



Superintendent's Bulletin

Triton Regional School District

February 13, 2008

Sandra J. Halloran, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

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A Message From The Superintendent

As the Triton Regional District has been involved in numerous changes over the past few years, I feel it is important to outline some of the on-going changes and the effects they have had on our district.

The dictionary definition of change: to make or become different, to modify, transform or revolutionize. All of these words describe the Triton Regional School District in recent years. We have experienced new leadership on all fronts with a new superintendent, assistant superintendent, administrator of pupil services as well as a new business administrator. In addition, due to retirements and movement of staff, we have welcomed five new principals and four new assistant principals.

The process of change takes a significant amount of time, three to five years, and involves communication, ownership and conflict management. The change process can be extremely difficult in some areas and requires an inordinate amount of hard work on the part of our schools and member communities working together. I am pleased to be able to assure you that the Triton Regional School District is moving forward in all aspects of academics, visual and performing arts, extra-curricular activities and interscholastic sports.

The District has developed a comprehensive improvement plan and has made it available in all of our school offices and communities. As a result of last year's financial commitment of our member towns, our school district has been better able to address the educational needs of our students for this school year with decreased class sizes, a gifted and talented program, and much needed additional math and reading support services.

Each of our elementary schools offer extended day programs that provide excellent childcare and enrichment opportunities on-site. After school programs include entrepreneurial enrichment, performing arts, recycling, journalism, competitive math league, health & fitness, rocket science, study skills, etc. All of these programs are open to all students and are free of charge to participants; a snack and transportation is included. A large variety of intramural and interscholastic sports continue to be made available with user fees matching and, in some cases, lower than our surrounding communities.

Finally, the Core Values of our district reflect what we as a school district believe: (1) Respect for Self and Others, (2) Excellence for All, and (3) Integrity in Words and Actions. As we move forward, with these Core Values in mind, my administrative team and I pledge to continue to work with parents and community members in the best interest of our students.

Contact Us

Triton Reg. School District
Superintendent's Office
112 Elm Street
Byfield, MA 01922

Voice: (978) 465-2397
Fax: (978) 465-8599

<http://www.trsd.net>

Administration

Sandra J. Halloran, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools
shalloran@trsd.net

Kathleen M. Willis
Assistant Superintendent
kwillis@trsd.net

Christine A. Kneeland
Admin. of Pupil Services
ckneeland@trsd.net

Brian L. Forget
Business Administrator
bforget@trsd.net

Kevin McLaughlin
Triton Reg. High School
Principal
(978) 462-8171
kmclaughlin@trsd.net

Jared Fulgoni
Triton Reg. Middle School
Principal
(978) 463-5845
jfulgoni@trsd.net

Sylvia A. Jordan
Newbury Elementary School
Principal
(978) 465-5353
sjordan@trsd.net

Arthur Beane, Ed.D.
Pine Grove School
Principal
(978) 948-2520
abeane@trsd.net

James L. Montanari
Salisbury Elementary School
Principal
(978) 463-5852
jmontanari@trsd.net

FY2009 Budget

The Administrative Team has presented an initial FY09 budget to the school committee, It was presented on Wednesday, February 6th at the regularly scheduled meeting. This budget represents an increase in spending of 5.83% but an average increase in town assessments of 5.0%. This increase was promised during budget deliberations last year with the caveat that the current FY08 Budget be approved. As you all know, there was a successful override in the Town of Rowley, and the Towns of Newbury and Salisbury were able to absorb the increase in their normal operating budget. This was a huge boost to the district, and allowed us to restore a great deal of positions and services to the budget. Athletics and activities were also able to be funded to a 50/50 split with fees which was a huge improvement over the 2006/07 school year. In addition, we were able to fund the necessary increases to the teachers' contract to bring salaries in line with other local districts. With this success, the FY09 budget process must begin with a sincere thank you to all three member communities.

The FY09 budget which was presented on February 6th provides four new classroom teachers, one special education teacher, two curriculum coordinators, a technology coordinator, and some additional supplies and materials that are needed to continue implementation of various programs. In addition, the largest portion of the increase in the budget is due to the settlement of the teachers' contract. This increase in FY09 is the largest fiscal impact over the four year period. The result is a contract that is far more competitive in the local area, especially for those teachers who are new to the profession.

Additional meetings for budget deliberation are scheduled for Wednesday, February 13th and Wednesday, March 5th. The March 5th meeting will be the Public Forum on the budget, which is the public's official opportunity to comment on record about the budget. A final meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 12th which will result in a final vote on a budget to pass along to the member communities for approval.

Personnel Update

I am pleased to announce the appointment of Kevin Dodier as the Triton Regional High School hockey coach and Erin Dempsey as the cheerleading coach for the 2007-2008 winter sports season.

Kevin brings extensive knowledge to the position from his experience both as a hockey goalie throughout his high school and college years and most recently, as an assistant hockey coach at Amesbury High School

Erin Dempsey was a varsity cheerleader for all four years at Bishop Fenwick High School and was captain of the squad as a senior. She has competed in a national championship and is currently an assistant coach at YJ Cheer in Middleton. Erin is also MSSAA and MIAA certified.

Due to the recent publicity surrounding the resignation of last year's Triton High School hockey coach and the decision not to reinstate the high school cheerleading coach, I feel that I must state my thoughts and feelings in regards to interscholastic sports.

I understand the importance of interscholastic sports in a young person's life from personal experience. Both my husband and I, as well as our children, participated in sports throughout our school years and it was always a healthy and positive learning experience.

Upcoming Events

- **Wed., February 13th;**
School Committee Meeting
7:00 PM
Triton High School Library
- **February 18th through February 22nd;**
No School
Winter Vacation
- **Mon., February 25th;**
Return to School from Winter Vacation
- **Tues., February 26th;**
School Committee Communications Subcommittee Meeting
4:00 PM
Superintendent's Conference Room
- **Wed., March 5th;** School Committee Meeting – Budget Public Form
7:00 PM
Triton High School Library
- **Thurs., March 6th;**
Policy Subcommittee Meeting
3:00 PM
Superintendent's Conference Room
District Communication Meeting
7:00 PM
Superintendent's Conference Room
- **Fri., March 7th;**
Early Release Day
- **Wed., March 12th;**
School Committee Meeting
Triton High School Library
- **Wed. & Thurs., March, 19th & 20th;**
Early Release – Elementary Schools Only
- **Fri., March 21st;**
No School
Good Friday

Personnel Update

I believe that coaches are role models and teachers and should possess a student centered approach to coaching and competition. The dedicated coaches in our athletic programs understand the importance of fostering a positive learning environment for participating students and they offer support and guidance for every player on the team.

I believe that coaches Kevin Dodier and Erin Dempsey possess these qualities and I wish them and our Triton High School hockey and cheerleading teams a great season.

Progress Update/Assessment – X2 Student Information System (SIS)

The grant received by the Triton Regional School District from the Triton Education Foundation in the amount of \$37,000.00 for the 2007-2008 school year has enabled us to take a major step forward with regards to student information management. The full amount of the grant was applied to the first year costs of a new Student Information System from X2 Development Corporation. This is a web based system that incorporates the tracking of all core biographical data as well as assessments, attendance, and student services.

As the 2007-2008 school year began, the District Administration presented a District Improvement Plan which established goals and timelines for all students achieving success in the coming years. A major goal outlined in this plan was the communication between the district, the member communities and families of Triton students. As we move further into the implementation of X2, this system will allow for all parents to log into the system to track the progress of their children. Information includes, but is not limited to, attendance, grades, Individual Education Plans (IEP's), and transcripts. The X2 system will be an incredibly valuable resource for us as we look to improve our school/home communication. First, we must first become experts with the system ourselves before opening up the system to families. It is strongly suggested by X2 Development Corporation that all school staff are highly trained on the functioning of the system prior to opening up the public portal.

At this point in the implementation process, we are not quite as far along as we had initially hoped. This is not due to any factor that the Triton Education Foundation could have controlled. As you are all aware, the X2 implementation was part of a large scale network/systems upgrade. This upgrade is the result of Triton's commitment to improving the current technological situation. Most recently, we entered into a long term network services contract that will ensure that we do not deal with the same situation we experienced this past fall. This contract will provide year round, total network management and monitoring for the district. This contract will be put into place in early February and has been budgeted to continue in the upcoming budget. In addition to the network management, we are also in need of a Coordinator of Instructional and Administrative Technology which is becoming increasingly necessary. This is being considered for the FY09 budget and will depend on the availability of funds. The ability to further increase the effectiveness of X2 and our ability to use it routinely would be greatly enhanced with the addition of a technology coordinator.

The transition into the new system has been slow, but we are continuing to make progress and have already seen drastic improvements in our ability to manipulate and use the data. Moving forward, there is an ongoing cost of roughly \$33,000.00 per year to maintain this system. The district has committed to this cost in future years.

District Committees

The following district committees have been and will continue to work together in the interest of effective communications.

- **SUPERINTENDENT'S ADVISORY COUNCIL:** Superintendent, assistant superintendent, district coordinator of special programs, and parent representatives from each community
- **DISTRICT COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE:** Superintendent, school committee (3), selectmen (3), and finance committee representatives (3) from each community
- **TRITON MIDDLE SCHOOL TASK FORCE:** Assistant superintendent, middle school principal, middle school teachers, parent representatives from each community
- **SCHOOL CHOICE TASK FORCE:** School business administrator, faculty, and parent representatives.
- **STUDENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE:** Superintendent, high school principal, student representatives
- **VOLUNTEER COMMITTEE:** Assistant superintendent, volunteer coordinator from each school
- **PTA/PTO/SEPAC COMMITTEE:** Superintendent, president/chair of each committee

John and Abigail Adams Award Winners

The John and Abigail Adams Award is presented to high school seniors who have scored in the top 25% percent of their class on tenth grade MCAS tests. This scholarship provides for free tuition at any Massachusetts state college or university.

The scholarships range from \$700 - \$1700 per year. We are pleased and proud to congratulate the following Triton students;

Jeffrey Andrews	Andrea Sacco	Taryn Marcorelle	Christopher Girard
Daniel Berardi	David Simon	Brian McDonnell	Danielle Gorski
Nicholas Bryant	Paul Spears	Lindsay Muse	Norman Jutrus
Devin Culverwell	James Velonis	Veronica O'Leary	Daniel King
Kyle Devenish	Nicole Wurdeman	Sarah Peterson	Melanie Lees
Ryan Flynn	Christopher Andrukaitis	Christina Puopolo	Katelyn McAdams
Michelle Godfrey	Rachel Bissett	Anna Sczepanski	Nicole McLaine
Brendan Grafe	Harley Cox	Ryan Slepoy	Melissa Norton
Elizabeth Kane	Russell Dabritz	Laura Stein	Brittany O'Neil
Amanda Kuczun	Elizabeth Donofrio	Tarra Wallace	Ashley Pierce
Jessica MacLean	Alexandra Foley	Michelle Bashaw	Peter Rock
Malerie McArdle	Andrew Goodwin	Danielle Brewer	William Short
Megan Murray	Hillary Granara	Zachary Crossman	Zachary Solomon
Emma Odell	Kristina Kim	Corey Denman	Mark Talas
Alina Pawlowski	Andrea Sacco	Taryn Marcorelle	Zachary Welch
Christine Powers	Jessica LaPlante	Matthew Emerzian	

Don't forget to check out the district website, located at <http://www.trsd.net> for all the latest happenings. Be sure to sign up for the TritonNews List Serve so you are notified of all important events.

Do You Know???

- Camp Historic Newbury took place at Newbury Elementary School on January 16, 17, and 24. Teachers, dressed in colonial costumes from Historic New England, took over classrooms to take our elementary students back in time. We continued with our Time and Change theme. This series of camps presented life and work in 18th Century Newbury. The younger grades explored music, dance, costumes, games, tea parties, etc., and the upper grades got a chance to try their hands at colonial crafts, such as tinsmith, chandler, cordwainer, weaver, clerk, hatter, etc.
- Newbury students in grades four to six participated in National Geographic's Geography Bee. Each class sent a representative to the school bee. Natalie True entered the national competition as the winner from Newbury Elementary School.
- Pine Grove School presented Willy Wonka and The Chocolate Factory on February 8th & 9th. John Collyer, Grade 5 teacher, had a lead role as Grandpa Joe. Dr. Beane had a cameo appearance as The Candy Man. Skip Pearson, custodian, was an Oompa Loopa in a purple inflatable suit. Over 100 children participated as actors or choral back up. Each performance was sold out. A great time was had by all. Mr. & Mrs. Diskes, Lois Freeman, Joanne Anderson, and Nancy DiMento-Jerome were critical in the direction of the play. Many other adults helped with microphone distribution, costume fitting, script reminding/prompting and stage set arranging. What a wonderful learning experience for our children.
- Salisbury Elementary School received a Community Service Award from the Pettengill House for Food Donations.
- Sue Mitchell and the Salisbury Elementary School Brownies made six birdfeeders for Poirier's Patio. They are placed in the three trees near the Title 1 window.
- The Arts Lottery awarded Salisbury Elementary School's Kindergarten \$720.00 for a field trip to the North Shore Music Theater to see Charlotte's Web.
- The Town of Salisbury has allotted \$10,000 in scholarships to help support Sergeant Camp. Thanks to Selectman Henry Richenberg, Town Developer Lisa Pearson, and Town Manager Neil Harrington.
- Seven Triton High School students and three Middle School students were recently awarded Boston Globe Scholastic Art Awards. Triton High students earned two Gold Key and four Silver Key awards along with an Honorable Mention. Gold Key Awards were presented to Rachel Bissett and Sarah Bouchard. Silver Key Awards were presented to Jill Lariviere, Colleen Loughlin, Anna Szczepanski, and Nate Shelter. Honorable Mention was presented to Matthew Brimicombe.

The Triton Middle School had two Gold Key Award winners and one Silver Key Award winner. Gold Key Awards were presented to Hannah Rausch and Gretchen Searle. A Silver Key Award was presented to Ashley Baril.

Do You Know???

- The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation recently awarded the Triton Middle School a Community Spirit 9/11 mini-grant to fund bike racks. This was in connection with the Green Team, our 21st Century after school recycling program. Thanks to parent Donna Rusinak and the Green Team, we have another opportunity to get fit and reduce our carbon footprint at the same time.
- The Triton High School Community Service Organization and National Honor Society served as “Bell-Ringers” for the Salvation Army for their sixth year. Sixty-one students volunteered their time in two hour shifts from December 8th through December 22nd for a total of 50 hours and raised \$1,490.87 to help the Salvation Army assist families in need.
- The newly formed Triton Glass Collaborative has hung their first collaborative project in the Middle School lobby due to the fact that the Middle School is the first place where children from our member communities come together in their learning environment. Amy Merluzzi, art teacher at Newbury Elementary School, taught the class. Participants in the Triton Glass Collaborative included teachers Pat Stimers, Kyle Campbell, Holly Reynolds, and Marion Prescott-Pine Grove School; Irene Kelly, Liz Raycroft, Leah Peicott-Newbury Elementary School; Barbara Mann, Melanie Babendrier, Carol Regazzini-Triton Middle School, and Jane Tallent, Molly Bidstrup, Curt Turner and Erin Fournier from the Triton community. A small reception is being planned for spring.