in the state by 3 points. We credit our success to the dedication of our students and the hard work of the teachers who have prepared them from elementary school through high school.

**W**e had 14 seniors take the AP Literature and Composition exam and 32 juniors take the AP Language and Composition exam. 80% of students earned a three or higher, qualifying them for some form of college credit. Of the 46 students who sat for the AP tests, 4 students earned a five, the best score possible and 14 students earned a four. The average score on the Literature test was a 3.571 and the Language test was 3.250. We are proud of the work Ms. Fidler and Ms. Ruschioni did to prepare these students.

**A**t Class Night we awarded Jay Mallen with the English Achievement Award and Courtney Weiner with the Journalism Achievement Award.

**W**e continue to implement and hone our Curriculum Embedded Performance Assessments (CEPAs) for each grade. These CEPAs align our expectations across grade levels as well as give us a tool to measure student growth. We used common assessments in grades 9-11 as another way for us to measure growth and target our instruction, and they have become part of the midyear and final for grades 9-11.

2017 was the fourth year of our *One Book One Grade* summer reading program. We had an excellent participation rate in all grades for summer reading and received positive feedback about our book selections.

**W**e are proud of the SHS English department's many strengths. Our curriculum is aligned with the Common Core, all of our English courses have curriculum accepted by the NCAA, and we continue to send our faculty members to conferences that support the new demands of the state as well as prepare us for Next-Gen MCAS. We use our scheduled collaboration time to hone common assessments, create and implement CEPAs, share best practices, as well as align ourselves across the department and vertically between grades. We continue to utilize the Writing Toolkits which encourage shared, high expectations in our department which are echoed by our colleagues across other departments at SHS.

**W**e work together within our departments across different classes, such as our AP Language class collaborating with Journalism for a podcast project, as well as with other departments, such as Journalism and Current Events on a literary lesson inspired by our *Facing History* professional development. We pride ourselves on being a collaborative community that supports each other with materials as well as ideas to better our craft and meet the varied needs of students.

**W**e continue to expose our students to varied educational experiences including trips to museums, guest speakers, and presentations to audiences outside the classroom community as well as hosting Bay Colony Shakespeare Company's production of *Macbeth. The Knight*, SHS' school newspaper, which is published by our Journalism classes, continues to be a success online. Our American Studies program is thriving. In this class students visit the Museum of Fine Arts, the WWII Museum, and Newport. Members of the English department continue to impact the SHS community in positive ways, not only in the classroom, but as mentors for the Step Up program, as coaches, as advisors for various clubs and activities such as Peer Leadership, Student Council, and National

Honor Society, as well as sitting on committees within the district and building. Our department members strive to positively impact our students in and out of the classroom.

The English department will continue to improve our sophomores' MCAS results by specifically focusing on growing our students' ability to answer the open response questions. While we do amazingly well, we need to better our student growth percentile by moving those students who earned Needs Improvements into the Proficient category and helping those in Proficient earn Advanced. As a department we need to continue to focus on and hone our skills at differentiated instruction to support the transition away from pathways level courses. With best practices in mind, we will continue to focus on sending teachers to conferences that meet our needs including AP workshops, College Board conferences, differentiated instruction workshops, and the NCTE conference.

### **Business/Technology Department**

The Business and Technology Department offers a variety of courses across the business and technology disciplines. The teachers are constantly adapting courses to include the latest technology and the newest resources available. The business department really appreciates the opportunity to attend the MassCUE conference in October. This conference provides great opportunities for networking and opportunities to support student learning in a variety of ways. The teachers plan what workshops they are going to together so that they can spread out and attend different ones. They share the information they learn with each other when they return. This conference is very valuable to the teaching that takes place day in and day out throughout the year. Teachers have incorporated Flip Grid and SpiralAC into their courses this year. The department taught the rest of the faculty how to use these two pieces of technology at a faculty meeting earlier this year. The presentation was well received by the staff. A number of faculty members reached out individually to say thank you for the opportunity to learn about those applications and a number of faculty members have tried them in their classes. Specifically, the business department has collaborated with the world languages department on using SpiralAC. The teachers had an additional opportunity this year to collaborate with colleagues from another school. On a professional development day, the business department had the opportunity to go to Old Colony Regional Vocational school in order to compare and contrast the curriculum and gain new ideas and insights.

The department is continuing to look at the digital literacy standards and ensure they incorporate those standards and practices into all courses. The department's newest course, Financial Literacy, became a term course this year. The department worked to condense the material in this course to one term instead of one semester. This change allowed the teachers to teach more sections of elective courses that students have been requesting to take. Mrs. Nancy Riley put a lot of work into updating the Microsoft Office course to reflect both the latest versions of office and some more advanced features of Microsoft Office. Mr. Thomas McCormack teaches informational technology courses as well as financial literacy. Mrs. Nancy Riley teaches graphic design, office technology and business courses as well as the yearbook production course. Mr. Kevin Bechet teaches video production courses as well as Digital Foundations. Mrs. Linda Ciccattelli teaches business, marketing and financial literacy courses. The department was very fortunate to have an additional teaching position added for this school year. Mr. Robert DeRosa is a welcome addition to the business department teaching a variety of courses within the informational technology and video productions courses as well as Digital Foundations.

There are a lot of different programs and resources available to enhance student learning in business education classes. Stoughton has used Virtual Business in some of the classes for a long time. It is typically used in Financial Literacy. Mrs. Linda Ciccattelli received a grant through DECA to be able to use two additional simulation units in her classes to support student learning. One of the simulation units is Hotel Management and the other is Fashion Marketing.

The department had a common goal throughout the 2016 - 2017 school year of creating a newsletter to communicate events to the community and to recognize the accomplishments of students in the business department. The teachers worked together to create and distribute the newsletter. The teachers were able to highlight some of the speakers that came in and some of the field trips the students had opportunities to go on through the newsletter.

The students have had opportunities to hear from and ask questions of a few speakers regarding their path within the business and technology field. Ms. Brittany Mahan, a former video production student and SHS graduate, came to speak to the video production students about her pathway. She is currently a stage manager with NESN and also does some work for ESPN. Ms. Courtney Weiner, another former video production student and SHS graduate came to speak about being a freshman as

a broadcast major at Elon College. She spoke in general about her college experience at a major broadcast school. Mr. and Mrs. Kevin and Gina Simoneau came to speak to the yearbook class about theme ideas and the guidelines for print publication. They are from Walsworth Publishing, the company printing the SHS yearbook this year. They gave an overview of how their company works.

**T**he DECA chapter continued its pattern of success during the 2016 - 2017 school year. Students made it to Nationals for the fourth year in a row! Two students competed at the International Career Development DECA Conference in Anaheim, CA. Craig Goodrich and Kemina Julien scored in the top 5 of their category at the state competition allowing them to compete at the international level. Seven students earned leadership conference spots for the conference (Olivia Hoffman, Jacob Trieber, Mia Greene, Kemina Julien, Kiana Mills, Kaitlyn Costeira and Thomas Smith) allowing Stoughton to send nine students and two chaperones to the conference in Anaheim. Thomas Smith ran a very successful campaign to be a State Officer this year. Thomas received a grant from Youth Services of America and Disney to run a Lemonade Stand Project to promote entrepreneurship and teach business concepts at the South School. Cam Smith, Thomas's brother and other DECA members participated in the program during the after school weekly activities which culminated in a Lemonade Stand Challenge at the South School for the best design and presentation of their product. Aarti Patel worked many hours and completed a lot of documentation on campaigns in order to allow Stoughton to attain the seven leadership spots. Students are able to give back to their community through DECA. DECA held a book drive for the Stoughton elementary schools, a DECA Trade Fair, a DECA Induction Night, participated in Haunted Hallways, held ice cream socials and connected with business partners.

**M**any students had individual successes through competitions in DECA events throughout the year. Sixty-four students competed in the district competition while half of those students qualified to move onto the state competition in Boston in March. At the district event, thirty-six of our students placed in the Top 6 of their business category. Forty students attended the state competition in March. Six students scored in the top ten of their business category at the state level (Rendi Brown, Tim Raeke, Sarah Widrow, Olivia Hoffman, Rachel Weiner, and Brian Peoples). Cam Smith was recognized with a trophy for his Cover Design created for this year's conference. Over 2700 students, advisors, parents, and judges were able to view this conference packet.

DECA is off to a great start for this current school year. The DECA Chapter has about 70 people competing in the district competition on January 10th and 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018. Students have taken their online exams and we are awaiting the results. Students will conduct a real-world interview and role-play with a business professional at the district competition in January.

As teachers, we continue to look for ways to improve and grow professionally. This year Mr. Kevin Bechet became certified as a Level 1 Google Educator and also took a Digital Research Strategies course. Mrs. Linda Ciccattelli earned a Master's in Instructional Technology through Bridgewater State University. This degree included earning the SEI endorsement. Mr. Tom McCormack took an ELL course through the Massachusetts Teachers Association. Mr. Kevin Bechet, Mrs. Nancy Riley, and Mr. Robert DeRosa are taking an Understanding and Teaching English Language Learners course.

**T**eachers within this department serve the community in another capacity. Mrs. Ciccattelli serves as the DECA advisor. She also serves on the DECA Advisory Board. Mrs. Riley serves as the Yearbook advisor. She also is a board member for the Lost Coin Women's Fund. This non-profit group "supports academic opportunities for low income Massachusetts women by providing Grants for undergraduate studies or vocational training programs". Mr. McCormack is the Director of Stoughton Academy. Mr. Bechet serves as the editor and producer of "Knightline". He also runs the educational channel. He continues to collaborate with Stoughton Media Access Cable to ensure that important Stoughton High School events are broadcasted to the community.

### **Mathematics Department**

**T**he teachers in the math department are very dedicated to supporting student learning and the students at Stoughton High School. The teachers work collaboratively as a department to share best practices and engaging lessons. Teachers regularly meet in teams to talk about the content we are teaching, the methods we are using and the trends we are seeing in student's assessments. We consistently refer to the common core standards when talking about the content we are teaching. We use SchoolNet to administer and analyze some common assessments. We now have a few assessments that we have given for a few years in a row. These SchoolNet assessments that teachers are building, allow us to assess the main concepts within a unit. Students take the assessments on

the computers. This is one way for us to prepare students for the upcoming changes to the MCAS in addition to using that information to drive instruction.

Throughout 2017, we have been looking at our course offerings and determining what courses would be best to offer at Stoughton High School. We have looked at what other towns offer for courses. Although SAT review has been offered at Stoughton High School for many years, the English and Mathematics departments examined that course and student needs together last school year. Stoughton High School split the current course into two courses where a content teacher taught English and Math. Mrs. Kim Kellogg wrote the curriculum for the Math SAT course while Ms. Renee Trudeau has taught that course in its first time in the mathematics department. Ms. Trudeau has spent a great deal of time looking at best practices regarding test taking strategies and ways to help students improve their SAT scores. SAT Math has been a great additional course to the department. We have been preparing to add four new courses in the 2017 - 2018 school year. Three of these courses are half year courses designed to allow students to examine math and some of its practical applications. Sports in Math will offer students, who have completed Algebra 2 or Algebra 2 Part 1, a chance to examine statistics through the lens of sports. Mrs. Kim Kellogg has been writing the curriculum for the Sports in Math course. Economics will allow students who have completed Algebra 2 a chance to take an introductory look at concepts within both macro and microeconomics. Mr. Joseph Donovan has been exploring the content for the Economics course at Stoughton High School. Mrs. Rosanna DelMastro participated in MA Exploring Computer Science Partnership (MECSP) training to bring Exploring Computer Science (an introductory computer science) course to Stoughton. The training includes a week during the summer at Framingham state University, and four Saturday sessions throughout the year. We are very excited to offer this course next year. It is a half year course that any student can take in order to learn more about what computer science is. In addition to expanding our course offerings, we have been examining what changes need to be made to the courses we currently offer. Curriculum re-writes have been an ongoing project throughout 2017. Teachers updated the Algebra 1, Geometry, and Algebra 2 scope and sequence documents to reflect activities and assessments we completed within those units. The scope and sequence documents we now use are a great resource for teachers to use throughout the year. Now that the common core standards have been implemented for a few years in Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2, we have now updated the PreCalculus curriculum to reflect those changes.

Technology continues to be a big theme within the mathematics department. In August, the mathematics teachers were all issued laptops as our main computer to use for school. The desk tops were taken out of the math hallway in August and docking stations replaced those laptops. The math department has found sharing classrooms to be much easier this year with the addition of these computers. In addition, the mobility of our technology has made collaborating and planning easier through the ability to use docking stations effectively. The laptops have also allowed us to support student learning. The AP Computer Science class has been able to use the docking station to debug programs as a class. The Chromebooks continue to be an important tool in the classroom. Many teachers have had students work on explorations on Desmos, a site that allows for interaction between the teacher and the students. These explorations also allow for students to see how other students are approaching problems and describing answers. In addition, many teachers are using Google Classroom as a way to offer students a variety of information and support. Teachers are using the general classroom features to have discussions about common misconceptions and errors as well as a discussion on what is the best answer to a problem. Teachers are using forms to gain insights on how students thought they did on a test. Edpuzzle is another very popular online instruction tool within the mathematics department which allows students to watch videos and answer questions that interrupt the video at varying points. Teachers use this tool as a way to reinforce concepts taught in class. All mathematics teacher at Stoughton High School received accounts that allow us to share videos and collaborate more easily through the website. The AP Computer Science class is using CodeHS to prepare for their exam in May.

**T**he math department continues to look at the online resources available through Realize, our online textbook. Teachers continue to look at opportunities to incorporate curriculum materials into the classroom. This tool can help teachers prepare students for the upcoming changes in state testing and can provide students the opportunity to become more comfortable with online testing formats. This tool also allows students to think about the mathematics behind everyday activities and discover the math involved in various situations. Teachers are continuing to embed these opportunities into curriculum documents.

**W**hile technology has been a focus to enhance student learning and to provide teachers an opportunity to build new practices, teachers continue to use best practices, like group work, to allow students to work together and communicate about mathematics. Teachers also continue to use

whiteboards and document cameras to highlight student work and allow students opportunities to present information and answer questions in varying formats. The mathematics budget has provided many opportunities to try different products and decide what resources teachers like to use in the classroom. The fiscal year 2017 budget contained more money for expendables such as various types of chart paper, post it notes and index cards than past budgets had. The geometry teachers asked for and received new protractors, rulers, and compasses for use in their classrooms.

**T**he Class of 2020 took the MCAS in May. Over the past few years the math teachers have looked closely at both PARCC and MCAS questions to align the curriculum and ensure students are practicing with questions written in the current format. The department continues to look at the documents the DESE is distributing regarding changes to the MCAS. Teachers continue to use the MCAS of the day programs and available practice problems. The Class of 2020 scored better than the state average on the MCAS. Eighty percent of the sophomores who took the MCAS in 2017 scored proficient or higher.

**O**nce again, roughly 90 Stoughton High students participated in the Massachusetts 54th Olympiad Level One Examination, which was given to more than 2000 students across the state. This is a challenging and rigorous critical thinking and problem-solving exam. Questions cover a wide range of topics including geometry, algebra, pre-calculus, trigonometry, and calculus. This exam is a wonderful opportunity to challenge our students above and beyond their regular course work.

The teachers continue to show students how math is applied and give exposure to mathematical fields. In December, several math teachers joined the global “Hour of Code” initiative, which is an online and interactive set of programs and experiences designed to introduce basic computer programming to students of all ages. Students of all mathematical abilities enjoyed participating in this activity. In December, Mr. Kyle Raposo, Consigli Construction Superintendent, came in to talk to the Differential Calculus class about the building project. He talked about the math used on a daily basis throughout the construction process. He brought in surveying equipment and showed the students how it was used. In addition, he examined some of the plans with them. The presentation was very engaging for the students. The students spoke very highly of that presentation and found it interesting and informative.

The mathematics department welcomed three new teachers in September. Ms. Renee Trudeau comes to the department with two years teaching experience. She moved back to Massachusetts after teaching a year in Nashville, Tennessee. Ms. Margo Jones joins us this year as a .6 teacher teaching the MCAS support labs. Ms. Jones is skilled at working with small groups and is preparing students for the MCAS this spring. Ms. Rachel Vieira joins us as a mathematics teacher this year after student teaching with Mrs. Patty Foley last spring. She graduated from Stonehill College in May. We welcomed Mrs. Kim Williamson to the department in December. Mrs. Williamson came highly recommended from a director in a local district. She completed a long term sub assignment in a local district this fall.

Many teachers within the department hold another role or position within the school. Mrs. DelMastro continues to be the advisor to the math team. Roughly fifty students participate in the math team each year. The team competes against five other area schools at four meets and competes in six New England math league competitions each year. In September, Mrs. DelMastro also became one of the new teacher mentors for the district. She works with two other high school mentors to help the new teachers have a successful experience in Stoughton. Mrs. DelMastro works with the new math teachers in the department. Mr. Armour is the varsity baseball coach. Both Mrs. Kim Kellogg and Mrs. DelMastro are mentors in the Step Up to Excellence program. Mr. Robert Dacey and Ms. Havener teach in the ninth grade extended day program.

### **Natural & Applied Sciences Department**

During the school year of 2017, the Science Department has completed a year of transition to the new 2016 Massachusetts Science Standards. Mr. Craig Beaulieu, Ms. Kathy Bulger, Ms. Trisha Asselin, and Mr. Kevin Carlton are designing a new freshman course that studies the Science of Energy. The course will examine energy from a variety of approaches: in food webs and ecosystems, in chemical bonds and compounds, as a renewable resource and much more. The freshman team has been working diligently to create new lessons and curriculum that correspond to the new MA Science Standards. Green Engineering, Forensics, and Chemistry have already transitioned to the new standards. Biology is waiting to transition to the new frameworks based on the state's recommendation for MCAS, but has been incorporating the eight science practices in their lessons and units.

The Science Department has continued to update curriculum and has done a great job in writing, revising and entering Common Exams to SchoolNet. A great deal of this work has been able to be accomplished by effective use of scheduled collaboration periods. Each common course (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Engineering, and Exploration of Natural and Applied Sciences) now has at least a midyear and final exam entered and assessed by SchoolNet. By the end of this academic year, this will expand to all classes. SchoolNet has also been used as a tool for quarterly exams or unit exams for some of our common courses: Chemistry, Biology, and Engineering. In addition, the department continues to utilize the SHS Formal Lab Report Writing Toolkits, thus integrating science writing across the curriculum and building across grade levels. POGIL (process-oriented guided inquiry learning) activities have been found to be useful in chemistry, physiology and biology to move students forward in inquiry based learning.

The MCAS scores for the high school continue to hold steady. Once again, analysis of MCAS data has indicated continuing need for additional academic support to meet the needs of our diverse student population. This year after school tutoring is being offered to any student who failed the Science MCAS in June 2017. In addition, MCAS instructional lab will be held in this coming spring. Last spring, the biology teachers designed an MCAS review day for all test takers to reinforce test taking strategies and material needed for the test.

The 59th Annual Stoughton High School Science Fair was held on February 15, 2017. The 1st Place Individual Grand Award winner was Jonathan Podesta for his project, “Extending the Range of Electric Cars with Bladeless Turbines” Second Place winner was Julia Awad for her project, “What is more Superior? Wind vs. Ocean.” Third Place winner was Colin Cochran for his project “WhyTunes? A study in the Evolution of Popular Music”. Honorable Mention in the Individual Research Project category went to David Cellucci for his project “Hydrogen: The New Fuel” and Leandra Andre for her project “The Effect of Microwave Radiation and Heat on Life”. Team Research Project winners were: 1st Place – Stevens Bontemps and Conor Kavanagh “The Glowing Transformation Efficiency in E. Coli,” 2nd Place – Lisa Ramanauskas and Amanda McGillicuddy “Vitamin C Titration of Fresh, Canned, and Frozen Foods,” 3rd Place – Bhumi Patel and Caitlin Jung “Creating an Artificial Pancreas.” Five science fair projects progressed to the South Shore Regional Science Fair. At the regional fair, Jonathan Podesta won a first place prize and was awarded the Genzyme Award. Julia Awad was awarded an honorable mention. Three projects, two

individual, by Jonathan Podesta and Colin Cochran, one team by, Stevens Bontemps and Conor Kavanagh continued to The Massachusetts State Science and Engineering Fair (MSSEF) at MIT.

**I**n March, Stoughton hosted the regional Destination Imagination Event. Stoughton had five teams competing in a variety of events: structural, scientific, outreach, and technical. In May, a group of students participated in Destination Imagination Massachusetts State Competition Event. This marked the eighth year of participation in this program. Competing in the Technical Challenge were team Team Armada consisting of Emma Harrington, Katherine Howe, Justin Kelleher, Krista Michienzi, Emerson Sprague and Hannah Stanley who placed second and Team Diesel consisting of Nate Bodette, Nick Comeau, Jenny Guzman, Lily Noe, Sophie Tamarkin, and Graciela Terronez who placed third. Their performance qualified two teams to compete at the Destination Imagination Global Finals competition in Knoxville Tennessee. A third team, Recipe for Disaster, a science team, did not qualify for the global competition, however it was recognized with the Renaissance Award, a high honor for outstanding workmanship and creativity. Stoughton Public School had six teams comprised of over forty students compete in four challenge areas, Technical, Structural, Scientific and Service Learning. This was also the second year SPS had three teams represented at the Destination Imagination State Finals.

**A**nother field trip, conducted by Dr. Joel Rubin, was a trip to the Boston Museum of Science for four of his classes and the Alternative Education students. The passes to the Museum were provided for no charge by MOS and the buses were paid for by the Chamber of Commerce.

**T**he science department continues to foster science curiosity in the elementary grades. AP juniors prepare and design science related activities and labs to perform with 4th grade classes throughout the district. The high school students lead science demos and inquiry. This annual event, held June 5th and June 6th, 2017, fosters a sense of community between the high school and elementary schools. It also allows students to develop as leaders and encourage younger students to expand their science knowledge.

**M**any members of the science department serve as advisors for a variety of extracurricular school activities. Mrs. Amy Wiebe is acting as the advisor for the Construction Challenge Team with the assistance of many in the department as team managers: Dr. Joel Rubin, Mrs. Wini Dillon, Mrs. Courtney Sasin, Mr. George Tzanetos, and Mr. Peter Law. Mrs. Wini Dillon coaches the Science

Olympiad Team. Mr. Kevin Carlton is the advisor to the Recycling Club. Ms. Kathleen Bulger acts as co-chair of the School Council. Dr. Joel Rubin is co-advisor of the Astronomy Club that holds “star viewing” events and also co-sponsored “Haunted Hallways.” Mr. Peter Law is advisor to both the Tokyo club and the Games and Hobbies Club. Mrs. Jen Kelly serves as a Mentor to new teachers to help them acclimate to SHS. Dr. Joel Rubin serves as a board member of Massachusetts Marine Educators and at Woods Hole Oceanographic Institute. In addition, Dr. Rubin and Mrs. Wiebe are involved in teaching the Freshmen Afterschool Program.

**T**his past year, Mrs. Jen Kelly, Mr. Peter Law, Mrs. Courtney Sasin, Ms. Trish Asselin, Mr. George Tzanetos and Mrs. Amy Wiebe were enrolled in graduate level courses and/or specialized training institutes involving such topics as neurobiology, classroom management techniques, neurodiversity, and chemistry teaching methods, SPED techniques and ELL training by WIDA. Five members of the Science Department attended an “Energy 3D” Professional Development conference, October 8-10, 2017. Four additional teachers went to the Massachusetts Association of Science Teachers Conference in November, 2017. They were able to attend workshops and preview the latest instructional equipment and materials. All brought many new ideas and instructional techniques back to share with colleagues and students. The science department participates yearly in lab safety programs to improve the overall safety conditions in the various science laboratories at Stoughton High School. The Lab Safety Review Committee consisting of Trish Asselin, Courtney Sasin, Kerry Wilbur, and Wini Dillon are continuing to improve overall safety by overseeing that safety protocols are followed for each lab.

**T**hroughout the year, Stoughton High School students have achieved success in a wide range of activities designed to enhance their science education. Through the combined efforts of the science faculty and dedicated students, SHS had another strong showing on the science portion of the MCAS. The twenty-six member Stoughton High School Science Olympiad Team competed in meets within the South Shore Regional Science League as well as the State Science Olympiad held each year on the campus of Framingham State College. The Construction Challenge Team won medals at the regional competitions and went on to participate in the state competition, and the Global competition. At the Senior Class Night, Rebecca McSweeney earned the award for Outstanding Achievement in Science. Finally, the prestigious Bausch and Lomb Science Award was presented to

Emerson Sprague as the top junior science student of 2017, and The Rensselaer Award for superlative science and math achievement was presented to Andrew Crean.

### **History and Social Sciences Department**

**I**n line with the Stoughton High School improvement plan, throughout the 2017 school year, the Social Studies department has been working to improve student reading and writing in content areas. Through the creation of common lesson plans and common assessments, the department has continued to work on their skills based approach to history. This year department members have been working with students on identifying main ideas and citing evidence from texts. Faculty have created numerous lessons using primary source documents such as Ronald Reagan's Berlin Wall speech, Fulcher of Chartres First Hand Account of the First Crusade, George Washington's Farewell Address and Martin Luther King's I have a Dream Speech. Teachers in the Social Studies department have worked collaboratively with the English department to incorporate primary source readings and different reading and analysis strategies in their classrooms each day. Department members continue to use assessment data to continually adjust teaching methods and instruction to meet the needs of their diverse learners.

**P**rofessional development continues to be an area that the Social Studies department focuses on. This year, the department was able to partake in trainings from Facing History and Ourselves. Through these multiple training sessions, the Social Studies department has been given tools to use in their classroom when discussing difficult topics and engaging in difficult conversations. Much of the professional development this year has been focused on how to engage students in a civil discourse on topics that can be controversial such as current political issues to controversies over the national anthem. Teachers in the Social Studies department have already begun to incorporate strategies from these trainings in their classrooms on a daily basis.

**T**his year, the Social Studies department unveiled a new Advanced Placement American Government class available to seniors at Stoughton High School. The AP U.S. Government and Politics course involves the study of democratic ideas, balance of powers, and tension between the practical and ideal in national policy making. Students analyze and discuss the importance of various constitutional principles, rights and procedures, institutions, and political processes that impact us as

citizens. We are excited to be allowing more students at various grade levels to participate in the rigor of an Advanced Placement class.

**T**he Social Studies department has made it a goal this year to incorporate more technology into their classes. With the addition of six new Chrome carts, teachers and students now have the ability to use Chromebooks in their classes each day. This new technology has made new resources available to students in the form of videos, textbooks, interactive maps and webinars. This past summer, the Social Studies department, was able to purchase new online textbooks for all ninth grade World History classes. The ninth grade teachers received training in the fall on the new textbooks by Pearson and have integrated it into the World History curriculum throughout this school year. Without the addition of the new Chromebooks, introducing a new online textbook would have been impossible.

**O**nce again, all tenth graders participated in a research project that culminated in an after-school celebration of our personal family histories and our community's cultural diversity. The celebration displayed family trees, artifacts, food and recipes, family mementos, photographs, primary source documents, stories, and original works of art.

**T**he Social Studies department voted Samantha Roane as the recipient of the 2017 History Achievement Award and Loubensky Lucas as the recipient of the Southworth Scholarship. Matthew Gallagher won the Daniel F. Davis Scholarship award. The winners of the election to represent Stoughton High School at the Massachusetts State House for the 2017 Student Government Day were Emma Harrington and Vanesiah Tavares Dos Anjos. The Voice of Democracy essay contest winners for the Stoughton district were Jacquelyn Torres, Alexander Joven and Molly Turner. All of these students represent the best and brightest of Stoughton High School and are deserving of their awards and honors.

**M**embers of the Stoughton High School Social Studies department continue to further their education by taking graduate courses through The Starr King School, Framingham State University, Fitchburg State University, Boston University, Augustana University and Harvard University. Additionally, department members took part in various symposiums including one that focused on first amendments rights and another on increasing religious literacy in schools. As of the 2016-2017 school year, every member of the Social Studies Department has become licensed in SEI and

RETELL. The SEI endorsement is a key part of the state initiative called Rethinking Equity and Teaching for English Language Learners (RETELL), to close proficiency gaps for ELL students.

### **World Languages Department**

The World Language Department enriched their curriculum and increased a global perspective in their classroom by traveling abroad, taking additional courses, attending workshops, participating in extracurricular student activities and weekly collaboration meetings. Ms. Hilary Turnbull continued as Director of World Languages for the 2017-2018 school year. The World Language department welcomed Ms. Maria Graciela Amorim in Spanish and Ms. Modeline Telfort in French. The department also welcomed Mrs. Beth Rawl in American Sign Language, a new addition to current language offerings. Mrs. Kristen Finnegan took a graduate course entitled *Including Special Needs Students in the Classroom* through Framingham State University. Ms. Liza Farquharson attended a seminar on Executive Functioning skills and did further coursework on this topic. Ms. Hilary Turnbull participated in a spring workshop through the Bureau for Educational Research. Ms. Jessica Scanlon took *Classroom Success for English Language Learners* through Idioma Consulting. Mrs. Rachel O'Reilly completed a graduate course in early 2017 through University of the Pacific called *History Ideas for the Classroom*, focusing specifically on the culture and history of the Quebec region. Mrs. O'Reilly also attended the annual MAFLA conference.

World Language teachers continue to enhance and enrich their curriculum through unique cultural lessons and hands on learning. Mr. Thomas Silva and Ms. Hilary Turnbull formed a Spanish Culture Data Team as part of their professional and student learning goals. Students in beginner through intermediate Spanish have had the opportunity to participate in these co-taught lessons that promote cultural awareness. Topics have included studying Central American culture(s) and having students making cross cultural comparisons. These lessons produced evidence of growth in student learning through data collected from pre and post assessments.

Mrs. Scanlon's Spanish 5 students sold fair-trade hand-woven goods in collaboration with Pulsera Project as a part of a cultural unit on Guatemala. It was very successful and sales from this project were reinvested in Nicaraguan and Guatemalan communities. Mrs. Scanlon is planning to continue this project with her advanced Spanish classes again.

American Sign Language was added to the World Languages Department this year and has promoted language learning through non- verbal expression. The program has quickly gained popularity as a beneficial alternative for students to attain the two year language requirement for graduation. In addition to projects and research on American deaf culture, students in the ASL classes have been able to use what they have learned in class to the Stoughton Community through the TOPS soccer program. TOPS is a soccer program for children with mental and physical disabilities between the ages of 4 to 19. It promotes soccer skills, social interaction, and emotional development. Many of the TOPS players have communication delays and signing is the way they communicate. Several ASL students have become volunteer junior coaches and plan to continue to volunteer in the community.

**L**anguage teachers and students benefit from opportunities to immerse themselves in the language and cultures that they teach. Language teachers continued to promote current global perspectives and language trends through travel. Mr. William Gorman traveled to Rome in April to continue his studies. Ms. Hilary Turnbull, Mr. James Babb, and Ms. Ashley Goldstein brought twenty- six SHS students to Barcelona, Spain during April vacation. This trip was a Language Immersion focused trip where students attended varied levels of language courses, along with visiting major landmarks and sights, such as La Sagrada Familia and an excursion to Montserrat. Each day of the trip was themed so that the information that students received in their morning classes would be brought to life in the afternoon, such as taking flamenco lessons and attending an authentic cultural presentation of flamenco. The group also visited a local school for children in need. SHS students integrated and worked hands on with school children from Spain in music, baking, and art classes. The students received certificates for completing this program.

**W**orld Language teachers participated in extracurricular activities and student clubs, Ms. Turnbull continued as the SADD club advisor, promoting good decision making skills and partnering with OASIS to help carry out their mission. SADD is also competing in the Team Rival competition through the Norfolk County DA. Ms. Turnbull continued as the Advisor to the Class of 2018. Mr. Babb also continued the position of Advisor to the Class of 2019.

Ms. Leanne Cross was chosen by the members of the World Languages Department to be the recipient of the World Languages Achievement Medal for 2017. Leanne was a student in Spanish

and Latin classes who performed well on national language exams and succeeded in all of her language courses.

**W**hen the National Latin Exam was administered, the following students received awards for the Latin I exam: Hannah Papagno, Harley Sousa, Joshua Joseph, Thomas McCoy and Hailey Tyrrell were cum laude recipients; magna cum laude winners were Jahmari White-Savage, Heather Maddalena, Colby Manning, and Patricia Daly; Christopher Rutter, Rebecca Lally, Victoria Silverman, Connor Evan, Abigail Langmead, and Brendan Walsh were maxima cum laude winners. Thayna Oliveira and Guiliana Loffredo were summa cum laude winners. On the Latin II exam, Nathaniel Wilson, Victoria Lyapin, Fabian Ponce de Leon, Kately Martin and Carter Gerome were cum laude recipients; David Twerago, Cyindia Goolcharan, Hanna Holden, Samuel DePina, Andrew Chiang, and Krestina Beshara received magna cum laude awards; Alessandra Loffredo, Olivia O'Neil, Sarima Omodu-Amadi, Shannon Petrie, Olivia Little, and Meagan Lurie were maxima cum laude winners; finally Nicholas Kosh, Gabriel Ribeiro, Theresa Billo, Brianna Ferrandiz, Kamryn Oliveira, and Luis Ferrandiz earned the summa cum laude award. On the Latin III exam, Sarah Ferzoco received a cum laude award. Lisa Ramanauskas received the magna cum laude award. Kemina Julien and Megan Heffernan earned the maxima cum laude award and finally Jai'el Toussaint earned the summa cum laude award.

**W**hen the National Spanish Exam was administered, the following students received awards for their accomplishments: Patricia Daley, Shannon Jolley, Jasmine Ly, Colby Manning, Jessie Martin, Emma McSweeney, Raksha Pokharel, and Juliana Rush received premios de honor at level two. Rachel Hoover, Alexandra Joven, Victoria Lyapin, Cesar McElaney, Luis Ferrandis, and Julia Oliveira at level three. At level one, Isabela Paiva received a premio bronce. Victoria Silverman and Alexia Thomas were awarded premios bronces at level two.

When the National French Exam was administered, Ayomide Komolafe and Nia Charles received mention d'honneur on the level two exam and Alessandra Loffredo, Nakia Gelin, and Theresa Billo received mention d'honneur on the level three exam. Debby Fernand obtained mention d'honneur and Kemina Julien received a gold award on the level four exam. Marco Antunes received a mention d'honneur while Conor Cavanagh received a silver award on the level five exam.

## **Stoughton Athletic Department**

**Ryan Donahue, M.Ed., CAA**

**M**y name is Ryan Donahue, and I am currently in my ninth year serving as the Athletic Director of Stoughton High School and have now started my second year as K-12 Physical Education and Health Director. I consider myself very lucky to have had the opportunity to spend my professional career in Stoughton. It is a great community to be a part of, and one that has so many excellent aspects to it.

**O**ver the course of 2017, so much has happened in Stoughton. The most notable achievement came in the spring as the Town of Stoughton officially “broke ground” on a new high school. This is a major moment of the Town of Stoughton, as it marks the start of a new era. It has been a fascinating process to see everything that goes into the construction of a new high school. Principal Juliette Miller has met this project head on with a tireless work ethic, to make sure everyone who may possibly be affected during this process is informed that the team stays lock step with the aggressive timeline that is being taken on.

**T**he athletic department has been effected by this change in a variety of ways. By losing our traditional home venues for football, track and field, soccer and tennis we have been very busy making adjustments to provide our student athletes with the best possible opportunities for training and competition. This has proved to be no easy task; as countless logistics must be taken into consideration for virtually every decision. The construction of a new building will not only bring a state of the art facility, but the athletic department believes this has been a great opportunity to bring the community together in a “all hands on deck” effort to make the next few years the best they can be for our student athletes currently in the trenches.

**W**ith the construction resulting in a lack of traditional space, the athletic department has strengthened bonds with the Stoughton Recreational Department, STOYAC Football, and Stoughton Youth Soccer. All departments have worked collaboratively to provide familiar and convenient venues for games and practices to our students and families. Due to preventative maintenance and prideful upkeep, our student athletes have high quality fields dedicated to providing them to opportunity to represent Stoughton to the best of their abilities.

**A**t this time the athletic department would like to recognize John Denison. John is now a retired teacher/coach from Stoughton High School and has continued his dedication to the town by acting as Recreation Director. John has been instrumental in countless positive initiatives within Stoughton and has been a great mentor to all. John has recently retired as recreation director, and on behalf of the athletic department, we thank him for his dedication to Stoughton Athletics along with health and wellness in Stoughton and wish him well in his retirement. A big Black Knight welcome and best of luck to the new director of recreation, Tim Davis.

**T**he athletic department has also taken this opportunity to reach out to local schools at the secondary and collegiate level for assistance in providing our students with quality home events during this construction process. Randolph High School, Stonehill College, and Brockton High School have all opened their doors to Stoughton High School and have acted as top notch venues for well attended varsity football games. It has provided great perspective, seeing how each group has offered to help without question and spend considerable time making sure events run smoothly in the process. Our dedicated event staff enjoyed the challenge of hosting home events at an away facility, and genuinely looks forward to working with those school communities in the future.

**W**ith so much happening in Stoughton it is very important to acknowledge the most important group, which are our student-athletes. This change in traditional settings has been challenged for so many, I find it to be very impressive that our students have adapted so seamlessly to the project. There are certainly many moments of frustration but our student “get it” and are making the most of every moment. Girls’ ice hockey has begun their quest to represent Stoughton at the varsity level in a very difficult Hockomock League. They have officially earned their first win at the varsity level, and now have promising young student athletes on the roster showing promise through practice and previous experience. Boys lacrosse is essentially in the same stage as girls’ ice hockey: Through senior student leadership they have finished their first season competing at the varsity level. This was the class that led the charge of fundraising to make lacrosse a reality at Stoughton High, and the certainly continued to impress by earning multiple wins in their first season. Though graduating a big class of seniors, the benefit of a youth program is already obvious and providing staying power of this program. A special thanks to everyone who worked diligently to fundraise and push for Lacrosse development in Stoughton, it is a great game and one that will hopefully be here to stay.

**B**aseball is one of the long standing traditions in Stoughton. The spring 2017 baseball team continued to keep that tradition alive by posting a 15-6 record earning their 2<sup>nd</sup> Hockomock League Championship Title in back to back years. The boys hosted an MIAA State Tournament game but lost in extra innings to a tough Milford team in an absolute nail biter. Stoughton would be proud of how the team conducted themselves in an upsetting loss, as they displayed top notch sportsmanship and a true team mentality by being there for each other in a difficult moment. The Black Knight track and field program continues to strengthen as they expand and offer participation opportunities to middle school students as well as over 200 students at the high school. The program continues its focus on team building, but now is incorporating more demanding commitment standards in attempt to bring the program to the next level.

**I**n the fall of 2017, our volleyball team the most successful season in over a decade by any female team posting a 16-5 record and just missing a league championship to the powerhouse in North Attleboro. They continued their charitable efforts off the court with their fundraising towards the American Cancer Society. To date the program has now contributed roughly \$20,000. Truly a great accomplishment and a season the girls have so much to be proud of. Our football team continued to display their toughness by traveling to all games and still qualifying for the MIAA Tournament. Their season was highlighted by a “Pick Six” interception with little time left to secure the first round tournament win over Whitman-Hanson. Athletics is looking forward to continued success and growth in citizenship in 2018.

**Dr. Robert G. O'Donnell Middle School**

**Matthew Colantonio, M. Ed., Administrative Principal**

**T**he O'Donnell Middle School partners with families and the community to provide a safe learning environment that fosters the intellectual growth and social/emotional development of each and every student. OMS students are empowered to be active participants in their school community by exhibiting our core values of R.E.S.P.E.C.T. (Responsibility, Effort, Spirit, Pride, Excellence, Compassion, and Teamwork). Inside and outside of the classroom, these values were on full display in 2017.

**I**n the spring of 2017, our students participated in a new version of the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System called the “next generation MCAS” in English Language Arts and Mathematics. Our students and faculty were more than prepared for this new, more rigorous MCAS, as curriculum, instruction, and assessment over the past several school years have emphasized the higher order thinking skills required of students in the 21st Century. Because this is a new version of the MCAS, the state did not give accountability and assistance levels to those schools, like the O’Donnell Middle School. We would have been at the top of this scale (Level 1 or Level 2) based on the previous version of the MCAS, if rating had been done.

**O**ne of the goals in our School Improvement Plan, both for 2016-2017 and 2017-2018, is to increase the number of eighth grade students performing at proficient or higher on the Science Technology and Engineering MCAS. There are several significant action steps in place to help us reach this goal. We have added a STEM Exploratory class for all students in addition to their general science class. The focus in the STEM class is on technology, design, engineering, and basic computer science. The science curriculum has been redesigned to spiral, so that the three main topics in middle school science (Earth science, life science, physical science) occur in each grade each year. Our Robotics Club and Science Club continue to thrive as extracurricular offerings for students interested in science. In 2017, the number of students performing at proficient or higher on the Science Technology Engineering MCAS increased by eight percentage points.

**O**n March 30<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> the OMS Drama Club, under the direction of Ms. Betty Bauman and Ms. Julianne Warren, put on a big spring musical for the second year in a row. The cast and crew put on two wonderful performances of *Beauty and the Beast* to a full house on both evenings. Lots of students and staff contributed to the performance beyond the cast and crew, including the set design and prop assistance from the Art Club.

**W**e are lucky to have a dedicated group of parents, teachers, and community member serving on our School Council. Another goal in this year’s School Improvement Plan is to increase the cultural competence of our students and staff. In June, the School Council designed a survey for all students and staff around cultural competence. The results of this survey were used to outline the action steps to accomplish this goal. Our social studies teachers are working with the Facing History and Primary Source organizations on lessons in cultural competence and our Guidance Department is using

Second Step to reinforce these lessons for students. Other resources have come from The Anti-Defamation League, Teaching Tolerance, and the United Nations. There have been team meetings for students and faculty meetings dedicated to this goal.

**O**n June 26, more than 300 eighth graders were recognized for the the successful completion of their middle school academic program at our Class Day Ceremony held at the Stoughton High School Auditorium. Stephanie Tadros and Davin Swierzewski won the Emile Farrington Award for “best all around” eighth grade girl and boy.

**T**he Dr. Robert G. O’Donnell Middle School Chapter on the National Junior Honor Society was founded in 2013 as a way to recognize students for their leadership, service, scholarship, and character. On October 26<sup>th</sup>, the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Induction Ceremony for the OMS Chapter of the National Junior Honor Society was held. Ms. Laura Whittaker and Mr. Andrew Whiting, co-advisors for NJHS, proudly announced the 57 new inductees. It was an amazing event that showcased so many promising students and how much this program has grown in four years.

**S**pirit Day 2017 was amazing. Held on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, the OMS Student Council and their advisor Mr. Daniel Block organized the day with a variety of fun competitions to promote school spirit. The day began with a door decorating contest, homeroom versus homeroom. There was a “Minute to Win It” challenge where students faced off against teachers. There was a contest for most spirited outfit. During the Pep Rally, the SHS Marching Band and Color Guard performed their halftime show for the entire student body in the gymnasium. The award-winning Stoughton Raiders Cheerleaders performed as well. Coach Greg Burke and members of the SHS Black Knights football team addressed the students, promoting hard work and, of course, the big game against Canton. The day ended with a teacher "turkey" toss for the students to see. In place of a real turkey, we had Tom, an eight-pound medicine ball dressed up as a turkey. The eighth graders watched the turkey toss live in the gym, and it was broadcast live to other classrooms thanks to the SPS Technology Department's live feed. The seventh grade edged out grades six and eight as the overall winners of Spirit Day competitions

**E**ach year, Project 351 unites an eighth grade Ambassador from every city and town in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts for a transformative year of leadership development, enrichment, and impact. In November, fifteen OMS students were silently nominated by their teachers to

represent Stoughton. All the nominees were recognized here at the OMS and at the Stoughton School Committee Meeting on January 23<sup>rd</sup>. Congratulations to all of the nominees: Samantha Tran, Evan Hoover, April Richardson, Stephanie Bento, Syna Sheth, Annalisa Marckmann, Erik Teodoro, Ella Anderson, Genesis Parker, McKayla Williams, Nathan Faria, Auston Nguyen, Celie Melo, Daniel Nascimento, and this year's Ambassador Immanuel White.

Our Head Teachers have been working with their departments and our curriculum coordinators to improve teaching and learning in all subjects. We have been doing much work in 2017 on interdisciplinary teaching across multiple subjects and on teams, as you will see in the department summaries that follow.

### **Mathematics**

**T**he Math Department at the O'Donnell Middle School continues to work on aligning the curriculum to the new Massachusetts Common Core State Standards as well as updating assessments to accommodate changes being made to statewide exams. School Benchmark Trimester exams are all taken on SchoolNet. The ODMS took the Next Generation MCAS (MCAS 2.0) exam in May with 6th grade having 49% proficiency, 7th grade 46% proficiency, and 8th grade 41% proficiency.

**T**he entire Math Department has taken on the challenge of improving the curriculum by updating all textbooks. We are in year two of implementation of Pearson's *enVisionmath2.0* in grades six, seven, and eight and Common Core Algebra in grade 8 Challenge classes. The department continues to use and explore this exciting tool which offers the flexibility of print, digital, or blended instruction at all grade levels. *enVisionmath2.0* helps students develop deep conceptual understanding through problem-based instruction, visual learning, small group work, and personalization. Pearson's focus, coherence, and rigor are aligned to the Common Core State Standards in Massachusetts.

**A**ll Math students in grades K-8 continue to use aimswebPlus, a program is designed to universally screen and progress monitor. AIMSWebPlus uses brief, valid, and reliable measures of foundational skills. AIMSWebPlus allows you to capture, manage, and report your assessment data all in one seamless, web-based system. It also allows teachers to identify at-risk students early, to monitor progress, and to differentiate and track targeted instruction.

**T**he entire Math Department has adopted a rotating model for teaching and learning. Every middle school student participates in a rotating math environment. Each student is assigned a primary math teacher who is responsible for attendance, entering grades, and communicating with parents. In grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>, the math teams consistently identify areas of strength and growth for each student allowing them exposure to multiple teaching styles and personalities as well as a rotating group of peers. It continues to be a successful venture!

**T**he placement of students moving into 7<sup>th</sup> grade for Pre-Algebra is determined by fall and spring AIMSWeb scores, their MCAS/PARCC scores, Year to Date (YTD) math grades, and professional review by the staff. Seventh graders prepare for the rigors of Algebra by focusing on 8<sup>th</sup> grade standards, with 7<sup>th</sup> grade standards being reviewed. 8<sup>th</sup> grade review 7<sup>th</sup> grade standards throughout the year as units build off prior knowledge. The 8<sup>th</sup> grade math team continues to work on alignment with the high school to ensure a smooth transition to 9<sup>th</sup> grade Geometry.

**T**he Math faculty continues to challenge themselves and add to their own professional development. Every grade is working on designing assessments that match MCAS's rigor with a focus on "quality versus quantity" and rigorous trimester exams. Several team members have taken professional development classes on technology, Google Classroom, SchoolNet, as well as specific Math courses that focused on the 8 Mathematical Practices and Formative Assessments in the Math Classroom. The Department has also attended Networking workshops given by the DESE. These workshops focus on the vertical alignment of grades 6 through 12 in the standards of ratios and proportional reasoning and the math pathway students entering middle school will take leading them all the way through their senior year. The faculty has also challenged themselves to learn more about the whole child with workshops that focus on motivation, anxiety and differentiated instruction in the classroom.

**I**n December the entire ODMS participated in the Hour of Code. The Hour of Code is an opportunity for students to receive an introduction to computer science and to demystify code while illustrating that we can all learn the basics. With the help of the technology department, each student was given the opportunity to work on a computer programming activity such as, Mine Craft, design your own Google logo, Star Wars, Scratch, and Moving Monkey provided by code.org and playcodemonkey.org. The event was met with great success.

**H**omework assistance, PARCC preps, and Math Olympiads are offered after school by faculty members on certain days. In addition, many students participate in a Math Labs where they can work on the basic math skills, math homework, problem solving skills, and MCAS preparation. Students at the ODMS are always encouraged to challenge themselves, think mathematically, and always do their personal best.

## **Science**

**I**n 2017, the Science, Technology/Engineering Department at the O'Donnell Middle School has been working diligently at exposing students to inquiry based lessons in all the science domains. Throughout the year, students will experience microscopes, explore the principles of density and investigate weathering and erosion and its impacts on a local and global scale. This year has also seen exciting changes in the science classroom as teachers continue to implement the new state standards and spiraling curriculum.

**G**rade 6 students have transitioned to a full-time science class that meets every day compared to elementary school. The first month of school was dedicated to the Nature of Science which introduced students to the meaning of science, various fields of science, methods and processes that all scientists utilize. Students practiced observation skills, making inferences and predictions with the use of mini-labs. These are skills students will continue to use and build upon throughout middle school. The first unit was in Astronomy and students learned about their “place in space”. They were amazed that we live in one galaxy out of billions of galaxies in the universe. Students also learned the cause of night and day, the moon phase cycle, solar and lunar eclipses. Students utilized a NASA computer simulator to understand the monthly moon phases followed by a hands-on demonstration by students. One of their highlights was when each student used a lamp and a white foam ball “lollipop” to model the actual moon phases and eclipses on their “moon lollipops”!

**G**rade 6 students were pretty intrigued when they were introduced to the theories of continental drift and plate tectonics and came to the conclusion that continents have moved over time and will even continue to move. Students recreated a puzzle map of one of the past supercontinents using fossil and rock evidence, called “Puzzling Pangea”. They were a little disappointed when they realized there was not one “right” answer. They are gradually learning that some scientists have to make inferences about the past with the evidence they have.

**I**n Trimester Two, students are learning how to measure the mass and volume of substances using triple beam balances and electronic balances. One highlight will be when students act as forensic experts and use their knowledge of density to solve a crime scene investigation. The trimester ends with a bang when students experiment with chemical reactions in a Ziploc baggie and then investigate everyday substances that involve chemical reactions, like hand warmers, glow sticks, and instant ice packs.

**S**eventh grade students at OMS were very busy this school year. The theme for the seventh grade is Earth's systems and cycles. Students gained an understanding of how the layers of the Earth work as a system by mapping the current earthquakes, faults and volcanoes around the world. Moving up through the layers of the Earth, students then looked to the atmosphere and designed their own labs to investigate the impact of different forms of weathering using a sugar cube as a model for the Earth. Diving even deeper into the systems and cycles of the Earth, students then built and tested their own solar stills looking at the water cycle.

**E**ighth grade students at OMS began the year very energetically, so to speak. Students explored the concepts of potential and kinetic energy by designing a lab to investigate the factors that may influence the amount of energy produced in a car. Students built ramps and used balls to simulate cars in the classroom. They calculated speed and energy and applied their findings to their hypotheses. Next, students applied the concept of kinetic energy to thermal energy. When particles move more, they get hotter. Students were challenged with a problem to test their understanding of how the two energies were related. They were asked to design, build and test a "hut" to keep their penguin (ice cube) from melting under several lamps and on top of hand warmers. Students were very successful as most maintained 80% or more of their original ice cube's mass.

**A**ll three grades at OMS continue to explore science beyond the classroom walls. Grade eight recently went to Bridgewater State for a field trip to some of their science labs and soon will be venturing to the Museum of Science in Boston. Teachers continue to expand their knowledge outside of the classroom as well. Katie Clarke continues to provide support for teachers to develop strong inquiry based lessons and units utilizing the new standards that DESE has provided. Teachers are also utilizing Katie and her expertise to prepare for the next generation MCAS 2.0 by weaving rigor, inquiry and problem solving into their lessons and units.

Science teachers continue to integrate LEGOs as manipulatives in the classroom. The LEGOs can be used to investigate chemical reactions, photosynthesis, air pollution, climate change and more. Currently, the eighth grade uses the LEGO kits to demonstrate the Law of Conservation of Mass. Grade seven showcases how photosynthesis and respiration are intricately linked by manipulating the same LEGO bricks to create two separate molecules.

For after school enrichment, students have the opportunity to participate in clubs related to science and technology/engineering; Robotics Club and Science Club. Students are excited to build, create and investigate in many different areas of science.

Exciting things are happening in the Technology and Engineering department as well. Students are able to take an engineering course in every grade with each year focusing on a different engineering design. In grade six, students are exploring circuits while in grade seven students are investigating alternative forms of energy. Grade eight is utilizing advanced technology and design by designing and creating their own ideas of how to help animals that may need prosthetics at a zoo, for example. Students developed a design, sketched it out on paper then transposed their drawing by coding into a computer where it was then printed with the school's 3D printer. Students could literally watch their ideas come to life!

### **English Language Arts**

The English Language Arts Department at the Dr. Robert G. O'Donnell Middle School continues to provide students with opportunities to excel and encourages intellectual growth. There continue to be many areas where we offer broad educational opportunities to challenge our students to work towards their potential as lifelong learners as well as promote the school's mission statement demonstrating the values of R.E.S.P.E.C.T.

Throughout the 2016 -2017 school year, the ELA Department continued to provide a broad and balanced curriculum to foster students' academic advancement. The department spent professional development time aligning our units and lessons to the newest Common Core documents in order to improve student learning. Members of the ELA staff created and/or revised the Writing Toolkits available for all OMS staff. These new documents were presented to the entire staff during an early

Thursday professional development session. Additionally, we continued to incorporate technology to better prepare our students for readiness in 21st century colleges and careers.

**M**any events took place throughout the year, but there are a few notable highlights. Each student participated in a class spelling bee with a winner and runner-up advancing to the school-wide spelling bee. On April 13, 2017, the 57th Annual O'Donnell Middle School Spelling Bee took place. Our school champion was Marcus Rodney; second place was Robert Andrade; third place was Huan Ly. Prizes and certificates were awarded through the continued generosity of the Stoughton Women's Club. Another opportunity for students to showcase their accomplishments was the annual tradition of our outstanding OMS Knight of Excellence, which was an overwhelming success. Our students displayed a variety of examples of their work that demonstrated their achievements, learning styles and diversity.

**A**t all English Language Arts levels students have been investigating a variety of news articles, historical documents, and biographies/autobiographies, etc. to reinforce critical thinking skills. Along with informational texts, students have been exploring a variety of literature selections (poetry, drama, short stories, novels, etc.) to continue to develop their comprehension, analytical, and evaluative skills when examining different types of texts. Students have been able to build on their previous understandings of vocabulary and grammar to demonstrate their knowledge of different texts through writing. They have completed a variety of compositions: research, argumentative, analytical, narrative. This broad and balanced curriculum encouraged our students and staff to raise the bar and strive towards a higher academic level where all students can learn and achieve success.

**T**he ELA department at the middle school strives to emulate the SPS vision to honor excellence, celebrate diversity, and challenge our students to realize their potential. We model our curriculum to set high standards using innovative, inclusive, and rigorous programs and experiences that enable our students to succeed and be a source of community pride.

### **World Language**

**T**he World Language Department at O'Donnell Middle School offers three languages: Spanish, French, and Chinese. Successful completion of the middle school language program provides high

school credit for a Level I language course and allows students to advance to Level II in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Grade six students are offered an introductory class in Spanish, French, and Chinese for one quarter (45 Days). The grade 6 Exploring World Language classes allow the students to have a glimpse into the three languages offered in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade. The introductory course helps students select their language of choice for the two-year Level I program that begins in Grade 7 and continues through Grade 8.

**T**he French Program has grown significantly in the 2017-2018 school year. Student enrollment in French for the 1A program more than doubled from 2016 to 2017. The French 1A program currently has 109 students while the 2<sup>nd</sup> year French 1B program has 49 students enrolled. The numbers of students opting to take French in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade grew at an unprecedented rate from last year to the current school year. The increased number of students opting to study French is noteworthy because Mrs. Katia Rigas and Mrs. Maria Driscoll work endlessly to offer students an amazing program. The 6<sup>th</sup> Grade introductory program, the hard work of the French teachers, and the annual travel opportunities to Quebec undoubtedly have caught the attention of students and have drawn them to pursue French as their language of study.

**I**n September of 2017 Fuqin Sun joined the OMS World Language Department to teach the Chinese program. Ms. Sun grew up in Shijiazhuang City, in the Hebei province of China. She brings a sincere love for teaching children and offers a unique style of instruction. Ms. Sun incorporates the study of culture, song, and language acquisition through a variety of immersive techniques and best practices.

**T**he OMS World Language Department is innovative with teaching with 21<sup>st</sup> Century tools. Last year students went 1:1 with Chromebooks which enabled greater possibilities for language acquisition. The department has continued to utilize many common technology tools to enhance instruction, reviews, and assessments. World language teachers have made common goals for student learning performance that entails common planning, analyzing data, and reflecting on strengths and weaknesses in our practice. The department has dedicated itself to a common goal that strives to improve student learning and performance through collaborative planning. The access to technology has opened many doors for learning a foreign language, researching the target cultures, and presenting student work. The OMS language teachers are all highly dedicated to seeking out

new ways to enhance student learning and outcomes for all learners with modern day tools and technology.

**I**n the spring of 2017 the World Language department successfully engaged parents and students in the annual Knight of Excellence. This spectacular event brought our school community together to appreciate our impressive multicultural diversity. It allowed staff, students, parents and other community members to be amazed by the hard work students invested throughout the year. Alongside the massive display of student work, more than 100 ethnic foods were brought in by families to give our community a taste of food from the various cultures that make up our student body. This night showcased the talents of our students and engaged our families in a fun filled evening honoring our students' hard work and our ethnic diversity. Students, staff, and family members were able to sample the dishes and view the fruits of our year's work in a marvelous display. The Knight of Excellence has become a highly anticipated evening for all members of the school community.

### **Social Studies**

**A** major goal of the O'Donnell Middle School's Social Studies Department is to provide students with a wide range of knowledge and experiences that will make them more responsible, informed, and active citizens. Teachers have attended a variety of workshops, seminars, and courses in order to bring social studies to life in the classroom. Chromebooks and additional technologies are also being used on a daily basis to engage students and creatively instruct the material.

**T**he Social Studies Department renewed their membership to the Massachusetts Council for the Social Studies (MCSS), a non-profit educational organization supporting Social Studies educators. Head Teacher Caitlin Valair attended the annual MCSS conference April 3-4, 2017 at the Edward M. Kennedy Institute, after which she was able to share new knowledge of a variety of resources and techniques available for Social Studies classes.

Social Studies Professional Development has included collaboration with three phenomenal organizations- the *Gilder Lehrman Institute*, *Facing History*, and *Primary Source*. The *Gilder Lehrman Institute* focused on teaching literacy through history using multiple types of texts: primary

sources, multimedia, and visuals for analysis. Educators were exposed to digital literacy tools that they can use to enhance their formative and summative assessment development. *Primary Source* worked with sixth and seventh grade teachers, using global texts to explore universal themes, analyze documents, and support argumentative writing. *Facing History*'s mission is to engage students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and antisemitism in order to promote the development of a more humane and informed citizenry. Eighth grade teachers worked with *Facing History* to tackle issues of ethics, social responsibility, prejudice, and justice in the classroom.

**I**n addition to cultural competency, professional development seeks to improve student literacy. The School Net-based common assessments have provided student-level data that is vital to improving as a department and examining literacy skills. The interdisciplinary work between the Social Studies and English Language Arts departments also continues to develop phenomenal literacy projects across the curriculum. Each grade level has worked as a team to produce two to three interdisciplinary units of study. The interdisciplinary projects combine higher-order thinking skills of historical research with creative and argumentative writing.

**D**avid O'Neil, Sharon Dailey, and Jennifer Ellis are the World History teachers in grade six who work hard to bring ancient civilization to life. Both the mid-year and final exam in grade six are now on-line, common assessments. Grade six also implements pre and post tests for each unit of study. There is a focus on hands-on, creative projects that bring history to life for sixth graders. Projects include the Mesopotamian flip-books, Sumerian writing and cuneiform, the pharaoh Facebook page, and creating a life-size sarcophagus for an imaginary pharaoh. The Ancient Civilization Traveling Museum is scheduled to visit the sixth graders in spring 2018. Various replica artifacts of ancient cultures will be shared and reviewed with students.

**C**hristine Spears, John Gunning, and Rachel Killion continue to broaden their Geography curriculums and develop as professionals. Hosted by their Geography teachers, grade seven students participated in the 10th Annual Geography Bee at the Knight of Excellence in April 2017. In spring 2018, Grade 7 Geography teachers are excited to implement reading in their classroom as they begin reading a new book with their students. The *New York Times* bestseller, *A Long Walk to Water*, focuses on the on the physical realities of people struggling to survive and the psychological and

emotional aspects of the struggle for survival. To survive in dangerous times, people need to *want* to survive, which requires finding a source of strength, determination, and hope. Not only are the Social Studies classes benefiting from *A Long Walk to Water*; the book will offer excellent opportunities for interdisciplinary lessons in both ELA and Science classes.

Caitlin Valair, Richard Grasso, and Anne Frasca work to keep American History and Government relevant and applicable to their eighth-grade students. All three eighth grade teachers attended the *Facing History* Workshop titled, “Literature of the Holocaust: Teaching Salvaged Pages” on November 3, 2016. In this workshop, the teachers explored ways to use literature to help students confront the history of the Holocaust. They examined ways to teach about adolescent choices, responsibility, and the impact of history on individual identity, along with the power of diary as a historical and literary record. In addition, Mrs. Valair attended *Facing History*’s “Choices in Little Rock” workshop on March 21, 2017. The workshop explored the desegregation of Central High School in 1957, a defining moment in the American Civil Rights Movement. Mrs. Valair was thrilled to meet Dr. Terrence Roberts, one of the Little Rock Nine, who was a guest speaker at the workshop.

A brand new Grade 8 American History/Social Studies Honors class was established at the start of the 2017-2018 school year. The honors course examines the same wide variety of topics as the college-level class, including the American Revolutionary War, U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights, Civil War, Civil Rights Movement, World War I and World War II. The honors course is designed to provide students with the analytical skills and factual knowledge necessary to critically assess and interpret American History. Students in this course must have already achieved a level of reading and writing skills necessary for this course. The honors programs prepares students for ninth grade honors by demanding students to produce more complex evidence through extensive independent reading and writing assignments, self-assessments, outside readings, and primary source interpretation/analysis. Honors assessments primarily include narrative writing and open response questions.

All 100 of Mrs. Valair’s Team 8B students participated in the 2016 Veterans of Foreign Wars Patriot’s Pen Essay Contest. Students wrote essays on, “The America I Believe In.” The Stoughton VFW’s first place winner was 8B’s Kailey Palma, second place winner was 8B’s Rebecca DeSousa,

and third place winner was 8B's Sabrina Martins. Mrs. Valair and the 8B winners attended the annual awards ceremony at the VFW in Stoughton in May 2017. Mrs. Valair's Team 8B students also collected donations for their annual community service project, Care Packages for Troops. Students learned about gratitude and how to show thanks to veterans. Demonstrating appreciation for active duty soldiers, students created hand-made cards and collected toiletries, snacks, games, and other items to ship to soldiers. Twelve students volunteered to package the boxes after school, filling 14 care packages in May 2017. The boxes were shipped to soldiers on active duty around the world, including Kuwait, Jordan, and Cuba. John P. Russell Insurance Agency in Stoughton made financial contributions to the project, which covered the cost of all care packages.

**T**he O'Donnell Middle School hosted the 2017 Southeastern Massachusetts Geography Network (SEMAGNET) Geography Fair on March 25, 2017. Focusing on the theme of protected land, students researched a specific site using the five themes of geography: location, region, human-environment interactions, movement and place. Student-created projects reflected their research and demonstrated an understanding of the place they investigated.

**S**tudents, teachers, and family members from Stoughton and Plymouth school districts participated in the fair. In the OMS gym, fair visitors could interact with Earth View-a giant inflatable globe, and a huge floor map of South America from National Geographic. Stoughton Historical Society President Dwight McKerron also set up a local history exhibit with numerous maps of Stoughton in the OMS library.

**O**MS seventh-grade geography teacher Rachel Killion coordinated the fair while OMS teachers John Gunning, Chrissy Spears, and Caitlin Valair helped the event run smoothly. OMS principal Matthew Colantonio and SPS Curriculum Coordinator Ashley Goldstein served as judges, while Data and Extended Learning Time Specialist Lynda Feeney also showed her support at the fair.

Stoughton's 2017 SEMAGNET Geography Fair Award Winners were Samantha Spears, best 3-D display; Deborah Lima, Charlotte Garcia and Derek Hu, best maps; Christyan Marques and Natalie Smith, best oral presentation; Pamella Pereira, Leah McCarty and Savannah Ellis, best use of theme; Maya Eisenstein and Neza Amado, best use of theme; Araianna Fresina, Sienna Lourenco, Gio Ortiz and Bridget Smith, overall creativity; Eve Saade, Marcell Espinoza and Evan Hoover, best oral

presentation; Isabella Fraga, best digital oral presentation; Joseph McNulty, best maps; Abigael Babajide, best visual display; Julia Driscoll and Kylie Flynn, best 3-D display; Bithialine Gustin and Bithiane Gustin, best digital project maps.

**O**rganized by Caitlin Valair and David Guglia, the eighth grade had its second annual Memorial Day Assembly in May of 2017. Former Stoughton High school teacher, Paul Monti, father of 2009 U.S. Congressional Medal of Honor recipient Sergeant First Class (SFC) Jared Monti, came to speak to OMS 8th graders about the true meaning of Memorial Day. He spoke passionately about his son and the ultimate sacrifice SFC Jared Monti made for his country. He imparted three things that Jared lived by; “Always do your best...Never give up...Do the right thing.” Mr. Monti displayed many personal items for the students to view. Mrs. Valair and team 8B organized a school-wide fundraiser to collect donations for the “Flags for Vets” program, providing all veterans graves at the Bourne National Cemetery with a flag for Memorial Day. The check was presented to Mr. Monti at the ceremony.

**T**ruly bringing the curriculum to life, nearly 140 eighth graders traveled to Washington D.C. June 9-12, 2017. Team 8C took a field trip on the Freedom Trail in October of 2017, which provided a wonderful review of the causes of the American Revolution. Thanks to the generous funding of the OMS PTSO and John P. Russell Insurance Agency, all eighth grade teams attended a trip to the Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the U.S. Senate in December of 2017. As part of this trip, students take part in a “mock Senate simulation” activity where they debate and vote on laws. The trip provides a great understanding of our government and civic participation.

**T**he Veterans Day Assembly in November of 2017 was another huge success. OMS is fortunate to have several veterans, from World War II through the present-day War on Terror, continue to participate and bestow their knowledge, experiences, and life-lessons on our eighth grade students. Local veterans from the Stoughton community who participated in the assembly included Joe DeVito, Charles Wade, Richard Hickey, Matthew Gada, Billy Farwell, Robert Devine, Greg White, Sheanna Isabel, Mike Pazyra, Tom Fitzgerald, Paul Andruchow, and Joe Fustolo. Each veteran was interviewed by an eighth grader, who presented their veteran to their entire eighth grade class. This year’s eighth grade participants included April Richardson, Evan Hoover, Yasmin Sousa, Colin

Alessi, Grace Lally, Sophia Leyva, Immanuel White, Eve Saade, Genesis Parker, Sydney Menz, Bella DeMarino, and Jonah Ly.

**M**r. Charles Wade was the 2017 O'Donnell Middle School Veteran of the Year. To ensure Mr. Wade that his service in the Korean War will never be forgotten, the entire OMS faculty and staff generously contributed to help raise money to honor Mr. Wade with a Korean War Veterans Association (KWVA) Life Membership. An additional donation to the KWVA Memorial Fund was placed in Charlie's name to assist with the Veterans Day ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, which the KWVA co-hosted.

**T**he assembly was organized by OMS Assistant Principal David Guglia and 8th Grade Social Studies teacher Caitlin Valair. The OMS band and chorus, led by Keith Curbow and Betty Bauman, did a wonderful job performing a variety of patriotic music. The Stoughton Council on Aging's Carolyn Lee and Jessica Fraine also held a wonderful brunch for veterans before the ceremony.

**A**n amazing update following the Veterans Day 2016 Ceremony: At the 2016 OMS Veterans Day Assembly, Mr. Guglia and Mrs. Valair wanted to do something special for one of their "favorite" vets, Mr. Joe DeVito, to thank him for his service and dedication to the town of Stoughton, as Joe is a lifelong Stoughton resident who also served on a PT boat in the Pacific during World War II.

**M**rs. Valair discovered a "Road to Victory Brick Program" being offered at the new World War II Museum in New Orleans, and thought it would be the perfect honor. Team 8B coordinated a school-wide effort to raise money to purchase Mr. DeVito his own brick to be laid at the museum, labeled with his name, hometown, and WWII PT boat.

**T**he entire OMS faculty and staff generously contributed to help raise the money needed to purchase the brick, which was presented to Mr. DeVito at the 2016 Veteran's Day Assembly. Mr. DeVito had NO idea the school community had done this, and was truly touched.

**F**or Joe's 91st birthday this past October 2017, his daughter's wanted to give him a wonderful gift; tickets to visit any place in the world. Joe considered going to Italy, but ultimately chose to visit the WWII Museum, where OMS had honored him with a brick that he wanted to check out himself.

Joe's daughter, not knowing much about the museum, contacted them to find out more information. The museum was thrilled as they immediately requested Joe to be a guest of honor, whom they could interview and ask him to speak with others regarding his time serving on a PT boat in the Pacific during World War II. Joe was humbled and happily agreed to this. The story gets even better! A person at the World War II Museum gave a call to JetBlue, who offered to fly Joe, his wife Jeanne, their three daughters and son-in laws, and two of their granddaughters to the World War II Museum, for free.

Joe and Jeanne said the trip was "Better than we could have ever imagined." Jeanne said "Joe was like a rock star...He was given the royal treatment everywhere we went; the museum, restaurants, even on the street-people were clapping for him and talking to him, some even wanted to take pictures with him." We are so happy for Mr. DeVito and his family, and to think, it all started with a brick.

### **Joseph R. Dawe, Jr. Elementary School**

#### **Robert C. Cancellieri, Administrative Principal**

At the Joseph R. Dawe, Jr. Elementary School, we commit to excellence in intellectual, physical, social, and emotional development. We respect individual differences and strive to reach our full potential. After completing my transition to the Dawe Elementary School as the new Administrative Principal during the summer and fall of 2017, it immediately became clear to me that this is a very special place to work.

The Joseph R. Dawe, Jr. Elementary School has a diverse kindergarten through fifth grade student population of approximately 360 students. Our student population is made up of children who speak a variety of languages and represent a wide array of ethnicities and cultures. The diversity that is present in our school is what makes being a Dawe Dragon so unique and special. Together, the Dawe School Dragons form a strong community invested in teaching, learning, communication, and social emotional development. At the Dawe School, we are a community of Dragons who share a common vision and high expectations for both our academics and character.

As such, this year we have developed a schoolwide initiative that focuses on building character within the Dawe students as part of our "whole student" educational philosophy. Our students and

staff are expected to conduct themselves with character each day. The character traits that we focus on are: *responsibility, respect, citizenship, self-control, integrity/honesty, compassion, tolerance/patience, confidence, perseverance, cooperation*. Each month a new trait is introduced and reinforced in the classrooms through morning meeting, classroom procedures, class expectations and any other time that seems appropriate in the classroom. Outside the classroom, everyone is encouraged to use the language and to recognize students who are conducting themselves with character such as, “Be sure to conduct yourself with character.”, “Did you conduct yourself with character?” and “I saw that you were being responsible.” These words gave us a powerful, common language to use when talking about character with the students. Each month we recognized students who exemplify the trait for that month. Students have their picture taken and the pictures are displayed in the display case in the lobby. ‘Conducting Ourselves with Character’ helps to create a positive learning environment for our school community. Our school-based teacher-led Literacy Leadership Team has even created a library of books that focus on each monthly character trait to help support this initiative even further.

**T**he Dawe School is most fortunate to have an extremely active Parent-Teacher Organization that works very hard to support our students, staff, and school. In September of 2017, the P.T.O. collaborated with the staff to start the new school year with the exciting Boosterthon Fun Run for the second year in a row. Similar to last year, the Fun Run incentives jumpstarted the school year with school wide rewards. The school wide rewards for this year were watching our physical education teacher get slimed by all of the teachers in the building, having the technology teacher greet students and visit their classrooms during the day while wearing a movie-quality Iron Man costume, and participating in a campfire read aloud with the principal who camped out on the school’s front lawn. Not only was the Fun Run like nothing the students have experienced, but it also raised over \$17,000 to enhance our school environment in many ways by providing additional resources for teachers, cultural presentations, field trips, after-school programs, enrichment programs, and family activities throughout the school year. The funds raised by the Fun Run in 2017 have allowed our Dawe Dragon fifth graders to participate in a district wide viewing of the movie *Wonder* at the Randolph Showcase Movie Theater. The funds raised have also provided the opportunity for all of our students to experience a schoolwide hip-hop inspired motivational assembly focused on character development, allowed our fourth graders to go to the Museum of Science on a field trip, and allowed

us to book in-school STEM-based field trips through Discovery Education for each of our grade levels.

**T**he Dawe School staff believes in the importance of frequent communication with the parents and guardians of our students. We encourage parents to play an active role in their children's education by staying informed. Letters to parents, notices or reminders of upcoming events, calendars, phone calls and monthly newsletters from the principal are utilized to make parents aware of special activities or events and to promote regular communication throughout the school year. Parents are encouraged to communicate with their children's teachers and to meet with them, as needed, during the school year. The 2017 Back to School Night at the Dawe Elementary School offered families the opportunity to come back to the school with their children for the first time to experience what school was like through their perspective. By offering Back to School Night in this new style platform, we were able to increase our parent attendance rate from 63% to 79%!

**W**e continued to offer staff directed academic and enrichment extended day programs to our students throughout the year. At the district level, the Dawe School had significant representation at the Knights of Summer program. Our own programs are offered before and after school. This year's enrichment programs included Math Games/Centers, Wellness/Physical Education, Technology and Robotics, Book Club/Buddies, and Yoga. These enrichment programs are offered to grades 2 – 5. Academic Support programs are offered to students in grades two and four who were identified by staff as needing additional support to enhance their academic progress.

**A**t the Joseph R. Dawe, Jr. Elementary School, we are committed to strengthening our technology program and developing new avenues for students to further develop their 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills. Student in grades kindergarten through 2 have iPads as part of the district one to one initiative while students in grades 3 through 5 have Chromebooks. These tools are used for research, and to reinforce and practice skills. In addition, students have been using Bee Bots, Blue Bots, Probots and the Terrapin Logo Website during their weekly computer time to learn about computer programming and to enhance their critical thinking skills. Furthermore, the fall of 2017 marked the beginning stages of our technology teacher's classroom transitioning into a Makerspace. By transitioning our technology classroom into a Makerspace, we have been able to provide our students with a collaborative learning area where they have access to a wide variety of materials and equipment in

order to create, modify, and develop projects that are a part of hypothetical real-world situations (*i.e. designing and building an emergency airdrop package parachute system*). Furthermore, our school-based teacher-led STEM group has also supported our mission to strengthen our technology program by developing monthly STEM challenges for every grade-level, partnering with the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society's *Pennies for Patients* program that will allow us to obtain a free K – 5 STEM/Engineering Curriculum, and partnering with the National Association of Women in Construction to allow our 1<sup>st</sup> graders the opportunity to participate in the national *Block Kids* building challenge.

**T**he Dawe teachers collaborate regularly to strengthen teaching and learning for all students. The teachers share a common understanding of high-quality evidence-based instruction and have formal systems for monitoring student progress. Classroom and support teachers determine which students are in need of receiving tiered support and provide them with the appropriate instruction based on the grade-level Response to Intervention plan. Teachers participate in Data Team meetings throughout the year (every six to eight weeks) to focus on student learning and working collaboratively. The focus this year is on computer based assessments for students and staff as well as a more in-depth analysis of student data through standard based assessments of all questions given to students. PLC meetings evolved to include, but were not limited to, reflection, analysis, planning of curriculum, student growth and development and the schools' commitment to high standards on a personal and academic basis. The data days are facilitated by the district data specialist, Lynda Feeney and the building's Administrative Principal. The Dawe School teachers share their expertise and talents to support each other to meet the needs of and provide rigorous learning experiences for all students.

**W**e thank the Town of Stoughton for its continued support by providing the means that allow us to provide an excellent academic experience for our students. Working together, teachers, parents, students, family members, and community members dedicate themselves to our students every day.

**Joseph H. Gibbons Elementary School**

**Lynne Jardin, Administrative Principal**

**T**he Gibbons School is a safe and respectful community that collaborates to challenge and inspire all students to embrace a lifetime of learning.

Social Emotional awareness continues to be of great significance as we strive to provide our students with the support they need to optimize their learning. As part of our School Council Plan we focus on a social emotional goal along with our student and professional goals. This year we continued to focus on building character with the students as part of that goal through Conducting Ourselves with Character. Our students and staff are expected to conduct themselves with character each day. The character traits that we focused on were: **responsibility, respect, citizenship, self-control, integrity/honesty, compassion, tolerance/patience, confidence, perseverance, cooperation.**

The following are student thoughts on the Character Traits:

*“Doing character traits in school helps me improve my responsibility when helping teachers and other classmates.”*

*“I use perseverance when I don’t give up on my work and persevere because if you give up it will not be good enough.”*

*“The character traits patience and self-control helps me when my brother is being annoying and it also helps me in school when I am stuck on a math, reading, writing, social studies, or science problem.”*

*“I feel that the character traits at the Gibbons School make us stronger than any other school, because it helps the Gibbons School be a better place for all kids big and small and creates a better environment for learning.”*

*“The Gibbons School uses character traits that help kids be kinder everywhere they go. It helps me by saying a simple compliment that warms their day and makes me feel happy I made them feel better.”*

*“I think the character traits are a good idea because it can teach people how to act appropriately in front of other people.”*

It is wonderful to see that the focus on character traits has meaning for our students.

Included in academic enrichment were the “buddy” activities between the kindergarten and fifth grade students. Each month they worked together on a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art Design and Math) and Literacy based activity: building the tallest tower, building a 3D model, etc. The experience provided opportunities for problem solving, managing oneself within a group,

communicating effectively and simply having fun while learning. These activities served as a model opportunity to showcase character traits among the students.

**T**hrough our PTA's fundraising efforts we were again able to offer several additional programs to our students. The Museum of Science Traveling Program joined us for Motion: Forces and Work and Life Cycles. In Motion: Forces and Work, students in grades 3 -5 learn about kinetic and potential energy and their application using tools like simple machines. In Life Cycles, students in grades K – 2 learn how living things grow and change. Both programs showcased the students ability to problem solve and work as a cooperative group. The Gibbons School was once again treated to a performance by The Rhythm Room. The Rhythm Room interweaves the energy and power of percussion with vocals to create an explosive and captivating performance. In addition to the performance, each grade level participated in a percussion clinic, in which students could create their own rhythms with the guidance of the Rhythm Room performers. We appreciate the PTA and Gibbons families for their amazing level of support.

**W**e continued to offer staff-directed academic and enrichment extended day programs to our students throughout the year. At the district level, the Gibbons School had significant representation at the Knights of Summer and vacation programs. Our own programs were offered throughout the year, before and after school. This year's enrichment programs included Creative Games – two separate programs in grades 2 - 5, Art, and Pre-Engineering – three different programs one for each of grades 3, 4, 5. They were offered to grades 1 – 5 with each session reaching capacity. Dream Team, our afterschool homework/physical education program, remains very popular with our third, fourth and fifth grade students. Academic Support programs are offered to students in grades one through five who were identified by staff as potentially benefiting from additional support as a way to enhance their academic progress. New this year was “Girls on the Run” offered to girls in grades 3 – 5, which helps support and build on character traits. The program teaches life skills through dynamic, conversation-based lessons and running games.

**T**he Gibbons Community continues to be active participants in the Stoughton Community. We participated in Coats for Kids through our annual coat collection. We helped to support our Stoughton Food pantries through a month long collection in January. In addition to participating in the paper recycling, we also participate in textile recycling. The Gibbons School is also a community

partner with MASS DOT (Department of Transportation). They provide support for the Walk to School programs and training through pedestrian safety and a bike rodeo. These community programs further supported our goal of conducting ourselves with character through our actions.

**A** strong emphasis at Gibbons is to instill a life-long love of reading. In January, the staff presented the annual Reading Rally with a series of skits to promote character through reading that is created, developed and performed by our multi-talented staff. The Rally kicks off a week long read-a-thon which includes a visit from a community reader for each classroom. As an extension program, we now have a Summer Reading Kick Off in June. Students were treated to a “book walk” down a sidewalk that was overflowing with books. Each child could choose any number of books that they would like to keep and then take them over to a blanket or towel to read to their hearts content.

**We** thank the Town of Stoughton for its continued support by providing the means that allow us to provide an excellent academic experience for our students!

**Helen H. Hansen Elementary School**

**Faye L. Polillio, Administrative Principal**

“The sun is always shining inside the Hansen School, so let’s have a great learning day!” That is my message each and every morning to the Hansen School Community. And as a result....

2017 was an amazing year of learning and growth at the Helen H. Hansen Elementary School. Each year we celebrate a school wide theme. This year we have embraced, “The Year of Excellence.” This theme is intertwined throughout the school day... academically, socially, and physically. Last year our activities ranged from the PTO sponsored Fun Run event where staff actively participated in the “Castle and Quest” theme by bursting onto the playground one morning prior to the students entering the building adorned with crowns and capes chanting, “Castle Quest”; to me making morning announcements from Hansen’s rooftop! The students were amazed yet baffled by my magical powers of appearing out of nowhere. Speaking about morning announcements, the Hansen School has now gone “live” every morning when delivering the announcements. Along with a group of children, I report the day’s happenings live and the students view it in their classrooms on the Smartboard. Incredible!!! Once again, due to the generosity of our PTO the students were spellbound watching a variety of assemblies. One of the more memorable performances was the R.A.P. (Realize Anything’s Possible) assembly. This performance delivered an entertaining and

energetic presentation using humor, crowd engagement, and hip-hop music to help our students realize that anything is possible when you have the right perspective. Rap music is arguably the most popular music that our kids listen to today and when it's paired with a positive message, it can make a lasting impression that could impact them for the rest of their lives. Now to another Hansen School specific activity.... Communities. Our school population is divided into eighteen cross-grade (Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> grade) level communities. This allows for 2-3 students from each grade level to be in one community. From year to year the students remain in their communities until they move on from the Hansen School. Each community is under the supervision of two staff members and is distinguished by a specific color. Through the brainstorming and planning of a group of Hansen Staff each month, a theme based activity is planned. Each activity was tied to the "Year of Excellence." For the month of November, each community designed Thanksgiving placemats and I delivered them to the Copley Nursing home to be used by their clients....one of whom is our namesake, Helen H. Hansen. Another of our very memorable events involved the Hansen School traveling by bus to Stoughton High School to listen to the Jazz Band and Show Choir (many performers being former Hansen School Hawks). Throughout all of our community activities, we celebrated, we played, we learned, we embraced, and we loved our communities. Our culminating activity in June was a trip to Camp Westwood in our communities to participate in team building events.

**I**n 2017, The Hansen School was also a vibrant learning environment. We offered an after school academic support program taught by staff. This allowed students in 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grades to work in small groups of up to 6 students to extend their writing, math and reading skills. We also offered students in first through fifth grade an opportunity to participate in math enrichment and pre-engineering programs. All of these amazing choices were filled with overflowing enthusiasm and excitement. Hansen School students (Kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup>) also had the unique experience of an added "Retired Teacher" academic support program. The Hansen School Community welcomed back 6 retired teachers to work with small groups of students during the school day on needed skills. They either worked on areas of remediation, stretched student thinking and understanding of specific skills, or helped solidify previously taught skills. This academic support configuration allowed for close collaboration among the professionals and fostered discussion of areas of need and mastery of strengths. This is a testament to the family that has been created at the Hansen School that we had 6 retired teachers who continued to offer their time and talents to assist our students. Also, we have

teamed up with the District Wide Data Specialist, Lynda Feeney and our Curriculum Administrator Supervisors (K-5), Eileen Sprague and Jamie Hulbig to analyze, discuss, and implement the findings of student data during our Professional Learning Communities (PLC's). Again, what a prodigious feat allowing our grade level teams to have the opportunity to collaborate every six weeks along with the grade level RTI, special education, and reading specialists. This leads to equipping the staff with the appropriate knowledge and tools to assist students on fine-tuning their ability to answer open response questions, to determine the most important information in a text, and to develop pieces of clear, vibrant, and descriptive writing in all subject areas.

**P**arent-school communication was strengthened and supported for the fourth year through our parent liaison. The Hansen School encouraged parents to participate in a wide range of school activities by volunteering for PTO and School Council, attending programs sponsored by the Stoughton Parent Engagement Center, or sharing their knowledge and talents in their child's classroom. We have had parents volunteer for 4<sup>th</sup> grade craft day, explain to 1<sup>st</sup> graders about bees and their community, have been Mystery Readers, and who have assisted in creating 3-D maps of Massachusetts with the 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. It remains a vibrant school/home collaboration.

**T**he Hansen School continues the "Walk to Read" and "Move to Math" model of small group reading and math instruction. For a third year we have continued a "Move to Write" model in all grade levels which focuses on grade level specific writing expectations. The classroom teachers, a special educator, and a reading specialist, work with children to stretch their thinking, support individual areas of need, and reinforce taught skills. Children's needs are looked at weekly in order to appropriately place them in small skill-based groups. Students are asked to read, compute, write, and share the strategies they used when determining their answers. These models are well liked by students and staff and assist us in meeting the individual needs of every student.

**B**oth our STEM and Humanities teams have been busy. This year, the STEM Team at the Hansen School has implemented a new building based initiative: Monthly STEM Challenges. Each month, there is a new Engineering Challenge for grades K-2 and for grades 3-5. Students have been fine tuning their skills in the Engineering Design Process through this monthly activity. Feedback from teachers and students has been overwhelmingly positive. In addition to this initiative, STEM Team members have been exploring and reviewing various science websites and resources to determine

how they can be used to support the current curriculum. Some specific resources that have been examined are Defined STEM and [mysteryscience.com](http://mysteryscience.com). Physical Science curriculum units were created over the summer, and STEM Team members have been helping classroom teachers access these lesson plans and accompanying materials. In Mathematics, the team has spent time discussing and reading about how to use Number Talks to enrich student vocabulary and practice mental math strategies. Guided math has also been a topic of conversation in meetings. The STEM Team has reviewed released MCAS items from the 2016-2017 school year, as well as the test format for this year to help our school be better prepared for upcoming standardized assessments. Finally, the STEM Team has been sharing resources and brainstorming ideas for games and activities for our District-Wide Mathematics Night coming up on April 3rd, 2018. Here are the exciting things the Humanities Team has done so far this year: We started the year with several of the team members volunteering to come back to an after school Scholastic Reading event which was very successful! At this event, families learned about our new scholastic book room and strategies on how to help their child become a successful reader. Students were able to play fun activities designed by our team members and other district personnel. It was a blast! The Humanities Team also helped organize the Scholastic book room as many members stayed after hours so that teachers in the building would be able to successfully access and return the new books. We also have discussed different strategies for using the new book room with team members. They then shared these strategies with their grade level partners. Along with the book room, the Humanities Team also discussed and decided to do a new writing initiative this year that involves each classroom in the school throughout the year. We set up a schedule for each grade level to partner with another grade level to do an Authors Chair format sharing of a piece of writing students have been working hard on. It has been a big hit so far with the students as they get very excited to have a real time audience to share their hard work with. Lastly, each month when the Humanities team meets, we share a reading/writing strategy and give a handout of the information that team members share with their grade level partners to keep new ideas flowing throughout the school. We have had a great time thus far and are continually looking for ways to make learning fun and challenging for the students at the Hansen School.

**A**s a district we have been fortunate to incorporate technology into every aspect of our curriculum. At the elementary level, every student in grades Kindergarten, 1 and 2 have iPads and students in grades 3, 4 and 5 utilize Chromebooks as their technological device. These tools are used from

researching projects to accessing assessment data. It is a new world with technology and the Hansen School has thoroughly embraced this fantastic experience.

**A**t the Hansen School, a student's effort is valued as much as their achievement. We celebrate students' individual accomplishments each day. Using various incentive programs such as Hawk Dollars, Fact Masters, and school store, students are encouraged to challenge themselves to work toward their greatest potential.

**W**e are proud to announce that the Hansen School remained a Level 1 School status as determined by accountability data. This was accomplished through the hard work and dedication of our students and staff. The Hansen School family, which includes students, teachers, staff, and parents, embraces the challenge of helping students learn to love learning.

### **South Elementary School**

#### **Maureen Mulvey, Administrative Principal**

**T**hroughout the month of December in 2017, before we parted for the holiday vacation and moved into the new calendar year, South School's fourth graders had created a bulletin board display with 45 stunning 8x10 black and white photographs of themselves holding a slate. The various words on the mini chalkboards included: neuroscientist, pharmacist, animator, Air Force Pilot, paleontologist, pastry chef, and Marine to name a few. Is it obvious what the title was? 'When I grow up, I want to be...' Of course the predictable responses of wanting to be a teacher, football player, police officer and doctor were included, but the majority of their unique dream career choices struck a chord. All occupations are part of our shared vision in capturing an 'image' for being a successful person who values education and works toward a goal. We, as a school community, embrace "thinking outside the box", encourage dreaming big and beyond, and teach all students that no matter what one's current ability is, effort is what ignites that ability as it turns into an accomplishment. The South Elementary School has maintained a statewide Level 1 status for its 5th consecutive year. We are proud of our accomplishment and wish to sustain and advance in the next year with your continued fiscal support.

**O**ne exciting advancement at the South School is our commitment to learning and living the Next Generation Science Standards. Through a grant provided by PPG Aerospace Innovative Classrooms,

students are experiencing how solar energy turns into mechanical energy by building mini cars and helicopters. Technology enhancements such as the newly acquired iPod Cast equipment are allowing us to pursue morning announcements using video and audio. Students in Kindergarten are using QR readers to log into Chromebooks in order to access learning apps (applications). The quality and participation in the before and after school programming for academics and enrichment improves annually and enables students to continue to value education and cultivate peer relationships with those whom they may not attend regular class. We offer two 12 week sessions in academic support for students in grades 2 through 5. The late bus on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons allows students who need transportation to participate. Enrichment Programs such as Video and Radio Production, Wellness/Fitness, Math Games, Art, and Music Exploration and Book Clubs are some of the choices.

**G**uests are always welcome and plentiful at the South School: guest authors, guest speakers, SHS student guests and even a guest Superhero (Ironman) visited throughout the past year. Mrs. Dewsbury, reading specialist, completed her professional goal centered on the development of a grade 5 immigration unit in literacy. The culmination of her successful project was coordinating a panel of guest speakers who shared their inspirational experiences with grade 5 students and teachers. Many of the guest speakers were parents of our current students and had immigrated to the United States. Another guest speaker, Kara Belotti, spoke to third graders about her work as an equine therapist on Cranberry Sunset Farm in Marston Mills. Students had read a nonfiction article about special needs students and how they learn and thrive when attending camp caring for and riding horses. Guest author and guest illustrator of the children's book [Niko and His Magical Earmuffs](#) came to visit their friend, Mrs. Kalianiotis and her Kindergarten students. What better way to teach budding writers how the craft of publishing stories develops, than to bring in actual authors? South School students are treated to events involving a number of talented Stoughton High School student guests. AP biology juniors taught lessons about the anatomy of the eye to 4th graders. SHS Girls' Track stars ran with our Girls on the Run participants and Seniors John Jolley and Matt Hadley spoke with 5th grade boys about the importance of balancing school with athletics. We even send out guest lecturers! In the fall, our Speech and Language Therapist returned to her alma mater, Boston University, to speak with undergraduate students in the speech language field. It's an honor to know that Stoughton teachers are sought after by institutions of higher learning.

**M**ost people working in education would agree that in order to meet one's stride, it takes about ten years working in the field and a continuous commitment to the calling by remaining current and actively reflective. In my eighth year serving as Principal of the South School, I continue to be proud of how the teachers work and grow as learners themselves. This year both the literacy and math teams chose two professional books to read, understand, discuss with the goal of synthesizing the material into their classroom instruction. The literacy team is reading Strategies That Work, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, helping teachers to better teach comprehension for understanding, engagement and building knowledge. Research states that in order to become proficient in mathematics, young mathematicians need to learn to reason with numbers, make convincing arguments, and make sense of problems. Students in all grades are beginning to use Number Talks as a vehicle to accomplish this feat. All of these types of self-initiated professional development, in addition to all that the district provides, deepen their own understanding of the content they teach.

**A**cademics and learning are at the forefront of our mission statement to, *“develop a community of lifelong learners who possess a strong sense of moral responsibility”*. Smart is something you can get is the message in High Expectations Teaching, the newest publication written by an educational guru, Jon Saphier. We read it and prescribe to the belief that a flexible mindset and strong effort can and will drive you to your dreams. Our heartfelt gratitude to the Town of Stoughton and all its residents who support our belief, fund our belief and believe in us as we work with your children, future neuroscientists and animators!

### **West Elementary School**

**Lisa M. Whelan, Ph.D., Administrative Principal**

**I**t is the mission of the staff and our diverse school community at West Elementary School to provide a safe and nurturing environment of mutual respect; inspiring all children to achieve their academic potential as life-long learners while assuring appropriate social and emotional development. Students are valued for their individuality and likewise are taught to face the future and contribute to society with compassion, courage, knowledge and vision. It is with great joy that I continue to serve as the Principal of the West Elementary School. It is indeed my honor to lead the outstanding team here at West that works so hard to serve the families and students of Stoughton.

**W**e are working collaboratively to model a program named Community, Acceptance, Responsibility, Empathy, and Self-Control (CARES). Our school year began by kicking off the CARES program with members of Harbor One Bank in Brockton who provided over 350 backpacks filled with school supplies from W.B. Mason for our students. Students and staff created a “Kindness Rock” that demonstrates a positive theme in our school which brings us pride. Students and teachers each made a rock and they are displayed in our front foyer to remind us that “Kindness Rocks” in our community. Together with the members of Harbor One, we assembled the rocks in a school rock garden. All classrooms begin their day with a brief morning meeting to discuss these themes and how students will model them throughout their school day. Our first All School Community Meeting demonstrated that our school models these themes in everything we do each day. Students receive a CARES award for living these elements within our school. Our parent involvement during these assemblies has increased since last September by 100%. Each grade level is responsible for facilitating a CARES meeting. We welcome all our families and community members to these meetings which are held every 6-8 weeks.

**T**he West Student Council, which as noted earlier is comprised of 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students, has taken on several community service projects. One of the projects was collecting winter coats for families in the Stoughton Community, we are proud to say that we collected over 100 coats to help keep needy families in our community warm during the winter months. The Council also helps to support West families and the community through the holiday season with several other charitable programs. We strongly believe in instilling a sense of community responsibility in our students and are proud to support our outstanding student council in these very noble efforts.

**D**uring the month of November and December, our school student council community exhibited great service by collecting blankets, towels, and sheets for the Animal Protection Center of Southeastern, MA. They also created CARE packages for the military troops that are stationed in California. The Student Council models the importance of leadership and civic engagement within our school.

**W**est Elementary is fortunate to have a diverse learning community where approximately 20% of our students are bilingual or speak a language other than English. You may hear Portuguese,

Spanish, Russian, and/or Haitian Creole in our hallways. Our school houses an English Language Learner Program and this program has succeeded in maintaining and achieving performance level targets on the Massachusetts State wide Assessment Tests. Students, teachers, staff and parents should feel proud of their work in support of these accomplishments and we all recognize that with shared effort, the sky is indeed the limit.

**S**tudent achievement is a paramount goal not only outlined in our school improvement plan but exhibited daily in classrooms. In order to progress and climb in proficiency levels we offer school wide initiatives which aid in achieving this goal. During school wide professional learning community days, which are facilitated by Lynda Feeney- district wide student data analyst and Lisa Whelan- Administrative Principal, teachers come together after student benchmark assessments are administered, and analyze student data to better individualize their instruction and determine strengths as well as areas in need of improvement. Action plans have been written to adjust instruction and/or to enhance the curriculum and program delivery. Through the use of guided reading and guided math programs, we can target reading and math services for students based on their academic levels in order to maximize instructional delivery. These programs provide students with differentiated learning as well as enabling them to adjust their instructional grouping based on their individual progress.

**I**nclusion practices are also visible throughout the classrooms of the West Elementary School. There are co-teaching models in Grades 3, 4, and 5 that allow students to be instructed in their classrooms by a highly qualified Special Education and General Education Teacher. This allows teachers to maximize instruction for all students in small groups in the least restrictive environment. We are also using this practice in Grades 4 and 5 for English Language Learners.

**D**uring staff meeting times we continue to be reflective practitioners by engaging in working groups focused on our school vision and professional learning. This year, we are reading Mindset by Dr. Carol Dweck. This book study has allowed us to engage in conversation relating to developing a growth mindset. Teachers bring this work to the classrooms and engage in lessons and activities that help students with effort and growth mindset strategies. We likewise engage in collaborative planning time weekly with colleagues to deepen our instructional practices and share our strengths so that all children are provided with the best instruction throughout their learning day. There are

many examples we have here at the West that demonstrate collaborative learning is working. Teachers are constantly collaborating with one another and students within our school community. This is a hallmark of our school.

**T**echnology is also alive and well at the West Elementary School. One-hundred percent of our students have access to iPad and/or chrome books throughout their school day. Students use these tools for reading, writing assignments, math assignments, homework, and parent communication. It is the goal of the Stoughton Public Schools to have all students in a paper free environment where access to learning occurs in the form of technology. On released time days, our students are involved in hands on STEM projects where all classrooms work in small groups to creatively master a goal using a variety of hands on materials. Through these projects, students are working collaboratively to problem solve and communicate. Beginning in January of 2018, all classrooms now view the morning announcements online with the use of a video recording camera. A thank you to Ryan McGee, Director of Technology for helping us with this initiative. This is the vision for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learner and we intend to provide that to our students.

**W**e are proud to host an Academic Extended Day Program. This program, under the leadership of Lynda Feeney, is offered to specific students in need of more academic learning time. Student achievement data is used to determine student eligibility for these programs. We have also extended this program to enrichment opportunities for students and we are fortunate to offer a late bus for students participating in these school wide programs. Pre-Engineering programs are offered by highly qualified teachers during the morning and afternoon, two days a week. We have also offered a Legos and literacy program to 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students. This program allows students to be creative and use their higher order thinking skills to develop structures with Legos, and to also create books by writing about various themes. All enrichment/academic programs are taught by highly qualified teachers within our school. We are fortunate to have these opportunities for students.

**F**rom our conversations with students, teachers, and families within our building, we are proud to develop and embrace a safe, respectful, and responsible learning environment. We model these themes within our school each and every day. As one enters and walks the hallways at the West they will observe a theme of, “everyone is teaching and everyone is learning.” We continue to enhance our mission and vision of excellence by embracing our diversity while striving to move forward in

academics and social achievement and development for every child. This is a community wide effort and we are grateful to the Stoughton community for your continued help and support. It takes the village of teachers, children, leadership, and families to maintain this vision and we appreciate the efforts of all members of our school community as we continue to work together on behalf of the West children.

**Edwin A Jones Early Childhood Center**  
**Heather Tucker - Administrative Principal**

The Jones Early Childhood Center (ECC) continues to be a busy hub of education for students with and without disabilities. Many new events have occurred to support family access to this community based resource and support. Under the direction of the Assistant Principal, the Jones ECC is developing a community where families are welcomed and encouraged to participate within the educational environment. The Jones ECC had continued to try to develop the School Council, even though it is not required at the preschool level. The Jones ECC does not have a Parent-Teacher-Organization; however, the Jones ECC does try to provide similar experiences for students and families as at to the elementary schools. This facilitates a smoother transition to the elementary schools. The Jones ECC continues to develop new experiences to strengthen the experience of the community.

The Jones Early Childhood Center identified already existing supports with which to collaborate in the Town of Stoughton. Last year the Jones offered a six week parenting course for families with support from the Stoughton Youth Commission. Through a collaborative partnership between the Jones ECC, the Parent Engagement Center and the Youth Commission, a parent survey was developed and administered to determine the next topics of discussion for the remainder of the year's presentations. The Jones started Friday Family Fun Nights, where once per month parents came to the school to engage in a variety of activities with their student. The Jones ECC started a new fundraising opportunity of Spirit Wear; families and staff are able to purchase clothing with the Jones School emblem. Be on the look-out for the Jones ECC car magnets!

The Preschool and Kindergarten collaboration continues to strengthen through a variety of curriculum development opportunities to support student development academically, socially and emotionally. Professional development focused on social emotional language and learning for

preschool students. The core components of Social Thinking and Zones of Regulation were integrated into the already established Responsive Classroom practices. The Kindergarten and Preschool staff were able to identify a consistency and commonality of language to address the social emotional curriculum. The Jones ECC staff wrote their professional goals on the integration of social skills into the daily curriculum. In collaboration with the kindergarten teachers, the Jones School revised and produced a new standards-based report card. This report card changed the way that students' performance is measured using the ratings 'consistently', 'sometimes', and 'not observed' to discuss student skill sets. Again, these activities facilitate a smooth transition for students from the Jones ECC to the elementary schools.

Collaboration, Consistency and Communication will continue to be on the forefront of the Jones ECC development. As always, the Jones is pleased to be "The First Steps to Discovery" in the Stoughton Public Schools.

### **Health and Physical Education Department**

#### **Ryan Donahue**

The Health and Physical Education Department has taken the opportunity to update curriculum and add a new program in 2017. Much time has been spent reflecting on past practices and develop action plans towards improvement in all aspects of health and wellness for our students. The Physical Education and Health Department understands the importance of educating students and families about the dangers of living un-healthy lifestyles. With the prevalence of obesity in America, our teachers are taking every opportunity to educate students on ways to live healthy lives. Obesity is causing a broad range of health problems that can include high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes and elevated blood cholesterol levels. Obese children are also more prone to low self-esteem, negative body image and depression. The physical education department recognizes their unique role in fighting obesity and ability to prepare students to take full ownership of healthy decision making.

The staff has been provided with professional development which is specifically geared towards physical education and health. We jumped at the opportunities to attend the MAPEHRD state conference and the SHAPE America National Conference. Both provided great insight from top professionals in the nation including key note speaker Dr. John Ratey. Dr. John Ratey is a professor

of Neuropsychology at Harvard Medical School and has traveled the world to share his findings which center on the human brain and its increased functionality as a result of being physically active. Dr. Ratey believes that many hurdles students face as it relates to learning in the classroom can be aided or overcome through physical education and activity. The Stoughton physical education and health department has very similar beliefs, which felt great to hear such an accomplished individual verify our thought process.

Through the middle school's use and experience with heart rate monitors in the classroom, the high school has now completely implemented this activity tracking tool. We are currently researching if students at the elementary level could benefit from using heart rate monitors. We believe that using the heart rate monitors and the student friendly software is a great teaching tool for our students. Without question, students are more active now in PE class than ever before, as the student's activity has a direct correlation to how their daily grade is earned. Walking into a physical education classroom and seeing the students smiling and sharing fun, team building experiences always makes any day a great day.

The Physical Education and Health Department as a whole would like to welcome William Horan, a former Stoughton graduate as a new member to the high school physical education team. Angela Palma who is primarily at the Gibbons Elementary School and Kevin Carty, who has made the jump from elementary Physical Education to Stoughton High. We wish the best of luck to all of the new teachers on our staff.

### **Fine Arts Department - Stoughton Public Schools**

#### **John Mange, K-12 Director of Fine Arts**

2017 has been another great year for the Arts in Stoughton; it has been a year of increasing students' access to top-notch musical experiences through the addition of new programs, ensembles, performance opportunities, and initiatives from elementary through high school. Our students continue to excel in a wide variety of ways. In September, we welcomed a new staff member to our department: Daniel Block joins us as the director of the 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Choirs and teaches elementary music classes at the South and West schools.

The Fine Arts Department aims to ensure that every student in Stoughton has the opportunity to experience and participate in the arts. All of the elementary students in Stoughton participate in both visual art and music. At O'Donnell Middle School, all students study visual art. In addition, sixth grade students study World Percussion, Guitar, and Music Technology. The OMS Chorus and Band ensembles have over 700 students enrolled. At the high school, the visual art offerings have been expanded and well-received by many students. The SHS Music Department continues to thrive with over 300 students in the performing ensembles. Students without a performing background also have a wide choice of music electives in which to participate.

Community outreach is a major focus for the department, which presents over seventy events for the school and the community throughout the year. Art shows are featured at each school and the public library; concerts are performed at each school, the senior center, town hall and nursing homes. In addition, the SHS Marching Band shares their musical and marching talents with the community at SHS football games, Veterans Day, Memorial Day and the Holiday parade. The *Stoughton Journal* sponsors the "Artist of the Week" and "Music Makers" series. The Department maintains an active web presence; information about upcoming events can be found at <http://www.stoughtonfinearts.org> along with links to individual teacher websites.

Our bands and choirs are most fortunate to have Parents of Performing Students (POPS) as a community resource. Along with community events and advocacy initiatives, our students have many opportunities to demonstrate their talent and creativity at the regional and national levels.

Stoughton has a long history of supporting the arts both in the schools and in the community. The Fine Arts Department would like to acknowledge the support from the school administration, School Committee and the community at large. We encourage the community to come and visit us at one of our many events in 2018. It is our hope that during your visit to an art showing or musical performance, you will see the pride students take in their work. That pride is a reflection of a supportive and caring community called Stoughton.

### **Elementary Visual Art**

Students in Kindergarten through grade five attend art once a week for 42 minutes. The students experience a wide variety of art mediums and activities including drawing, painting, sculpture,

printmaking, and collage and fiber arts. Lessons are developmentally appropriate and allow each student to expand their artistic knowledge and skills by learning how to utilize the elements of art and the principles of design to convey their ideas.

**K**indergarten, first grade and second grade students learn about line, color and shape. They have fun learning and using new and exciting materials. Among the lesson topics they learn are portraiture, drawing the human figure, using texture and sculpture.

**S**tudents in grades three through five continue to expand upon their previous knowledge while learning new techniques and begin developing their own personal artistic style. Students learn to express emotion through their art, as well as how art impacts and connects to the world around them.

**S**tudents work diligently throughout the school year in anticipation of the annual Fine Arts Nights held at each elementary school in the spring. Students participate in the selection and preparation of their artwork. The Fine Arts Night is a wonderful event to display student artwork to family and friends.

**F**ine Arts staff members Carolyn Corrente, Gibbons School; Meridith Perry, Dawe School; Alyssa Murphy, West School; and Wendy Anello, South and Hansen Schools are the elementary visual art teachers for the school district.

### **Elementary Classroom Music**

**A**ll elementary students enjoy music class once a week for 42 minutes. By singing, moving/dancing, experiencing folk music from around the world, playing musical games, and trying musical instruments, students learn a variety of critical musical concepts, form the groundwork for musical literacy skills, and begin to understand how to express themselves. All fourth and fifth graders have the opportunity to sing in their school chorus. Students in the chorus sing at their school's Holiday Concert in December and the Fine Arts Concert in the spring.

**I**n the fall, we began implementing a new initiative to provide every third grade student in Stoughton with a free recorder; in the past, students had been required to purchase their own recorders except in cases of considerable financial hardship. It is important to our mission as a

department to be able to provide students with the instructional materials they need to cover the curriculum.

**F**ine Arts staff members Yvonne Montgomery, Gibbons School; Christopher Weigel, Dawe School; Steven Curley, Hansen and South Schools; Sarah Labrie, South and West Schools; and Daniel Block, South and West Schools; are the elementary vocal teachers for the district.

### **Elementary Instrumental Music**

**T**he instrumental music program in the Stoughton Public Schools begins in 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Beginning band students have the opportunity to choose one of six band instruments; flute, clarinet, alto saxophone, trumpet, trombone and percussion. Students participate in group lessons and band rehearsals on a weekly basis. Band members perform at both the winter and spring concerts at their individual elementary schools.

**F**ine Arts staff members Ann Dorgan, Nicholas DeFrias, and Danielle Horan direct the elementary school bands.

### **Middle School Visual Arts**

**T**he Visual Arts Department at the O'Donnell Middle School helps students become better artists by developing their artistic skills and imagination. Mrs. Karen O'Connell, Mrs. Kelli Jarasitis, and Mr. John Dorion teach all middle school students in grades six, seven and eight. Students learn to express themselves while learning skills and techniques with projects that include digital art, portraits, cartooning, linear perspective, life drawing, and fantasy. Students develop skills such as application and technique of color, value, proportion, and depth, through fun and imaginative projects. Mr. Dorion also teaches an art enrichment class where imagination and creative thinking are stressed.

**T**he art department also offers after school programs for all students looking to expand their skills and creativity. Mrs. O'Connell sponsors the Digital Art Club where students can produce digitally altered photographs to produce interesting and imaginative pieces of art. Students also create stop-motion animated movies and other kinds of movie making techniques.

**M**r. Dorion and Mrs. Jarasitis each sponsor an Art Club, which meets after school two days a week. Both groups present an art show at the end of the school year to display the wonderful artwork they produced throughout the school year.

### **Middle School Music**

**O**ur Exploring Music sixth grade curriculum is now in its fifth year. Sixth grade students receive a hands-on experience creating and sharing music. Students learn about musical concepts and styles through performance using world percussion instruments. They learn to read musical notation while learning to play guitar, and compose original music utilizing the latest music technology tools and apps. Projects such as composing ringtones, creating a product and an original jingle, and writing original guitar music foster creativity, communication, and collaboration. Fine Arts staff member Betty Bauman is the classroom music teacher at the O'Donnell Middle School.

**T**he O'Donnell Middle School choral program has enjoyed tremendous growth over the last few years. Over 350 students participate in one of six choral ensembles during the school day. The OMS Choruses perform in the OMS Winter Concert Series and the Spring Concert Series each school year. The 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Chorus also performs at the SHS Singers Night Concert each March.

**I**n the past year, we have also secured funding to bring in a piano accompanist for up to four rehearsals for every OMS choir in advance of each concert date. In the past, the accompanist could be paid for a single dress rehearsal before a performance. Having a piano accompanist available for rehearsals has been transformative in allowing our choir directors to rehearse effectively.

**T**he OMS Choral program is well-represented at the regional level. Several students each year are accepted to perform at the Massachusetts Music Educators Southeast District Honors Choir Festival and the SEMSBA Honors Festival. Fine Arts staff members Betty Bauman and Daniel Block direct the choirs at the O'Donnell Middle School.

**T**he OMS Band program also enjoys a high participation rate with 350 band members in grades six through eight. The band program has 6 concert band ensembles that meet during the school day. After-school offerings include 2 jazz ensembles and a percussion ensemble. The OMS Jazz Ensembles participate in the Massachusetts Association for Jazz Education festivals each year.

Several OMS instrumental students are selected to perform at the Massachusetts Music Educators Southeast District Honors Choir Festival and the SEMSBA Honors Festival each year.

**F**ine Arts staff members Keith Curbow, Nicholas DeFrias, Ann Dorgan and Danielle Horan direct the bands at the O'Donnell Middle School.

### **High School Visual Arts**

**T**he Visual Arts Department of Stoughton High School provides opportunities for a variety of learners from those hoping to build a portfolio and further their art education in college to students who simply want to broaden their academic scope. Drawing will be the foundational building block that leads to a more concentrated study of media such as painting, fine crafts, a range of 3D media, and digital forms of art such as imaging and photography. Additional opportunities for enrichment include after school art clubs where the activities are more student driven, field trips to art museums and universities, and chances to obtain recognition at the regional, state, and national level in a variety of visual arts competitions. SHS graduates frequently continue their artistic studies at college. This past spring, our students were accepted into the Fine Arts programs at Lesley University, Mass Art, and Clemson University.

**T**he SHS Art Department is a long time participant in the Scholastic Art Awards competition held each January. The Scholastic Art Awards regional sponsor is the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

**T**he Scholastic Art and Writing Awards Alliance recognized many Stoughton High School art students for their artistic talents. Kendra Coombes received a Gold Key Award for her top entry. Last March, she received her certificate and Gold Key pin in a ceremony at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Her work was showcased at a special Gold Key exhibition at the museum. Her work also moved to the national level and was sent to New York to be judged alongside the Gold Key work from all of the other regional affiliates from around the country.

Henenda Dourdan earned the Silver Key Award for her entry and was awarded his Silver Key Award and pin at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

Honorable Mentions were awarded to Kendra Coombes, Gianna DeNapoli, Aaron Edwards, Kelli Joyce, Nicole Soncrant, Keagan Walsh, Rachel Weiner, and Gia Williams.

**F**ine Arts staff members Alyssa Dancey, Joseph Fontinha, Jesse Stansfield and David Wall are the visual art teachers at Stoughton High School.

### **High School Choral Music**

**T**he SHS Choral program offers students a wide range of opportunities for singing at any skill level and in nearly every major genre. There are many different choral ensembles at SHS: Treble Chorale, Concert Chorus, Symphonic Choir, Jazz Choir, and our a cappella group, the Stoughcatos. The Symphonic Choir performed for the first time this year at the MICCA Choir Festival and received a silver medal. The Combined Choirs now feature over 100 members and perform as the concert finale at the Winter Choral Concert and the Spring Choral Concert.

**T**he SHS Jazz Choir has earned a reputation of excellence over the years. The Jazz Choir was the recipient of a Gold Medal at the Massachusetts Association for Jazz Education State Finals last April and was invited to perform at the Hatch Memorial Shell in Boston on the esplanade. The Choir also participates in the prestigious Berklee College of Music High School Jazz Festival and this year received an Honorable Mention for their performance.

**I**n the past year, we have also secured funding to bring in a piano accompanist for up to four rehearsals for every high school choir in advance of each concert date. In the past, the accompanist could be paid for a single dress rehearsal before a performance. Having a piano accompanist available for rehearsals has been transformative in allowing our choir directors to rehearse effectively.

**S**HS chorus members Allison Carter, Andrew Crean, Vanesiah Dos Anjos, Victoria Lyapin, and Isabelle Solem were accepted into the MMEA Southeast District Festival Choir based on their auditions this past fall. Andrew Crean also performed in the MMEA All-State Choir in March.

**F**ine Arts staff members Christopher Nickelson-Mann and Sarah Labrie direct the choirs at Stoughton High School.

### **High School Instrumental Music**

**T**he SHS Band program continued its tradition of excellence this past year. There are many different

instrumental ensembles at SHS: Concert Band, Symphonic Band, Wednesday Jazz Band, Tuesday Jazz Band, Jazz Combo, Drum Club, and the Marching Black Knights and Color Guard. The Symphonic Band performed for the first time this year at the MICCA Concert Festival and received a silver medal. Over 150 students perform in these fine groups each year.

**T**he SHS Jazz Ensembles continue to demonstrate excellence in performance. The Tuesday and Wednesday Jazz Bands both distinguished themselves at the 2017 MAJE Jazz Festival. This year, the Tuesday Jazz Band was awarded a Gold Medal at State Finals and was invited to perform at the Hatch Memorial Shell on the esplanade in Boston.

**T**he SHS Marching Black Knights continued to distinguish themselves in the fall. The Marching Black Knights earned a Gold Medal and Superior Rating at the 2017 Massachusetts Instrumental Choral Conductors State Marching Band Championships held on October 29<sup>th</sup>. The Knights also competed at the regional level in the US Bands and NESBA Marching associations. The 110-member band came in fourth overall at the US Bands New England Championships with high-caption award in Color Guard, and also had the distinction of being the Massachusetts State Champions in their division.

**T**his fall also saw the debut of the new marching band uniforms, which replaced our aging 2002-2016 uniform set and immediately gave the band a much-needed update to their look. The band is extremely grateful to the Stoughton community for their support of the new uniforms initiative.

**L**ast winter, the Stoughton Color Guard started a brand-new program which has been a very exciting addition to the performance opportunities we provide: the SHS Winter Guard, which puts together a fully-choreographed interpretive dance show complete with guard flag work and other visual elements designed by the Winter Guard students and their parents. The Winter Guard competed in the NESBA Winter Guard Championship and came in first place in the Local Scholastic Regional A Division.

**F**ine Arts staff members Keith Curbow and John Mange direct the bands at Stoughton High School.

## **Guidance Department of the Stoughton Public Schools**

**Christine Luzi, M.Ed., CAGS, Director of Guidance K-12**

2017 was a progressive year for the Stoughton Public School Guidance Department. The SPS school counselors bring a unique perspective to the school community, providing social, emotional and academic support to all students. As a K-12 department, we continue to grow our developmental guidance curriculum, with the goal of providing consistent delivery of services to students and families at all grade levels. The Guidance Department consists of one Director for the district, four counselors at the high school, three at the middle school, and five counselors in the elementary schools. All of the school counselors have Master's degrees in the field of counseling and are considered "highly qualified" by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. Our school counselors are active members of professional organizations, including, The American School Counselor Association, the Massachusetts Association, The National Association of College Admission Counselors, as well as The College Board. All school counselors meet individually with students, parents and teachers, and attend IEP, 504 and Building Based Support Team (BBST) meetings.

At the elementary level, each school has one school counselor assigned to the school, with four schools having a full-time school counselor and one building has a part-time school counselor who is also a part-time adjustment counselor for her school. Each school, which is K-5, offers individual, small group and classroom counseling. Activities for students focus on social emotional learning (SEL). The counselors execute their lessons through the use of the Second Step Program, a research-based violence prevention program that is endorsed by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. The curriculum teaches children to understand and peacefully resolve conflict. Through these lessons, students are learning to be aware of their thoughts, emotions, body sensations and surroundings by being fully present in each moment. The elementary counselors have also been working this year to create a mindfulness curriculum to support students and their Social Emotional Learning (SEL). Mindfulness has been shown to help children maintain focused attention, impulse control and emotional regulation, which are the foundational skills for problem solving, understanding others' perspectives and learning. The school counselors are supportive to classroom

teachers in areas such as classroom management and understanding of mental health issues. They work closely with the principal, school nurse and school adjustment counselor in their school involving the various issues facing children and families throughout the system. School counselors also help students with academic issues.

**A**t the O'Donnell Middle School (OMS), the three school counselors work with students to address many age appropriate and sensitive topics through individual and group meetings. Like at the five elementary schools, the Second Step Program is also taught in the middle school. This program addresses academic, Social Emotional Learning (SEL) and developmental issues that middle school students face every day, with particular attention paid to anti-harassment and bullying. The counselors work with all three grade levels, in small lunch groups, throughout the year on a variety of academic and social and emotional topics to improve academic, social and life skills performance. Additionally, the counselors assist students who apply to private schools and the local vocational schools, filling out applications, preparing for interviews and writing recommendation letters. In February and March, the school counselors help students with course selection for the following year through individual meetings, class discussions and parent meetings. In June, the counselors work closely with the elementary counselors to ensure a smooth transition for the fifth graders to the middle school, and also help with the spring orientation night for students and parents. The counselors also work closely with the high school counselors to ensure a smooth transition for the eighth grade students moving up to the high school.

**I**n 2017, OMS brought the Sandy Hook Project "Say Something" Campaign to their community. This program promotes safe schools through student awareness. There will be follow up in 2018.

The school counselors at Stoughton High School continue to build on the skills developed in the earlier grades. One of the primary goals at the high school is to have students develop the needed skills to be successful after high school. Stoughton wants its students to be responsible citizens who value high academic expectations, diversity and excellence. School counselors work with students to plan for their academic, personal and career development goals. Students are encouraged to take a rigorous course of study at Stoughton High School, with the goal of preparing students for their post high school experience. Counselors are committed to helping every student develop a post-graduate plan. Counselors communicate with students through their Gmail accounts, as well through Naviance, a college and career planning software Stoughton purchases. Beginning in the 2016-2017

school year, counselors teach a one term seminar course to sophomores. This class covers topics including graduation requirements, GPA calculation, study skills, learning styles, career interest inventories, college and career searches and college application requirements. Sophomores also have the opportunity to log in to Naviance and begin exploration of what it can do. The counselors are excited that the new high school will have a classroom to present their curriculum. Having this designated space for counseling will help to grow the college and career going culture in Stoughton.

Stoughton High School offered the PSAT to freshmen, sophomores and juniors in October. This is to give students plenty of exposure to this standardized test, allowing for test preparation and improvement of scores. The College Board now partners with Khan Academy, an exceptional resource for students. Students can load their scores into Khan Academy and get free test preparation, beginning in the ninth grade.

**T**he high school counseling experience begins with the Eighth Grade Parent's Night, called Showcase. This joint effort to transition students and parents to the high school was held in January. Information was given about academic, athletic and extra-curricular opportunities at Stoughton High School. Throughout the year, the counselors implement the counseling curriculum through visits to classrooms, holding individual and small group sessions, and distributing materials. Students are introduced to college and career search programs, including using Naviance, Collegeboard.com and the Common Application. The counselors host a series of college and career focused evening events to support students and their parents. There are college and career planning nights for juniors and seniors, as well as financial aid presentations. There is also a college fair held at Brockton High School in May, which Stoughton High School supports and helps to organize. There are over 100 colleges present, as well as representation from the military and other career focused organizations. In the fall, the counselors hosted over 70 individual visits from colleges, technical schools and the military. The department is working on expanding their college and career readiness program, with many plans for the 2018 school year. A college and career counselor position was requested in the 2019 budget, and we hope will be able to secure this person to further grow the services and resources for students at Stoughton High School.

There were 12 Advanced Placement courses offered at Stoughton High School in May, 2017. The class of 2017 consisted of 225 graduates. Of the Class of 2017, 67% attended a four-year college,

16% attended a two-year college, 2% attended a technical or trade school, 7% joined the workforce and 3% joined the military.

**G**iven the current landscape of students and their use of technology, more specifically, their unhealthy use of social media and texting throughout the school day, the counseling staff (inclusive of three adjustment counselors) felt it was in our students best interest, and for their health and well-being, to do our small part in limiting their stress and anxiety brought on by their phones. That being said, the Counseling Department is happy to report that beginning in 2018, our suite is CELL PHONE FREE. Twelve Chromebooks were secured thanks to Ryan McGee; Administrator of Educational Technology, to allow students to do work. Headphones were purchased so students can listen to music. We have posted signs around the office to promote mindfulness, including coloring books and other suggestions for things students can do other than play on their phone. We look forward to seeing how this mandate in our office positively impacts our students and their coping skills.

**A**t the start of the 2017-2018 school year, the entire Stoughton School Counseling Department embarked upon a full year of professional development as a team. Looking at the upward continuum of services, aligned K-12, gives the counselors an understanding of what happens at each grade level. Through cross-training and curriculum development as a group, the Counselors are collaborating to align the school counseling program. A consultant was hired to support the twelve Counselors and their growth through this process.

### **Report of the School Health Department**

**Sally Borges, MSN, RN Supervisor of Health Services**

**S**taughton Public Schools' nurses are the main health resources available to students and staff during the school day. Practicing within the Nursing Standards of Care and following Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MADPH) regulations, our 8 school nurses provide current, clinically competent and evidence based nursing care for the numerous and varied types of health office visits encountered daily. School nurses practice recognizing the significant correlation between health and education and work within a collaborative structure to help students be healthy, safe, and ready to learn.

Year 2017 was the ninth year of the MADPH Essential School Health Services Grant; a grant designed to provide all school-aged children in Massachusetts access to a high quality, comprehensive health program. With help from the grant, Stoughton Schools are able to maintain a level of staffing necessary to meet the ever changing medical needs of our students. A full time school nurse is available in all eight school buildings, allowing for the care of any health issue or emergent situation experienced by students or staff. During the 2016-17 school year, there were 852 enrolled students diagnosed with a medical condition. During this same school year, the nurses handled over 49,645 office visits for first aid, illnesses, medication administration, treatments, procedures, health assessments and mental/behavioral health concerns. Ninety-five percent of those students were able to return to class, ready to learn. Proudly, our statistic utilized by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to determine the effectiveness of each district's health service program surpasses the average statewide statistic of ninety-three percent. In addition, school nurses provided care to 576 staff this year. School nurses performed 5,915 state mandate health/wellness screenings, which in turn resulted in 164 referrals for further medical intervention (such as glasses, hearing aids, and scoliosis treatments).

A portion of the total number of health office visits included 9,386 doses of medication administration, notably 2 were doses of emergency epinephrine that potentially thwarted life threatening emergencies. Presently in Stoughton, there are 287 students diagnosed with potentially life-threatening allergies. These allergies range from food, bee stings, latex, or a variety of other elements such as cold weather. All require the school nurse to maintain competency in diverse treatment plans. School nurses are responsible in researching and developing student plans that outline emergent, preventative, parent and child teaching strategies that keep our students safe both during the school day and in out of school time activities. With over 166 epinephrine medication orders on hand, the school nurses sought to restructure staff training this year that emphasized the importance of identifying anaphylactic emergencies and solidifying competency in administration of Epinephrine during times when a nurse may not be available, such as during a field trip or extended day times.

School nurses are trained to deal with many emergency situations. All are CPR trained and are trained to use the Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) located in each school building. The school nurse contributes to the development of the emergency plan for each school, assists in

maintaining a sufficient number of staff who are CPR trained, train staff annually on choking emergencies, and are involved in a variety of committees to review medical need scenarios. School nurses are trained to administer Narcan, which is also available at each school.

**O**pioid use is a part of everyday media reports. Recently, Governor Charlie Baker addressed the increasing numbers of Opioid overdoses and deaths in Massachusetts, calling it the most dangerous epidemic reaching our youngest population. In March of 2016, the Massachusetts Legislature enacted an Act relative to substance use, treatment, education and prevention (STEP Act) which outlines the requirements for public schools in the Commonwealth to engage in substance use screening and education. As a result, SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment) was added to the list of health screenings conducted in public schools. SBIRT is a public health approach that involves surveying young people about substance use and providing guidance or referring them to treatment if a problem exists. A successful high school plan was established in 2016-17, and screening is underway. It includes one grade level at both the high school and middle school (grade 10 and grade 8) as required by State regulations. To further cultivate substance use prevention strategies, the Health Services Department continues to work in collaboration with OASIS (Organizing Against Substances in Stoughton) to bring educational initiatives into our schools. The Cardinal Health Care Medication Safety class was presented successfully to all second grade students in each of the elementary schools. The program is being recognized nationally at the 2018 National RX Drug Abuse Summit as an innovative early primary prevention program.

**T**he school nurses continue to do health evaluations as a requirement of the Chapter 766 Special Education Law which assists in the identification, evaluation, program planning and management of students with health problems that affect their classroom performance. Nurses ensure compliance with mandated immunization schedules and physical examinations, specifically those required in grades Kindergarten, 4, 7, and 11 and before participation in any interscholastic sport. The school nurse also serves as a vital community resource, linking students and their parents to health insurance, health providers, and other varied resources, which is particularly helpful to families who are new to the town or country.

**S**taughton School Nurses are dedicated to the health and well-being of our students. According to the Center for Disease Control's (CDC) Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model,

health and education affect individuals as well as the community. Schools are THE most efficient systems for reaching children and youth to provide health services and programs. Our school nurses are in the forefront for sustaining these initiatives as well as integrating health services into the daily routine of schools. As a result, the health and wellness services provided by our school nurses represent an untapped tool for raising academic achievement and improving learning. For all of this positive medical attention, we thank the town for its continued support of raising healthy youth.

**Report of Stoughton Academy**

**AND**

**Stoughton Evening School**

**Thomas W. McCormack, III, Director of Alternative Education**

Stoughton Academy

Stoughton Academy, established in 1995, continues to grow as a leading high school adult diploma program in the area. We have graduated close to 710 students. All of our students must complete the twelve course requirements, as well as pass the MCAS tests in the areas of Math, English Language Arts, and Biology. The MCAS testing is administered under the requirements of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Our twenty-second commencement ceremony was held at Stoughton High School on June 13, 2017. Twenty-nine students received their high school diplomas before a large crowd of family and friends, who came to share this very special achievement. The sense of accomplishment and pride is always a highlight of our graduation ceremonies. This adult diploma program affords an educational opportunity to many people who have left high school before completing their required program. Through Stoughton Academy, students are able to enroll in a series of academic courses, offered at standard high school level, taught by certified secondary teachers. Upon completion of this program and its required courses, many students go on to higher education either at the community college level or at other institutions of post-secondary education.

Stoughton Academy continues to be proud of the reputation we have built within our community as well as surrounding communities. We service Stoughton students, as well as many students from surrounding towns. The program is well respected by the guidance departments in the area, as all of

these high schools now accept the credit a student earns from Stoughton Academy as well as all branches of the military. We have offered “Career Night” and brought various speakers to our assembly to offer our students a better understanding of the options they have upon completion of our course requirements. They gain a true appreciation of the difference earning their high school diploma will make in their lives. Counselors recommend Stoughton Academy to many of their students when they may need just one class to meet graduation requirements from their own high school. Upon completion of the class, Stoughton Academy sends the area high school a transcript for their records and the student is able to graduate with their own high school class in June.

**I**n conclusion, as I complete my fourteenth year, I am honored to have the opportunity to serve as Director of Alternative Programs. I continue to feel a great sense of pride in being able to reach out to our students and offer them this fantastic opportunity.

**I**nformation about Stoughton Academy may be obtained by calling 781-341-8701 or by visiting our website at [www.stoughtonschools.org](http://www.stoughtonschools.org) and clicking on the Adult Programs link.

#### **Stoughton Evening School**

**W**e offer two programs at Stoughton Evening School, Yoga and Volleyball. Although attendance has decreased a bit from previous years, we continue to seek enrichment programs that the community shows an interest in.

**Y**oga is still the most popular offering at Stoughton Evening School. We run two classes and each one quickly fills to capacity. Our Volleyball program has expanded, and both nights are very well attended. We would like to continue to expand our Evening School programs and would welcome any suggestions for class offerings from our residents. If you feel you have something to offer to enhance our program, please call. We welcome new ideas and suggestions. We can be reached at 781-341-8701.

Our course offerings are advertised in the Stoughton Pennysaver.