

# *Lion Pride News*

## *Henry James Memorial School*

Spring/Summer 2019  
Volume 1, Issue 3



Dear HJMS Families,

As this school-year is quickly coming to a close there is so much to celebrate and be excited about. In the following pages of this newsletter are numerous examples of the great things happening at our school. Throughout this year, our students have earned countless awards, showcased musical and artistic talents, and demonstrated a commitment to our school community. While I am so proud of the students who have been recognized for their achievements, I am even more more impressed with what I see every day from all our kids.

When reflecting on this first year as your principal, I can say with confidence that our school is doing a good job in defying the stereotype of middle school being some of the toughest years as a student. As their new leader, I was welcomed warmly at the start of the year by your children and I continue to begin every day with a smile and a greeting from them. Of course there have been times when Mrs. Belmonte and I have had to have difficult conversations with students and families; however, the number of kind actions, supportive friends, and students just doing the right thing far outnumber tough situations. I am so proud of the vast majority of our students who come to school every day ready to learn and looking forward to making someone else's day better. When I first accepted this position I received more than a few eye rolls asking what I did wrong to be headed to the middle school. To answer them, this has been a great experience to be sharing my days with students who are just starting to figure out who they are, who crave connection with the adults here, and demonstrate more responsibility than most adults I know. Our students are awesome! This is a time a great possibilities and I have been inspired by your children every day.

The community we have at HMJS doesn't happen by chance; we are so lucky to have such supportive families, dedicated teachers, and a talented support staff. Thank you for supporting the HJ Way and the importance of hard work at home to prepare your children for success at school. I wish the families who will be departing HJMS this year great success in the future and I look forward to continuing to partner with our returning families to make HJMS an even better school community next year!

Have a great summer!

Scott Baker  
Principal

### **Character Quote of the Year:**

**This inspirational quote comes from John F. Kennedy:**

*“As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter the words, but to live by them.”*

## COUNSELOR'S CORNER

Welcome to the Counselor's Corner! It is our hope that through quarterly updates your family will have more insight into how their school counselor is working with your child.

Chris Hall (A-G)   Alexandra Bond (H-P)   Sarah Maher (Q-Z)

Spring is a busy time of year at HJMS. All students have completed the course selection process for the 2019-20 school year. Counselors met with students during connections periods in the Spring months to verify course and credits as they plan for next year.

On May 9th, members of the Simsbury Chamber of Commerce in addition to parent volunteers met as "mentors" for the 12th annual "Lunch N Learn" program at Henry James. The purpose of the program is to introduce the students to various professionals in their community who are willing to share their life stories while enjoying lunch with small groups of students. Mentors aim to stimulate thinking about a student's own career choice and what steps they can start to take. Key life skills such as making strong eye contact, firm handshakes, and engaging in meaningful conversations were reinforced by Principal Scott Baker. "It's become a great tradition and we can't thank the chamber and parent-volunteers enough for taking the time to work with our students," says School Counselor, Chris Hall.



**7th Grade** students also had an Introductory Mindfulness Lesson to teach different relaxation strategies to learn to deal with stress & anxiety. Counselors offered Mindful Minutes before school on Wednesday mornings to support all student and faculty ongoing education and practice.

### **Over the summer try a Mindful Moment: Take a break with the 3 B's**

Before you engage in an activity like sports or conversations with others, you can always take a break with the 3 B's.

- 1. Breathe:** Notice your breath. Take a deep slow breath.
- 2. Body:** Notice how you feel in your body. Relax and release any tension.
- 3. Begin:** Begin the task and be thoughtful in your actions.

## UNIFIED SPORTS



Students from Henry James Unified Sports Basketball Team participated in the Unified Sports Tournament on March 13th.

## Upcoming events:



June 4th: 8th Grade Day at Boulder Ridge/7th Grade Field Day

June 12th: HJ 7th & 8th grade awards ceremony

June 14th: Student's last day—early release

## STUDENT AWARD

Maddy Orosz of the Green Team was presented with the Connecticut Association of Public School Superintendents award on November 30th. This award was based on community service and service to others, academic prowess and leadership service to the school community. After being nominated by her team teachers, a schoolwide vote was taken by faculty and staff and Maddy was chosen as the most deserving student for this honor.



*Maddy Orosz with Superintendent Matt Curtis and HJ Principal Scott Baker*

*“Preparing all students for success at the high school level and beyond by inspiring lifelong learning and developing citizens of strong moral character.”*

***Henry James Mission Statement***

## NEWS FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE



**Medications** - Before any medication, prescribed **or** over-the-counter (OTC), may be taken by a student, a Simsbury Schools Authorization Form must be on file in the school health office. No prescribed or OTC drug (Tylenol, ibuprofen, aspirin) or topical cream (hydrocortisone, calamine )will be administered by the nurse or self-administered until this form is on file. This is in compliance with Connecticut statutes and Simsbury Board of Education policy.

At the end of the school year, medications will be sent home with the student with the exception of controlled substances which must be pick up by a parent or guardian by the last day of school, or they will be discarded.



**Illnesses and Absences** - If your child will be out of school for any reason, you must notify the school **each day** he/she is out. If your child will be finishing the year early, please notify the school with a written note.



Healthcare for Uninsured Kids and Youth

The **HUSKY** plan (Healthcare for Uninsured Kids and Youth) is Connecticut's health insurance program for children. Every child needs quality health care, and the Husky plan offers a comprehensive health care benefit package for children up to age 19. For questions and help applying for the program, call 1-877-CT HUSKY.

(1-877-284-8759) or visit [Husky Healthcare](#) on the internet.



### **SUBSTITUTE NURSES NEEDED**

Simsbury Public Schools need substitute school nurses. If you are a current RN and are interested in more information, contact **Sue Beardsley, Director of Health Services** at 860-658-0451, ext. 712.

## ART NEWS



Kate Martin was honored in May at the Lions Club luncheon for her peace poster. Kate's poster won at the regional level for central Connecticut. The theme for the poster this year was "Kindness Matters". A representative from the Lions Club gave a speech on the message about how small random acts of kindness really do matter.

Jonas Schroder (8th grader) was the artist of the week on Artsonia in January. Artsonia is a website used at HJ where students have their own online digital portfolio. Every week a few students are chosen at random to be artist of the week and win by achieving the most online votes. Jonas received over 1,000 online votes for his artwork (Self Portrait) shown here on his plaque. He received a \$50 gift card to Dick Blick and his teacher received a \$100 gift card to Dick Blick for classroom supplies.



## SEA PERCH



In March, two teams of our Engineering students competed in the Connecticut Sea Perch Championship held at CCSU with Bryan Forman, their advisor. Henry James did very well at the competition. The team of Ethan Cramer, Mikaela Martinez and Natalie Chykirda (shown on the right in the picture) were declared the overall winner and will represent the state of Connecticut at the National Sea Perch Challenge at the University of Maryland on June 1-2. The team of Samantha Lombardi, Jameson Bodenburg and Luke Williams (on the left in the picture) came in second place. Congrats to both teams! Good luck at the national competition!

## HJ MUSIC CONCERTS



May was certainly a busy month in the music department! The HJ in school concert was held on May 5th. Our students have been working hard all year and put on a great performance! Thank you to Dr. Ryan Ford, Jason Stammen and Charlotte D'Aleo for your attention to every little detail that makes the concerts come together so beautifully!



# JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH MUSICAL



Henry James students presented the musical “James and the Giant Peach, Jr.” in March. The audience was delighted by the wonderful performances of the players as well as the elaborate ‘giant’ peach shown above! Kudos to director Michael Hunter and music director Jason Stammen!



## MATHCOUNTS

Eleven students from Henry James Memorial School competed in the regional MATHCOUNTS mathematics competition in February. The team of Stefan Boca, Tyler Ma, Anthony Luo, and Jameson Bodenbug placed 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 12 teams and qualified for the State MathCounts competition. In addition, Michael Li qualified for the state competition as an individual. We want to congratulate all the Mathletes on their awesome effort!

## CHESS CLUB COMPETITION



Students from HJMS competed in the CT State Scholastic Chess Championship in early March. While this is an individual competition, a school team title is also awarded by totaling the scores of the best four players per school. Henry James was awarded the first place championship trophy! Congratulations to our students and their coaches Scott Behringer and Gert Hillhorst.

## HJMS Spelling Bee Winners!

HJMS held its annual Spelling Bee competition on May 15th. After several rounds of challenging words, there was a tie for first place between Paris Albrecht and Nandini Ramanathan. Congrats to both our winners! Thank you to Dawn Medve and Bill Antonitis for hosting the event.



### NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

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