



Nighthawk News

WWW.NEWTOWN.K12.CT.US/NHS
NEWTOWN HIGH SCHOOL BLOG

NOVEMBER 1, 2009

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Parents will be notified of upcoming Parent/Teacher Conferences electronically this year. Watch for an email during the week of November 2 with details on scheduling Conferences.
- Student Directories will be sent home with students by November 15.

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Principal's Message

Communication with constituents remains at the top of our list of items that we are striving to improve. In addition to the formal efforts to reach parents and community members that we are continuing to work on (like this newsletter, regular PTSA meetings, and the formation of the Principal's Advisory Council), we are expanding our efforts to hear from our number one constituency – the students.

Each week, members of the Administration and the Counseling Staff meet with small groups of students to gauge our progress on meeting school goals – from a student perspective. Currently, we are meeting with freshmen

and sophomores to assess the effectiveness of freshman orientation, the transition to the high school, and improving the entire student experience.



It is our intent to expand the scope of our feedback collection to include experiences from juniors and seniors as well.

I would like to personally thank all of the students who have participated so far. The honest,

candid responses that we have received have prompted discussions and actions that will improve the experience that students have at Newtown High School.

In addition to making sure that our students have learned core subject material and have had the opportunity to experience our elective programs, we are committed to enhancing their ability to resolve conflicts, communicate effectively with adults and each other, and make healthy connections to adults in the building.

Mr. Chip Dumais
Principal

PTSA President's Message

Are you a working parent, wanting to help out at NHS but finding it hard to fit it into your busy life? PLEASE consider making a lasting contribution to an NHS student by being a mentor for a day, while a student shadows you. We have a huge need and many students are just waiting for this opportunity to get a view of the real world.

We are especially in need of mentors in the fields of engineering, medicine, public relations, actuarial fields, interior design and marketing. Additionally, mentors are needed to assist students for one semester with a Junior/Senior project. Also, students are looking for internship positions after school that will total 30 hours.

Contact Kitty Latowicki or Peg Ragaini in the Guidance Career Center at 426-1915. Emails: latowickik@newtown.k12.ct.us or ragainip@newtown.k12.ct.us.

Thank you!

Sarah Beier
PTSA president

PTSA Reminders

PTSA MEETING

Please join us for our next PTSA meeting on November 9 at 7 pm. We will meet until 8:15 pm in the library conference room, room B141. These meetings are the perfect place to ask questions as well as get updates and details on high school policies and goings-on. This casual meeting will get you up close and personal in our discussions with the Principal, Mr. Dumais and our staff liaison and Chair of the Math department, Karen Sherman. We will also have the pleasure of having our three Assistant Principals as guests. Don't miss this opportunity, an hour out of your life, to be part of the NHS community!

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY

**From the Desk of
US Congresswoman
Rosa DeLauro**

The House passed [H.R. 3221, The Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act](#). The bill reforms the system of federal student loans to save taxpayers \$87 billion. It invests \$77 billion of those savings back into education, particularly by increasing funding for the Pell Grant program and creating an Early Learning Challenge Fund to increase high-quality early childhood education and development for low-income children.

NHS PTSA Board:

President	Sarah Beier
Vice-President	Heliett Sanchez
Vice-President	Audrey Greenwood
Treasurer	Chris Haitz
Secretary	Carla Kron
NHS Principal	Chip Dumais
PTSA Staff Liaison	Karen Sherman

Contact us at:
newtowncptsa@yahoo.com or
Sarah at 364-1988

Remember to Vote on November 3!

Please remember to vote in our local election on TUESDAY, November 3.

Voting hours are 6 am - 8 pm. Voting will be held by district at their respective locations.

For additional information, absentee ballots, or to find your voting location, please contact the Town Clerk's office at its new location on the Fairfield Hills campus. Hours: M-F, 8am-4:30pm. The phone number is 270-4210.

BOTH the Town Clerk's office at Edmond Town Hall AND the new office at 3 Primrose Street at the Newtown Municipal Offices/Fairfield Hills will be open this Saturday from 9 am-12 noon for absentee voting.

Please go to our town website at www.newtown-ct.gov/public_documents/index to preview the ballot and to read more about qualifications for absentee voting.

EXERCISE
YOUR
RIGHT AND
PRIVILEGE!

VOTE on
November 3

Veterans Day Events at NHS

On Wednesday, November 11 NHS will host the fifth annual Veterans Day luncheon and assembly. The lunch will begin at 11:00 am and is for veterans from the greater Newtown community and will be prepared by NHS culinary students.

An assembly will be in the high school auditorium for students in grades 10 and 11. The 102d Army Band commanded by CW3 Mark Cummings will perform during the assembly. They will be joined by members of the NHS concert band. An

NHS vocalist will also join the band. There will be various guest speakers and recognition of local and staff member Veterans.



Scott Clayton
Asst. Principal

Notes from the Assistant Principal

The summer is gone, school started and now I have had the opportunity to interact with students and faculty at the administrative level during my first 100 days in the Assistant Principal's Office. I have received a warm welcome from students, parents, administration and everyone in the school support staff.

I have also been visiting classrooms, meeting with students, attending athletic events, and cultural and extracurricular activities. I witness the sense of commitment

and effort put forth by many of our students not just in the academic areas but also extracurricular activities. I have no doubt that I made the right choice by accepting this position at Newtown High School.

I am looking forward to becoming involved in current and new educational initiatives that will bring Newtown High School to a higher level of success.

Jaime Rivera
NHS Assistant Principal

The China Initiative

Newtown-Liaocheng Sister School Partnership

Newtown High School is quickly becoming a model school in Connecticut for the work that has been accomplished with Liaocheng and the Ministry of Education in Beijing. Recently, Newtown's initiative to further expand the partnership was recognized by Connecticut's Department of Education and Beijing's Hanban Educational Foundation as a successful program. Newtown has been invited by *The Hanban Foundation* and *Asia Society* to apply for membership into their network of model schools in the country. These network schools are recognized as models for their work toward establishing cultural awareness and 21st century connections through their exchange and language programs.

This recognition stems from the work at Newtown High School over the past two years to promote a professional friendship with Liaocheng's high

school. The partnership was established in April 2008 when NHS and Liaocheng negotiated and signed an agreement focusing on professional collaboration to improve the student experience.



This partnership has been furthered with delegation visits between both schools represented by administrators, teachers, and students. In weekly ongoing dialogue between Assistant Principal Hiruo and Liaocheng officials, we continue to work toward furthering understanding of each country's culture and educational experience.

Collaboration has been recently focused on the highly anticipated February visit of Liaocheng's high school principal and his team of professionals. Following this visit, Newtown will travel to Liaocheng in April. This anticipated historical event is recognized by the state of Connecticut as unprecedented as a team of 28 Newtown educators will travel abroad to teach in the classrooms of Liaocheng.

In preparation for the arrival of Liaocheng's principal delegation in February, NHS and the PTSA are looking for supportive contributions in the form of meals, monetary donations, host families, dedicated time, and gifts that represent the American culture. The PTSA has established a Hospitality Committee to support the ongoing work between the sister schools. Supporters can contact Assistant Principal, Jason Hiruo, Coordinator of the China Initiative.

“Newtown has been invited by *The Hanban Foundation* and *Asia Society* to apply for membership into their network of model schools ...”

Busing, Parking & Traffic at NHS



The expansion project at Newtown High School (NHS) has posed some significant challenges for the school community, especially as it relates to school buses, parking, traffic flow, and security on campus. In response to these challenges, NHS has enacted some new regulations and protocols to ensure keeping with our number one priority: the safety and well-being of our students. NHS recognizes that some of these regulations and protocols may pose an inconvenience, but we ask for your patience and cooperation during the construction project. As NHS keeps their eyes on the prize, we look forward to a newly completed educational environment for our students.

The most notable changes are the new locations for parent-student afternoon pickup and vehicle access to campus. This access is available to parents and guardians just prior to and during afternoon dismissal. As part of the expansion project, several modular classroom buildings have been constructed in the lower cafeteria parking lot. This resulted in the loss of 30+ staff faculty parking spaces. More importantly, the size and proximity of these modular classrooms makes it impossible for school buses to utilize this parking lot for afternoon student pick-up. As a result, the inability to stage school buses in the cafeteria parking lot necessitated a relocation for school buses that are now staged in both vehicle travel lanes leading to the main entrance of NHS. This

staging area prevents vehicles from accessing the main parking lot areas in the front of the school. In response to this adjustment, parent-student afternoon pickup has been moved to the lower parking lot alongside the exterior cafeteria patio.

Other significant changes to past practices include:

- School buses begin staging in the NHS entrance driveways at approximately 1:30-1:40 pm.



Therefore, all vehicle access to the driveways (with the exception of vehicles in line to pick up students in the lower cafeteria parking lot) is shut down at 1:40 pm. This shutdown remains in effect until both waves of school buses exit campus, which generally is completed no earlier than 2:15 pm.

- During general school hours (7:00 am-2:15 pm) student parking is restricted to seniors with a valid campus parking permit only. Each student has been assigned a numbered parking space (number is painted on asphalt) for their exclusive use during the duration of the school year. Visitors and staff are not to park in numbered spaces, but may park in the designated visitor spots located along the guard rail in the front half of the upper parking lot.

- Parking for faculty is designated by the letter "F" in the cafeteria parking lot, the front half of the upper parking lot, as well as the dirt cutouts along the exit driveway. These areas are reserved for faculty and staff assigned to NHS.

- Due in part to parking adjustments and continued refinement of security due to the expansion project, the stadium track will not be available for public use during the day. The lower parking lot adjacent to the track must now be reserved for food services employees (8 of 10 spaces) working in the NHS cafeteria. The remaining two parking spaces in this lot are regularly utilized by Newtown Park and Recreation vehicles servicing Blue and Gold Stadium. Additionally, the track and adjacent fields are designated "teaching areas" for physical education classes. It is an unsafe practice to have members of the general public interacting with students during a period of instruction.

- Alumni seeking an appointment with a staff member during school hours should make arrangements via telephone or email to schedule an appointment in advance. Staff are available to meet with alumni after 2:00 pm. While NHS encourages alumni to visit and share their experiences with their teachers, the practice of random visits during school hours is prohibited due to the challenge of parking, professional staff obligations to current students and the security of the school facility.

“... all vehicle access to the driveways (with the exception of vehicles in line to pick up students in the lower cafeteria parking lot) is shut down at 1:40 pm.”

Student Success Begins in Guidance

Piloting Student Success for Connecticut

This year, incoming 9th grade students were welcomed into a Guidance class that focuses on their academic, individual and social-emotional success. The Guidance class is outfitted with computers, online resources and a SMART board as it narrows its focus on self-inventories, career interests, the college experience, and good decision-making. These are only some of the focal points in this class.

Last year, Peg Ragaini of the Career Center and Cathy Ostar of the Guidance Department were able to obtain grant funding to supply the classroom with computers and technology resources. The district's IT department

installed the technology over the summer to have the Guidance classroom ready for the new school year. This comes at the same time that Assistant Principal, Jason Hiruo and Special Education Chairwoman, Sherry Earle are advising the Student Success Planning Committee for Connecticut's Department of Education. This committee looks to its participating members to compose and finalize a student success program suitable for all districts in Connecticut. Mr. Hiruo and Mrs. Earle are working with this committee to share their expertise on student success planning and 21st Century skills. The

committee is charged with producing a document and program that generates a well-rounded student experience for grades 6 through 12.

Mr. Hiruo directs the Student Success Planning Team for the school district's Strategic Planning initiative. This SSP team is charged with generating a plan to implement a student success program at the high school as well as work with the Middle school and Reed Intermediate to implement a developing SSP program starting at the sixth grade level. Mr. Hiruo and the Middle School will begin work in the Spring of 2010.

"NEVER leave valuables inside unsecured backpacks, or on locker room benches or floors..."

Locker Room Thefts an Issue at NHS

Unfortunately, since the beginning of the school year and continuing through October 13, 2009, there have been 12 reported thefts at Newtown High School. Six of these thefts occurred in the Girls Locker Room, and were committed both during and after school. The stolen items consisted of UGG Boots (5 pairs), an iPod, and a pair of designer jeans.

It is not my intention to revictimize the victims. However, please know that the one common denominator for all 6 locker room thefts was the fact that the victims did not appropriately secure and lock their valuables in a locker. To put an end to additional thefts

and to prevent yourself from becoming a crime victim, it is imperative that students LOCK and SECURE their



valuables (i.e. UGG Boots, iPods, cell phones, calculators, jewelry, and designer clothing) in a locker during physical education classes and after-school athletic activities. **NEVER** leave valuables inside unsecured backpacks, or on locker room benches or floors, and do not preset your combination lock to open.

Please know that the NHS Security Team and Administration is working diligently to identify and apprehend the person(s) responsible for these thefts. Anyone with information regarding these crimes is strongly encouraged to bring it to the prompt attention of a security officer or school administrator. All information will be handled in the strictest of confidence.

By continuing to work together, NHS students and staff can have a significant impact on reducing thefts in our school.

Mark Pompano
Director of Security
Newtown Public Schools

Guidance & Career Center News

FROM LISA KAPITAN - FRESHMAN GUIDANCE COUNSELOR

Guidance classes allow me to meet with your child at least once every eight days. I love getting to know them and helping them create a plan for success! I want students to leave class with the tools necessary to make good decisions throughout their high school career and beyond the classroom.

Students participated in a scavenger hunt around the building on the first day of class. This gave the students an opportunity to familiarize themselves with the layout of the building and its various resources, and to have fun! Our second class fell during Suicide Prevention Week, so the school psychologists, social worker, and students' assistance counselor aided in our own version of Family Feud to learn about warning signs of suicide and methods of prevention. We also demonstrated how to access Naviance, a computer program designed to help students find high school and post-secondary success. With this program, each student has an individualized success

plan, inventories are taken and student information is stored. Naviance is also a powerful tool for researching potential colleges and universities.

We dedicated an entire period to learning the NHS graduation requirements. We discussed the minimum class enrollment per semester, the process of earning credits, and our strong encouragement of continued enrollment in the five core subjects through all four years.

A recent lesson introduced students to the "Fish!" philosophy, inspired by a group of fishmongers from Seattle's Pike Place Fish Market. We watched a video and discussed how one can create a culture that encourages people to flourish and increase productivity. Through play, being there, making someone's day, and choosing your attitude, one's environment can be more positive and valuable.

Presently, we are working to

complete the "Learning Style Inventory" in Naviance. This tool is designed to inform students of the specific strategies and learning environments most beneficial to them based on whether they are an auditory, visual, tactile, or kinesthetic learner. We also are reviewing study skills and ways to apply such methods to their academics. In the near future, students will be taking the "Career Interest Inventory" that will generate a list of careers based on the students' skills and abilities. I will also be showing a powerful video called "The Truth about Hate" that will inform students and initiate discussion on discrimination, hate, and racism.

As you know, we've also registered you for Naviance. We encourage you to check it out! I'm really excited to be teaching these classes and look forward to the rest of the school year.

Connect to Naviance



Please make sure we have your email address so you can receive correspondence from us via Naviance. Naviance is our communication tool for post secondary planning. Please contact Kitty Latowicki at latowickik@newtown.k12.ct.us or 426-1915 for questions about Naviance or assistance signing on to the program.

The best way for parents to contact the Guidance Department is by telephone at 426-7651 or by email. The counselors' emails are as follows:

Cathy Ostar
– Director of Guidance

ostarc@newtown.k12.ct.us

Diedre Croce
Lisa Kapitan

croced@newtown.k12.ct.us

kapitanl@newtown.k12.ct.us

Ana Mendes

mendesa@newtown.k12.ct.us

Bret Nichols

nicholsb@newtown.k12.ct.us

Gerry Waterbury

waterburyg@newtown.k12.ct.us

Jan English

englishj@newtown.k12.ct.us

Jeff Tolson

tolsonj@newtown.k12.ct.us

Students who need to see their counselor may stop by the Guidance Office and set up an appointment by asking any of the secretaries to schedule an appointment for them.

“Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world.”

- Nelson Mandela

Guidance & Career Center News

Studying Tips

Everyone knows studying is important to doing well in school. But does your teen know how to make the most of the time they spend reading and reviewing? You can help them be confident and prepared with this road map to smart studying.

Hit the road. To tackle study sessions, your child needs the right materials, as well as schedule. Textbooks, class notes, and old quizzes can help them prepare for a test. Have them allow enough time to study by counting the days until an exam, consulting their calendar for commitments (club meetings, sports practices), and working out a plan.

Tip: Suggest an hour a day - students tend to retain the most in the first hour of studying.

Use a map. Encourage your child to create study guides for each test. They can use colored pens (or color highlights on the computer) to define geography terms or identify characters in novels. These guides will help them quickly focus on important information.

Take a friend along. A “study buddy” brings a fresh perspective to work sessions. One partner might have notes on something the other missed or understand a section better. By exchanging study guides and information, they will each be able to review more thoroughly. They can also quiz one another.

Study Checklist

With the school year under way, now is a good time to ask your child to check their study habits. Ask them to review this list:

- I decide ahead of time when I'm going to study.
- I keep supplies in one place so I don't have to hunt for them.
- I take a ten minute activity break every hour to keep my mind fresh.
- I tackle big projects one small step at a time.
- I take care of hard assignments first so I don't avoid them.
- I quiz myself as I go to see if I remember important information.

Taken from High School Years

Have You Considered Community College?

Community Colleges in Connecticut

Asuntuck	Valley
Capital	Northwestern CT
Gateway	Norwalk
Housatonic	Quinnebaug
Manchester	Three Rivers
Middlesex	Tunxis
Naugatuck	

Did you know that half of college undergraduates attend community colleges? Consider this option if your child:

- Prefers to live at or near home.
- Cannot afford a four year university (yearly tuition at community colleges generally is less than half that of four year schools).
- Needs flexible schedule because of job or family commitments.
- Doesn't have strong enough grades or test scores to get into a four year school.

- Needs remedial courses in reading, writing or math.
- Would benefit from smaller classes and a personal relationship with faculty.
- Wants training in certain careers like nursing, radiology, computer technology and law enforcement.

Note: Since community college credits often transfer to four year universities, your child can start at a community college and move later. Have them check with the four year school of their choice to be sure credits will be accepted.

COUNSELOR MEETINGS FOR SOPHOMORE STUDENTS AND PARENTS DURING NOVEMBER CONFERENCES

The school counselors have created online calendars to schedule 15 minute appointments during the November Conferences. This was done in an effort to make a stronger connection with sophomore students and parents early on to set goals for the remaining years of high school. Topics to be addressed can include course planning, Naviance, the college process, testing, and more. A message was sent out through Naviance posting available times. If there is not a time open that is convenient for you, please contact your counselor via e-mail to set up another appointment.

Guidance Center - Hot Dates

November 5	College Admissions Info Night With Vassar College	7:00 pm	
November 11	Veterans Day Assembly	12:45 pm	
November 24	Alumni Day	TBA	
December 2	Financial Aid Night	7:00 pm	(Snow date: Thursday, December 3)
January 12	8 th Grade Coffee	8:00 am	
January 13	8 th Grade Coffee	8:00 pm	
January 21	8 th Grade Coffee	8:00 am	
February 10	Jr. Planning Night	7:00 pm	(Snow date: Thursday, February 11)
February 16	8 th Grade Orientation	7:00 pm	(Snow date: Wednesday, February 17)
April 6	10 th Grade Parent Night	7:00 pm	
April 7	College Fair	7:00 pm	
May 1	SAT at NHS	7:30 am	
June 2	Awards Night - Seniors	7:00 pm	
June 3	Awards Night - Underclassmen	7:00 pm	
June 12	ACT at NHS	7:30 am	

PLEASE CONSIDER BEING A MENTOR

The Career Center is **desperate** for community volunteers to be mentors for our students who participate in our internship program, career shadow program and our junior/senior project class. Please go to the NHS website and scroll to Departments. Scroll to Guidance and click on the Career Center tab for the career resource link to our community volunteer letter.

We look forward to expanding our list of community volunteers and working with you throughout the year.

SAT TEST DATES

TEST DATE	REGISTRATION DEADLINE	LATE FEE REQUIRED
December 5, 2009	October 31, 2009	November 1-13, 2009
January 23, 2010	December 15, 2009	December 16-30, 2009
March 13, 2010	February 4, 2010	February 5-18, 2010
May 1, 2010*	March 25, 2010	March 26-April 8, 2010
June 5, 2010	April 29, 2010	April 30-May 13, 2010

ACT TEST DATES

December 12, 2009	November 6, 2009	November 7-20, 2009
February 6, 2010	January 5, 2010	January 6-15, 2010
April 10, 2010	March 5, 2010	March 6-19, 2010
June 12, 2010*	May 7, 2010	May 8-21, 2010

* Denotes test being given at Newtown High School



What is Career Cruising?

Career Cruising is an internet-based career exploration tool. Career Cruising can be accessed from school, from home, or wherever your student has access to the internet. Features of the program include:

- **Interest and Skills Assessment:** A career assessment tool to help students identify suitable career options based on their interests and skills.
- **Career Profiles:** Thorough and up-to-date information about hundreds of different occupations.
- **Multimedia Interviews:** Interviews with real people in each occupation, which add depth and realism to career profiles.

Since we subscribe to this website, you will need our school's username and password. Please email either Peg Ragaini at ragainip@newtown.k12.ct.us or Kitty Latowicki at latowickik@newtown.k12.ct.us. We can also be reached at 426-1915 or your student can stop by the Career Center and pick up a Career Cruising information sheet.

Speak Up and Speak Out

“We listen a book a day, we speak a book a week, we read a book a month, we write a book a year.”

- Dr. Walter Laban

I first learned about the work of Dr. Walter Laban when I attended the 1991 Asilomar conference for English teachers, which he had launched in 1950. At the University of California, Berkeley, Dr. Laban conducted long-term research on the impact of oral language on reading and writing. His findings showed a strong correlation between a student's facility with oral language and his or her level of achievement in reading and writing. Dr. Laban once said, “We listen a book a day, we speak a book a week, we read a book a month, we write a book a year.” This statement has become so widely repeated that a recent Google search showed it is no longer attributed to him; it has become common knowledge.

At NHS we recognize how important facility with spoken language is. In addition to subject area requirements, students must meet standards in four key areas in order to be eligible to graduate from Newtown High School: information literacy, problem

solving, written performance and spoken communication. Students have many opportunities to speak over the course of a school day in all subject areas, from informal discussions to formal presentations. In English classes, students participate in text-based seminars, collaborate with partners and small groups on a variety of assignments, write and present speeches, perform poems and so on. For the most part, students understand how to make effective use of spoken language in the classroom. Students who get in the habit of contributing to seminars and group discussions are gaining valuable experience in listening, building on what others say, and putting their own thoughts into words that others will understand and appreciate.

It's also important for students to take spoken language skills along when they meet with faculty members and administrators, communicate with coaches and employers and interact with members of the community.

Students switch easily between the casual language they use with friends, the concise language of text-messaging and the shared history and unfinished sentences of family talk. However, they may need some encouragement to switch to more formal language when that is appropriate.

In my work as department head, I often meet with students I don't already know. I am so impressed when the student begins by introducing him or herself, makes a clear statement of the reason for the meeting and, regardless of the outcome, thanks me for taking time to meet. These are communication skills that can be practiced both in and out of the classroom, in a wide variety of situations. When teenagers understand how to approach an adult in a polite, confident manner, doors open; they are more likely to get what they want in the short term and more likely to play an active role in community life in the future.

Jeanetta Miller
English Department Chair



Physical Education/Health News

With the fall comes Flag Football for Freshman PE classes. With the Health Unit completed, freshman classes are enjoying the outdoors. Please remind your student to dress appropriately for the cooler weather.

Sophomore classes have completed their physical fitness testing and a unit in square dancing. Presently, the back gymnasium has been transformed into a 5-lane bowling alley. Students in the 10th grade are enjoying the lifetime activity of bowling and learning how to properly keep score without a calculator!

The junior classes have begun their Health rotation. Health activities include concepts in Global Health; Healthy Relationships; Growth and Development; Substance Abuse; Nutrition; Stress Management; and Depression and Suicide Prevention.

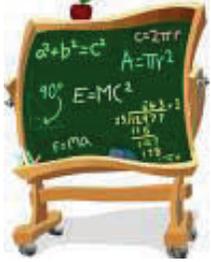
Kathleen Davey
PE/Health Department Chair



Winter sports try-outs begin on November 30 (Basketball on 11/23).

See the Nighthawk website at www.nighthawksports.com for detailed information regarding try-outs, required paperwork and the sports physical.

From the Math Department



The Math Team had its first competition at Wilton High School on October 7. Future competitions will be the first Wednesday of each month and we are always looking for new members. Practice sessions are held in B236 from 2–3 pm each Monday afternoon. Please remind students that attendance to each practice is not mandatory, but feel free to stop by Mrs. Sherman's desk and pick up practice problems.

The next big Math Competition that is

held at the high school is in February. All grade levels are encouraged to take part in the American Mathematics Competition. This competition challenges students to think outside the box to solve problems. Students will hear more about this competition as it approaches. They are welcome to go online to see some practice problem sets, www.maa.org.

The Mathematics Department at the High School has been working on Common Formative Assessments in each of the Integrated Math courses to

better assess student progress. This information will also allow for adjusting instruction as needed or offering suggestions for additional help for individual students. Since the Integrated Math sequence is a continuum it is important that each teacher check the progress of students relative to the curriculum using a common lens. We expect using these common assessments will ensure a smooth transition between courses.

Karen Sherman
Math Department Chair

Science Department News

Students from Susan McConnell's Foundations of Health Science class will be attending a career day at Hartford Hospital on Thursday, October 29.

Five students (Rockwell Anyoha, Jason Howell, Calvin Song, Amanda Sweat, Wending Lu) in Kim Lowell's AP C Physics class took part in the Yale Physics Olympics on Friday, October

24, where they competed in 5 different events.

The AP Environmental Science (APES) class did a water quality study of the Pootatuck. They did a habitat assessment in which they measured pH, nitrates, phosphates, turbidity, dissolved oxygen levels, and stream flow. They also collected macro-invertebrates to be used as a biological measure of stream

health. The data will be submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection through Project Search and will become part of their database for stream quality throughout Connecticut.

Chris Canfield
Science Department Chair

Jury Outreach Program

The Jury Outreach Program will be coming to Newtown High School to speak with senior students who currently take American Government. In American Government we examine the workings of the Judicial Branch.

One of the goals of Newtown High School is to create an environment that fosters civic responsibility. The purpose of the Outreach Program is to inform students of their responsi-

bility to jury duty and to expel any myths they may have heard about jury duty. The presenters come to us from the Judicial Branch of Connecticut and supply us with an informative and interesting program.



Music Program Events

Madrigal Dinner
November 21

Winter Concerts
December 7 & 8

GYPSY
March 11-14

COMPANY
May 13-16

The 2010 NHS Musicals Season has been announced. We will be presenting "Gypsy" from March 11-14 and "Company" from May 13-16. Auditions will take place from November 30-December 3. Any students interested in auditioning can obtain an audition packet by visiting www.nhschoral.com.

The annual Madrigal Dinner will take place on November 21 at the Stony Hill Inn in Bethel. The Madrigal Dinner is presented by the NHS Singers and serves as the major yearly fundraiser for the Choral Program at Newtown High School.

Enjoy an evening of music, merriment, and general whimsical nonsense as the Singers perform

music from the Renaissance to the Beatles and, with the Jesters, perform skits that are sure to delight. For more information and ticket ordering information, visit www.nhschoral.com.

The Music Department would like to invite you to their Annual Winter Concerts on December 7 and 8. On December 7, the NHS Choirs take the stage with a Winter Concert full of music from holiday favorites to contemporary masterworks. On December 8, the NHS Orchestra and Band will take the stage in a joint concert featuring the finest instrumentalists in the school. Admission to both concerts is free, and all are welcome to attend.

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!
Come and Celebrate The Fifth Annual:

Madrigal Dinner
With the Newtown High School Singers

November 21st, 2009
at the Stony Hill Inn in Bethel

For Tickets call 426-0678
or email madrigaltix@aol.com
www.nhschoral.com

NHS Drama Club 2009-2010 Season

Neil Simon's "Lost in Yonkers"

This poignant comedy, directed by NHS senior Bianca Crudo, details the lives of two teenage boys living with their unusual extended family members in Yonkers during World War II. Winner of Pulitzer Prize for Drama and the Tony Award for Best Play in 1991.

Thursday, November 5 at 7:30 pm
Friday, November 6 at 7:30 pm
Saturday, November 7 at 2:30 & 7:30 pm

Coming in the spring:

Mainstage Musical - "Gypsy"
March 11-14, 2010

Black Box Musical - "Company"
May 13-16, 2010



What's All This Talk About Talking?

Current advice for parents of teenagers almost always includes the directive to "talk to your teen." I agree with that advice in reference to many issues, especially drugs and alcohol. However, I'm becoming increasingly aware that that recommendation needs to be explored and broken down to be more "user friendly."

When do you talk to your teen?

It's best to bring up these issues when you're doing something together such as playing a game, driving in the car, or watching TV. Don't demand or expect eye contact. Male teens especially seem to prefer side by side social interaction. I have several gadgets in my office that students like to keep busy with while we discuss personal issues. Talk often, rather than one big speech or discussion, just as you would about any other significant part of their life, like cheerleading or basketball.

After all, drug and alcohol use is a large part of teen culture and is worthy of discussion even with those who don't use. They hear about it or know kids or even friends who drink or smoke. If a discussion is following a difficult event such as finding out your teen is using a drug, make sure you wait until you are both calm.

What about self disclosure?

This is a hot button for me. There seems to be a 'tell all' wave now. Students often are able to report to me all of the partying tendencies of their parent's youth (TMI).

We don't tell children things at various stages of development for very good reasons.

My parents didn't tell me that the Jones' got divorced because he was having an affair with my piano teacher. I didn't tell

my 15 year old that I don't want him getting rides from his asst. coach because I saw him at a restaurant twice really drunk.

We need to use discretion. A recent survey proved teens wanted to know what their parents did as teens. However, the study does not then follow them to see what will happen or what their actions will be after they have a full-blown disclosure from their Dad who did beerbongs nightly at a frat, for instance. I believe the risk for the teen brain to say: "Wow my parents were wild, I can certainly have some fun, too" and/or to lose some respect for their parents (authority), is tremendous.



That being said, there are certainly instances appropriate for self-disclosure (but again, I would not give details), such as the parent who attends AA meetings and talks openly with his or her teen about the disease of addiction, what mistakes may have hurt other people, etc.

Self disclosure of any kind needs to be well thought out.

I think parents should keep the discussions about substances as clear as possible.

Drugs and underage drinking are NOT good for you (provide legal, health, and developmental reasons). Talk to them and listen to them! Answer their questions - if an answer is not known, explore the issue together, look it up on the internet or pick up pamphlets the next time you go to the

doctor together. I find kids are good with direct questions... "Do you know kids in your grade who smoke pot?" is a good launch to a discussion.

We are your parents, in charge of guiding you, and keeping you healthy.

What else should be included in discussions?

Include reasons why it is so important to avoid drugs and alcohol. Be specific. They've heard that illegal drugs are bad but they often don't know exactly why.

Remind them of family rules and consequences if rules are broken.

Remind them of school rules and the consequences if these rules are broken (we get many shocked expressions when privileges are taken away, such as dances).

Finally, EVERY discussion should include your positive reinforcement. Give them the message that you know it is not easy. That you are proud of them for the many good decisions they make. Remind them of the goals they might have, their "spark." Praise them when they act responsibly and thank them when they are honest with you. Positive self-esteem and self-confidence is crucial to avoiding risky behavior.

This is a great message printed on the back of a pamphlet on Refusal Skills put out by the CT Clearinghouse for Substance Abuse:

Treat Yourself With Respect.

Trust Your Ability To Make Good Decisions.

No One Can Make You Do Things You Shouldn't.

You Have the POWER To Say "NO!"

Martha Shilstone LCSW
Student Assistance Counselor
270-4826, Confidential Voicemail

Senior Alumni Day

NHS Annual Alumni Day is scheduled for Tuesday, November 24 which is a full day of school. Alumni need to contact Mrs. Mendes, the Alumni Day Coordinator to reserve a spot in the lobby where they can disseminate

information and speak to current NHS students about their college experience from noon to 2 pm. Students will need to remain in the lobby and will not be allowed to visit in the academic area as classes will be in session. Please e-mail

Mrs. Mendes if you are interested in being an Alumni Representative for your college at mendesa@newtown.k12.ct.us.

Newtown Football Food Drive

The Newtown Football team is holding a food drive for the Salvation Army/Social Services Food Pantry during their home game on November 13. The need is greatest for the following items:

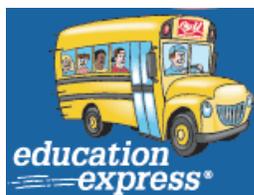
Canned fruit, canned pasta dinners, peanut butter, jelly, juice boxes, school snacks, coffee, cleaning & paper products, laundry detergent

Help our football team give back to the community by joining in to make this drive successful! Monetary donations in lieu of food donations will also be accepted. Please contact Kyle Packer at 426-3880 or packerkyle0@gmail.com with any questions. Go Nighthawks!



**BRING YOUR SALVATION
ARMY FOOD PANTY
DONATIONS TO THE
NIGHTHAWKS
FOOTBALL GAME!
FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 13
7 PM AT NHS**

Big Y Education Express / Stop & Shop Bonus Bucks



If you have attempted to subscribe to either of these benefit programs so that points may be earned by Newtown High School, you may have had trouble finding the school in the listings offered by [Big Y](#) and [Stop & Shop](#). Please note that the correct town address for Newtown High School is **SANDY HOOK**, not Newtown.



Community Conversation on Underage Drinking

Newtown is pleased to have received our second Graustein Grant to conduct a Community Conversation on a topic of importance to our community. Last year we held a very successful conversation on Bullying and Mean Behaviors. The result of that conversation was a list of initiatives to reduce mean and bullying behaviors in Newtown. This list

has become part of the Newtown Prevention Council's ongoing efforts. We will continue to focus on reducing mean and bullying behaviors through a number of programs and initiatives into the future.

This year the topic of our conversation will be Underage Drinking. We have currently put together a planning com-

mittee of diverse community members who will plan a dinner conversation to take place in January. All interested community members are invited to attend. More information will follow. If you would like to be involved, please contact Judy Blanchard at 203.426.2798 or blanchardj@newtown.k12.ct.us.



Newtown High School
12 Berkshire Rd.
Sandy Hook, CT 06482

Important Links

- NHS Home Page www.newtown.k12.ct.us/nhs
- Newtown High School Blog <http://dumais.us/newtown/blog/>
- Guidance/Naviance <https://connection.naviance.com/newtown>
- Athletics www.nighthawkspports.com
- The Hawkeye Student Newspaper <http://my.hsj.org/Schools/Newspaper/tabid/100/view/frontpage/newspaperid/2873/Default.aspx>
- Newtown Schools & BOE www.newtown.k12.ct.us
- 2009-2010 School Calendar <http://www.newtown.k12.ct.us/page.php?pid=396>
- NHS Schedule of Days Calendar [http://www.newtown.k12.ct.us/nhs/site/common/files/calendar0910\[1\].pdf](http://www.newtown.k12.ct.us/nhs/site/common/files/calendar0910[1].pdf)

School Office:	426-7646
Fax:	426-6573
Attendance:	426-7656
Cafeteria:	426-7637
Guidance :	426-7651
NHS Resource Officer:	203-830-9299
Nurse:	426-7649
Psychologist:	426-7651
Substance Abuse Counselor:	270-4826

Send newsletter submissions
to:
newtownctpts@yahoo.com
Deadline for December issue:
November 20

Dates to Remember .



November 1	Daylight Savings Time Ends - Turn clocks back!
November 3	No School - Election Day
November 5	Marking Period 1 Ends
November 5-7	Fall Drama: "Lost in Yonkers"
November 9-13	Spirit Week
November 9	PTSA Meeting - 7 pm
November 11	Veterans Day Assembly
November 13	Homecoming / Pep Rally
November 15	Reflections Projects Due
November 17-19	Early Dismissal
November 17	Parent-Teacher Conferences / 5:00-8:00pm
November 18-19	Parent-Teacher Conferences / 1:00-3:00pm
November 20	Homecoming Dance - 7pm - Crowne Plaza
November 21	Madrigal Dinner
November 23	Basketball Tryouts
November 24	Alumni Day
November 25-27	Thanksgiving Recess
November 30	Winter Sports Tryouts
December 2	Financial Aid Planning Night
December 7	Chorus Concert
December 8	Band & Orchestra Concerts
December 24 - January 3	No School - Holiday Recess

Spirit Week!

- Monday, November 9 Color War
Freshman: Green
Sophomore: Red
Junior: White
Senior: Black
- Tuesday, November 10 Neon Day
- Wednesday, November 11 Jersey Day
- Thursday, November 12 Superhero Day
- Friday, November 13 Blue & Gold Day
Pep Rally

November 2009 Schedule of Days

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri
2 A	3	4 B	5 C	6 D
9 E	10 F	11 G	12 H	13 A
16 B	17 C	18 D	19 E	20 F
23 G	24 H	25	26	27
30 A				