

WINCHESTER HIGH SCHOOL
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PARENT FACULTY ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER ~ JANUARY, 2013

Visit our website at www.whspfa.org

FROM THE OFFICE OF PRINCIPAL TOM GWIN

Happy New Year and I hope you had a wonderful holiday break! I hope that 2013 brings the best to all of you. It's difficult to believe but WHS has almost reached the halfway point for the year. Second quarter ends on January 18, and mid year exams will take place during the week of January 21st after the Martin Luther King holiday. Exams will be given from Tuesday, January 22nd to Friday, January 25th (see the midyear exam schedule below). Students will be dismissed at the end of the last exam each day.

The impact of the tragedy in Newtown, Connecticut has affected all of us and the district will continue to review safety and security protocols in the New Year. Despite the fears that these events bring to all of us, we need to remember that statistics indicate that schools are very safe places. There are almost 100,000 public schools in the United States and about 25,000 of those are secondary schools. These kinds of incidents are very, very rare

WHS is in the midst of planning for next year and we're well into the FY14 budget process. The budget process begins in November when departmental directors submit their initial requests to me. Those requests are for curriculum related expenses, equipment, technology, and additional staffing. These requests are combined to develop the high school budget proposal, which is then submitted to the superintendent and director of finance. During the months of December and January the principals and central office administrators work in conjunction with the school committee to review and prioritize items in the initial proposal. Invariably reductions will be made so the final budget approved by the school committee will be more in line with what the town can actually afford to pay.

In November and December, directors also submit new curriculum proposals (new courses, course modifications, curriculum level changes) and we meet to determine which of these proposals will be included in our 2013-2014 course selection book. New courses include *Game Development and Interactive Media Projects* and *Competitive Robotics*. The directors then revise their sections of the course selections book which goes to press in February. The registration process for the next school year then begins at the beginning of March.

Principal Drop-in: This month, principal drop-in will take place on Wednesday, January 2nd (5:30-6:30 pm)

Mid-Year Exam Schedule

Tuesday, January 22:	7:45-8:40	D Block class (Day 7)
	8:45-9:40	G Block class (Day 7)
	9:45-11:15	A Block Exam
Wednesday, January 23:	7:45-9:15	B Block Exam
	9:30-11:00	C Block Exam

Thursday, January 24:	7:45-9:15	D Block Exam
	9:30-11:00	E Block Exam
Friday, January 25:	7:45-9:15	F block Exam
	9:30-11:00	G Block Exam

PFA NEWS

From the Co-Presidents

Jody Collins Skinner and Audrey Loria

Happy New Year from the PFA! We hope that all of you enjoyed a restful, joyful vacation week and that our students are ready to take on their mid-term examinations. It is hard to believe that we are nearly at the midpoint of the school year!

We have decided to cancel our regularly scheduled PFA meeting in January. Our next meeting will be on February 13th. It would be great if we were able to celebrate a win at the WFEE Trivia Bee, which is scheduled for February 6th. Of course, we can't win the coveted award without a team. The PFA will pay the registration fee, but we need three parents who are willing to represent us. If you'd like to be on the team (or want to nominate someone), please contact us at WHSPFA@gmail.com.

We are still trying to reach our goal for the PFA budget this year. The Direct Appeal needs your support—if you haven't given to the appeal, PLEASE take a moment to do that now. You can pay via the link to Paypal or mail a check to Cheryl Meyers at PO BOX 550, Winchester, MA 01890

SCHOOL NEWS

Please join Parent Conversations Wednesday, January 23rd at 8:45am in the Guidance Conference Room. GUEST: Suzanne Ontso: Head of Guidance

Parent Conversations invites you to join us for coffee and informal conversation about our kids, WHS and our community. The monthly discussions are casual and drop in yet always confidential. New and "seasoned" parents offer stories and experiences and through these conversations, ideas are exchanged, questions are answered and many problems are solved. The monthly discussions vary among open topics, specific topics and guest speakers. This month, we will welcome Suzanne Ontso, new Head of Guidance to help "guide" us through our questions and concerns. **Shafiya Ciccarelli, WHS Clinical Counselor facilitates the group discussion.**

NEWS FROM THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT

WHS Winter Instrumental Concert

WHS Auditorium Wednesday, January 15th at 7:30 pm.
Orchestra, Symphony and Band

The Guide

A Monthly Newsletter from the WHS Guidance Department

January 2013

PSAT/NMSQT Score Reports **Mailed in December**

PSAT scores were mailed home at the beginning of December. The Guidance Department has each student's PSAT test booklet. Students or parents should pick up this test booklet in the Guidance Office.

Students who took the PSAT in October 2012 are able to use www.collegeboard.com/quickstart free of charge for the duration of their high school careers. This is the College Board's online tool for career, major, and college exploration that also includes a personality assessment.

National Merit Scholarship Corporation **(NMSC)**

U.S. high school students who take the PSAT and meet other program requirements will enter the competition for the National Merit Scholarship Program recognition and scholarships. Nearly all program participants (entrants) will be juniors planning to enter college in 2014. Currently, more than 1.5 million test-takers meet requirements to enter NMSC's competitions annually. NMSC uses PSAT/NMSQT Selection Index scores (the sum of critical reading, math, and writing skills scores) to determine participations who qualify for program recognition. Semifinalists are the highest scoring entrants in each state. In early September 2013, nearly a third of the 50,000 high scorers will be notified that they have qualified as Semi-Finalists.

PSAT Student/Parent Workshop

Will be held on Wednesday, January 9th at 7:00 pm in the auditorium. The workshop will help

you to interpret your scores as well as help identify next steps.

Sophomore Parents

An informative coffee for tenth grade parents hosted by the Guidance Department will take place on Tuesday, January 15th at 8:00 am at the high school.

During January and February, Guidance Counselors will be meeting with all tenth grade students. Students will receive their password for Naviance and can begin utilizing career exploration tools available through Naviance.

Junior Parents

In January Guidance Counselors will be meeting with all eleventh grade students to review post secondary options and the college process.

Junior Parent Night Scheduled ***For January 31, 2013***

The Guidance Department's Early College Planning Night for parents of juniors is Tuesday evening, January 31, 2013, at 7:00 P.M. The program will be held in the auditorium and will feature local admissions professionals who will describe the admissions process from the colleges' perspective. Guidance Director Suzanne Ontso will discuss how to get started on the college selection process and provide an overview of how to use Naviance. The Early College Planning Night is the first in a series of workshops designed to equip parents with as much information as possible about the college process. Juniors are

encouraged to attend this workshop with their parents.

Important Info for Parents of Seniors

In February, after mid-year report cards have been issued, a copy of the mid-year report card is automatically sent to all colleges to which a senior has previously requested transcripts. The mid-year report sent to the colleges reflects only the student's mid-year grades in each course.

Quarter grades, mid-year exam grades, and teacher comments are NOT included in the mid-year report.

College Goal Sunday January 27, 2013

College Goal Sunday is a volunteer-driven effort to provide free assistance to students and families in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA). The program is supported and administered by a volunteer committee comprised of members of the Massachusetts Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (MASFAA). College Goal Sunday workshops will be held at various locations across the state. Students and their parents should bring completed 2012 or 2011 Federal tax returns, W2 statements and other 2012 or 2011 income and benefits information, current bank statements, untaxed income, drivers license. To learn more or to register go to: www.FAFSADay.org

Financial Aid ...Get Your PIN Now!

Although the Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA) cannot be filed until after January 1, 2013, seniors and their parents planning to apply for financial aid can get a PIN (Personal Identification Number) now which will be used to electronically sign the FAFSA when completing and filing the application online. Applying for a PIN now will avoid holding up the

process of filing the FAFSA online after January 1. To obtain a PIN, students will need to supply their name, social security number, date of birth and mailing address and submit the PIN request. Parents of a dependent student must also request a PIN, since both parent and student must sign the FAFSA. To obtain the PIN, go to: www.pin.ed.gov.

Scholarships

Winchester Scholarship Foundation applications will be available in January 2013 in the Guidance Office. Additional scholarship information can be found under the *Scholarship* tab in Naviance.

College Decision Outcomes Decoded

“Deferred” - If you have applied under Early Action or Early Decision and were deferred this means that you have been pushed back into the Regular applicant pool. If you applied Rolling, the school would like to have more information in order to make a final decision.

“Waitlisted” - Means that the school has finished reviewing your file and made a decision to put you on a waiting list for admission. Schools vary with how many/if any students are accepted from their waitlist.

“Denied” - The school has made a final decision. If you applied ED or EA you cannot reapply under Regular decision.

Preparing for Mid Term Exams

The following were part of a study skills & test preparation workshop that was conducted in December for all Freshmen as part of their WAG program but are good advice for any student and may help you if your child starts to feel stressed out over exams.

Before the test:

- ✓ Budget your time, make sure you have sufficient time to study so that you are well prepared for the test.
- ✓ Go to review sessions, pay attention to hints that the instructor may give about the test. Take notes and ask questions about items you may be confused about.

Ask the teacher to specify the areas that will be emphasized on the test.

- ✓ Make sure you go to the class right before the test; it's another prime time for the teacher to give out more hints or the format of the test.
- ✓ Go over material from practice tests, HW's, sample problems, review material, textbook, class notes.
- ✓ Take frequent breaks: move around, change your environment, eat snacks.
- ✓ Eat. Having food in your stomach will give you energy and help you focus. Avoid heavy foods which can make you groggy.
- ✓ Don't try to pull an all-nighter.
- ✓ Put the main ideas/information/formulas onto a sheet that can be quickly reviewed many times, this makes it easier to retain the key concepts that will be on the test.

During the test:

- ✓ Keep a positive attitude throughout the whole test and try to stay relaxed. If you start to feel nervous take a few deep breaths to relax.
- ✓ Focus on your own work not what others are doing.

- ✓ When you first receive your test, do a quick survey of the entire test so that you know how to efficiently budget your time.

- ✓ Do the easiest problems first. Don't stay on a problem that you are stuck on, especially when time is a factor.

- ✓ Do the problems that have the greatest point values first.

- ✓ Pace yourself, don't rush. Read the entire question and pay attention to the details.

- ✓ Ask the instructor for clarification if you don't understand what they are asking for on the test.

- ✓ Write legibly. You can't earn points if the teacher can't read what you've written.

- ✓ Always read the whole question carefully. Don't make assumptions about what the question might be.

- ✓ If you don't know an answer, skip it. Go on with the rest of the test and come back to it later. Other parts of the test may have some information that will help you out with that question.

- ✓ Don't worry if others finish before you. Focus on the test in front of you.

- ✓ If you have time left when you are finished, look over your test. Make sure that you have answered all the questions. Only change an answer if you misread or misinterpreted the question because the first answer that you put is usually the correct one. Watch out for careless mistakes and proofread your essay and/or short answer questions.

CONNECT AND COMMIT

Connect & Commit Community Service-Learning Club
All meetings are 6:30-7:30pm in the WHS Library
January Club Meetings will be held Tuesday the 8th and Tuesday the 29th

The Connect & Commit club is open to all students. You can get involved at any time. You can sign up for the opportunities listed below at the meetings or in the Connect and Commit office, which is in the library of the high school. If you have questions about Connect and Commit, visit Kristen Ritchie, Program Director, in the Connect and Commit Office or contact Kristen via email connectandcommit@gmail.com or phone 781-721-7020 x1999.

Volunteer Opportunities & Events

Living Legacy Project- Ongoing- January-April

Connect & Commit is partnering with the Winchester Nursing Center to develop on-going relationships between student volunteers and residents at the center. Interested students would be paired with a resident and over the course of a few months, work to develop a living legacy for that resident through interviews, discussions, sharing photos etc. We imagine weekly afternoon visits as a group to the nursing center from 3:15-4:15pm supervised by Mrs. Harvey. There will be more information to come, but if you are interested please contact Kristen Ritchie.

Room to Grow- Saturday January 12th, 10am-12pm Back Bay, Boston

Volunteers are needed to help this nonprofit sort and organize incoming donations of baby and children's clothes as well as other items that the agency needs to support new mothers and their children.

Jenks Cyber Cafes- always 3-4pm 1/15/13, 1/30/13, 2/7/13, 2/26/13, 3/7/13, 3/26/13

Spend an hour one afternoon with 2 peers assisting senior citizens at the Jenks Center with technology needs. Work together to come up with a theme for each session. Theme ideas include: Apps, Uploading Photos, Emails, etc. If you are interested, please contact Kristen Ritchie.

Relay for Life Kick-off Meeting- Wednesday February 6th 6-7pm in the Pond Room at the Jenks Center

Help us Kick Off the second annual Relay for Life of Winchester! Come join together for coffee and refreshments as we learn about plans for this year's American Cancer Society Event and how you can get involved. All are welcome!

Community Servings- always 1-4pm 2/6/13, 4/11/13, 5/6/13 (all half days) Jamaica Plain, Boston

Volunteers are needed to help prepare food for this nonprofit agency providing delivered meals to patients with terminal illnesses and as a result restricted diets.

Jenks Mardi Gras Festival- Saturday January 9th

Servers are needed to help at the Jenks Center Mardi Gras Festival. More information to come.

Brunch Servers at the Jenks- Sunday March 10th 11:30am

Volunteers are needed to help serve brunch to Patrons at the Jenks Center before they attend a local theatre show. More information to come.

RELAY FOR LIFE- Saturday June 22nd 5pm-6am Skillings Field

We are looking for a Planning Committee Chair as well as Planning Committee Members. This will be a big commitment for most of the year, especially second semester, but the rewards are great, so please take that into consideration when thinking about your interest.

www.relayforlife.org/winchesterma



Winchester Youth Center

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781-721-0906

www.wynec.com

winchesteryouthcenter@gmail.com

www.facebook.com/pages/Winchester-Youth-Center

The WYC offers a wide range of leadership, service-learning, and good-decision-making activities for WHS students. We encourage all WHS students to check out our website and stop by the WYC anytime to find out how to get more involved in all the cool things that we have going on!

WYC Coffee House

“Walk Into Warmth”

Friday, January 11th 8:00-10:30pm

Are you looking for a fun and warm place to be with friends on a Friday night? Come to the Coffee House. As always, the Coffee House will feature live music and delicious homemade treats, frappes, and coffee drinks. The Coffee House is open to high school students only. Admission is \$5. All proceeds will benefit the Peer Leaders' Habitat for Humanity trip.

Lantern Walk Student Committee

Monday, January 14th 7:00-8:00pm WYC

Do you think that stress is an issue in Winchester? Do you want to help reduce stress for yourself and your peers? Then join the Lantern Walk Committee. Our next meeting is Monday, January 14th at 7:00pm in the WYC. All students are welcome to join!

Relay For Life of Winchester Kick-Off Celebration
Wednesday, February 6th 5:30-7:30 Jenks Center

Are you thinking about participating in the 2nd annual Relay For Life of Winchester? Please join us for the Kick-off event on Wednesday, February 6th at the Jenks Center. Our first Relay included 30 teams and 300 participants and raised over \$60,000! We invite everyone to get involved in this year's Relay and help us reach our goal of \$75,000! Go to www.relayforlife.org/winchesterma to register your team, like us on Facebook, and follow us on Twitter @winrelayforlife. Please contact us at winchesterrelay@gmail.com for more information.

COMMUNITY NEWS

NEWS FROM THE WINCHESTER COMMUNITY MUSIC SCHOOL

Open Mic Night at Starbucks – Thursday, January 3, 7:00-9:00 PM

Join us for Open Mic Night at Starbucks, 542 Main Street, Winchester. Hosted by Winchester Community Music School and singer/songwriter Mike Verge. Open Mic Nights occur the first Thursday of every month and we welcome performers, families and friends for this lively, emceed coffee house event. Individual or small duo/trio performances are encouraged. We welcome all ages, all instruments, and all types of music. Bands are welcome but must be acoustic. Free and open to the public. For information, call [781-721-2950](tel:781-721-2950) or visit www.winchestermusic.org.

MMEA Pre-Audition Workshop – Saturday, January 12, 10:30 AM – 12:00PM

For 9th grade and middle school students trying out for the MMEA Junior District Music Festival. Prepare for the audition process in a supportive environment. Perform your audition piece and scales to receive valuable feedback and helpful suggestions from peers and faculty. The workshop will cover presentation issues, expectations from the adjudicators, relaxation suggestions, and tips on audition strategies. Open to all singers and instrumentalists, you do not need to be enrolled at WCMS to participate. Held at Winchester Community Music School, 407 Highland Avenue, Winchester. Fee is \$25 per participant; pre-registration required by **Friday, January 4**. Call [781-721-2950](tel:781-721-2950) or visit www.winchestermusic.org for more info.

Faculty Chamber Ensemble Concert – “Music to Warm the Heart” – Sunday, January 27, 3:00 PM

Winchester Community Music School presents its annual Faculty Chamber Music Concert on Sunday, January 27 at 3:00 pm. Join us for an afternoon of chamber music performed by talented WCMS faculty. Works will include the Brahms clarinet trio; pieces by Bruch for viola, clarinet and piano; and songs by Purcell and Massenet. Performers include Glenn Dickson, clarinet; Melissa Glaister, soprano; Alex Vavilov, viola; Nick Upton, cello; Olga Talroze, piano; Jennifer Choe, piano; and Heather Bissell, piano. A “Meet the Artists” reception will immediately follow the recital. Held at Winchester Community Music School, 407 Highland Avenue, Winchester. Tickets: \$15 at the door. For more information, call [781-721-2950](tel:781-721-2950) or visit www.winchestermusic.org.

FRIENDS OF THE WINCHESTER PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Joy of Getting Things Done--Wednesday, January 9, 2013 at 7:00 PM Winchester Public Library:

Back by popular demand, Life Coach Linda L. King of Reading returns to the Winchester Public Library to share her secrets of organizational and motivational success. Attendees will be given helpful hand-outs to assist in fulfilling many of their New Year's resolutions and other personal and professional goals. This is a great opportunity to start the New Year with a plan! Free and open to the public.

**PARENT TO PARENT PRESENTS:
PARENTING WORKSHOPS AND COFFEE WITH THE SUPERINTENDENT**

Three Workshops on Understanding and Interacting with Pre-Teens & Teenagers. Come to one, two, or all three!

Back by popular demand, **Rick Irving, LICSW** will speak to parents about effectively communicating with children even before they hit adolescence. Rick is a clinical social worker for the Andover Public Schools and has a private practice in Winchester.

First Session: Communicating Successfully with your Pre-Adolescent and Adolescent Child (So you don't go crazy!) Tuesday, January 22, 2013, 7 to 9 pm, *The First Congregational Church, Palmer Room, 21 Church St., Winchester Center.

In this workshop, Rick will cover ways to have more satisfying interactions with your children, focusing on components of adult-child interactions, common communication traps, techniques to avoid, and ways to listen for what your child is trying to share. He will go over specific language, timing and tone to use for various situations and temperamental styles. Parents are encouraged to bring questions and situations and will leave with practical ideas to try.

Second Session: The Characteristics of Our Tweens and Teens That Make Us Lose Sleep (And how to respond without feeling helpless!) Tuesday, February 5, 2013, 7 to 9 pm

Third Session: The Gift of Confidence, Resilience and Competence (So you can watch them handle the world) Tuesday, February 26, 2013, 7 to 9 pm

***Please note:** The First Congregational Church has generously provided funding and the space to make this series possible; however, there will be no religious content in the program. These workshops are **free and open to the public**. Snow-date: Tuesday, March 12th

"Coffee with the Superintendent" on Tuesday, January 29, 2013 from 9:00 am to 10:30 am at the McCall Middle School Library.

Please join us for a cup of coffee and an opportunity to hear directly from Superintendent William McAlduff who will provide updates on each of our schools. The format will include an open dialogue with the superintendent and may cover topics such as the school budget, curriculum, new and innovative programs, school building maintenance, sports programs, and more. Please come with your questions!

For more information, visit www.parenttoparentwinchester.org ***Please note the snow date is Thursday, January 31.**

NEWS FROM THE WINCHESTER MULTICULTURAL NETWORK

WINCHESTER IN TRANSITION (WIT): A CONFERENCE ABOUT COMMUNITY

The Winchester Multicultural Network will once again be sponsoring a dynamic community-wide conference and invites you to join us for WIT 2013 on Saturday February 9, 2012, 8:30-1pm at the Winchester Town Hall Auditorium. The conference is for all those who live, work, study, worship, play and conduct business in our town. Last year over 150 Winchester residents from all segments of our population gathered for conversations on ten topics. Participants left heartened and empowered by engaging in these face-to-face, provocative civic discussions.

This year WIT 2013 will build on last years' success with a half-day conference that deepens our exploration of four topics that surfaced prominently during last year's conversations. An experienced facilitator will lead each of the following sessions.

- Stress: The role that stress increasingly plays in our lives, across all ages from youth to elderly
- Accessibility: The issue of accessibility, particularly for those with limited mobility
- Class: The class issue, often hidden and not discussed openly in our suburban community
- Demographics: How is the face of Winchester changing?

Longtime Winchester resident Sol Gittleman, Gantcher University Professor in the German Program and Judaic Studies departments at Tufts University, will be our dynamic and engaging keynote speaker for the morning together. Join community leaders, friends and neighbors as we build upon the success from last year. Your perspective is important. For more information, please visit our website: www.GetToWIT.org or call [781-729-7100](tel:781-729-7100).