



# Superintendent's Bulletin

## Triton Regional School District

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Sandra J. Halloran, Superintendent of Schools

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### DO YOU KNOW???

- The High School Guidance Department has recently acquired Naviance software. This program is designed to assist parents and students in making decisions regarding colleges and careers. It also allows the Guidance Department to track and analyze college/career data. Guidance counselors will be presenting the new software during the month of April to Juniors, Sophomores and their families.
- This month Newbury Elementary School students celebrated reading with the *Massachusetts Book Awards*. Enthusiastic readers from the 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades read a minimum of five books and completed accompanying reading responses in order to receive their certificates. Several students read beyond the minimum and received an additional award.
- Over 200 People attended Math Family Fun Night at Salisbury Elementary School on Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>.
- Tutoring is available to all Middle School students every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday thanks to the High School National Honor Society.

### Triton Regional School District Music Festival:

On March 13, 2007, Triton's music department held the first ever Triton District Music Festival. Over 200 elementary school musicians joined singers and instrumentalists from the middle and high schools for a day long extravaganza of learning and making music together. Students rehearsed together, were treated to performances by the middle and high school select groups, picnicked in the gym, and produced a concert. The day was a resounding success, and the culminating concert well attended by parents, school committee members, and administrators.

This event was made possible by donations from all three elementary schools' parent groups, the Triton Music Parents Organization (TMPO), and Salter Transportation. Cafeteria staff from all three schools, custodians, and teachers joined forces to provide this enriching experience to our children. Special thanks to Pauline Saulnier, Donna Andersen, Sha Riordan, and Nadine Holohan for their help. Congratulations to music teachers Deb Walton, Laurie Peterson, Lois Freeman, Jim Brauneck, Dee Hardy, Bob Lathrop, and Sue Densmore on a job well done!

### District Early Childhood Programs:

#### Preschool:

The Triton Regional School District has been offering integrated preschool programs since 1988. The philosophy of the program is to provide a supportive and stimulating environment in which all children, particularly those with disabilities, can learn. Children in each preschool classroom have a wide range of skills, abilities, and interests. The program provides all participating children with opportunities for developmentally appropriate activities which are individualized based on need and which foster language, social, cognitive, and physical skill development. The goal is to ensure that children will succeed based on their individual development.

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## Upcoming Events

- **Tues., March 27<sup>th</sup>:**  
School Committee  
Communications  
Subcommittee Mtg.:  
4:00 PM  
Superintendent's  
Conference Room
- **Fri., April 6<sup>th</sup>:**  
No School  
Good Friday
- **Wed., April 11<sup>th</sup>:**  
Executive Session of the  
School Committee;  
6:00 PM  
Superintendent's  
Conference Room  
School Committee  
Mtg.: 7:00 PM  
Triton Regional High  
School Library
- **Thurs., April 12<sup>th</sup>:**  
Superintendent's  
Advisory Council Mtg.:  
6:30 PM  
Superintendent's  
Conference Room
- **April 16<sup>th</sup> through**  
**April 20<sup>th</sup>:** No School  
Spring Vacation
- **Tues., April 24<sup>th</sup>:**  
School Committee  
Communications  
Subcommittee Mtg.:  
4:00 PM  
Superintendent's  
Conference Room  
School Committee  
Policy Subcommittee  
Mtg.:  
6:00 PM  
Superintendent's  
Conference Room
- **Thurs., April 26<sup>th</sup>:**  
Superintendent's  
Advisory Council  
6:30 PM  
Superintendent's  
Conference Room

## District Early Childhood Programs: (Continued)

The curriculum follows the Guidelines for Preschool Learning Experiences developed by Massachusetts Department of Education which is aligned with the Curriculum Frameworks. Integrated therapies are provided by speech, occupational, and physical therapists that also provide consultation to the preschool staff. All classes are currently accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Children attend two, three, or four half day classes based on parent interest. A child's schedule may be modified to meet the requirements of the Individualized Education Plan. Enrollment is in late March. Tuition is charged and there is a sliding fee scale based on family income. Current enrollment is 176 children.

In addition to the integrated preschool classes at Newbury Elementary School, Pine Grove School, and Salisbury Elementary School, there is also a preschool class at Triton High School which provides a field experience for those students enrolled in the Child Care and Development Class offered through the Family Consumer Science Department.

### **Kindergarten:**

The Triton Regional School District offers parents two choices for kindergarten. In addition to the traditional half day option, parents have the opportunity to choose the tuition based full day kindergarten program for their child. Half day sessions are either AM or PM for the full year and determination of AM/PM is by home location and bus route. Half day and full day kindergarten classes are staffed by a teacher and assistant. Integrated therapies are provided by speech, occupational, and physical therapists that also provide consultation to the kindergarten staff.

The kindergarten program was among the first in the state to be accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children and is still one of the very few districts to have received accreditation for both preschool and kindergarten.

The kindergarten curriculum is based on the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks as well as criteria established by the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

## Triton Heroes: Thank You

I want to take this opportunity to thank all those who were involved in any way with the Triton Heroes. There was an amazing effort undertaken by a core group of volunteers who have, to date, raised over \$135,000 on behalf of Triton Students. In addition to those who put countless hours into this drive, there are close to 350 individuals, businesses and groups that have made financial donations. The determination of all who are involved in some capacity is exemplary and should be commended. I thank you on behalf of ALL those who are affected by the steep fees assessed to students this year.

I am hopeful that an effort of this nature will not be necessary in the coming school year. The budget we have developed contains the funding necessary to enable a flat user fee of \$250 for all athletics and \$100 for all performing arts and activities. I am optimistic that those who have looked into the numbers, and explored the details of the budget will see that it reflects spending that is fair, balanced and reasonable.

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## FY08 Operating Budget

As you know, the Triton Regional School District budget has been approved by the School Committee and forwarded to our three member communities for approval. The budget for FY08 represents an increase in spending of 9.35% from our current budget. Of this increase, there is approximately \$1.6 million in new spending. This year, the increase to each town's assessment averaged 5%. With the proposed budget, each town's assessment would increase by an average of 12%. The difference, representing an average of 7%, makes up the \$1.6 million in new spending. Should this budget not be approved by the towns, and we revert to a 5% increase to the town's assessments, no programs or staff will be restored in the schools. We would, therefore, only be able to provide the same level of services to our students as we are this year.

At the three elementary schools, due to class size, there is a clear need for restoring teachers. This budget reflects 9 classroom teachers across the district, as well as 1 reading specialist and 1 math specialist to each elementary school. These specialists will provide direct service to students 60% of their time targeting areas in need of improvement as well as areas where students need additional challenges. In addition, there is a need for supplies and curriculum materials in grades 3 through 5. In grades 3 and 4, Social Studies texts will be purchased. In grade 5, materials for Investigations, which is the final grade level in the implementation cycle, will be provided.

At the Middle School, a full time math specialist and a half time reading specialist will be added. Again, the target student population will be those not currently serviced by additional programs. A half time Library/Media specialist has been a long standing need at the Middle School and will be added next year. In addition to staffing, the budget includes funding for a new novel series which will be used in both 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

Much of the increased spending at the High School is in direct response to our status being changed to Warning by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. This is an important accreditation, and we need to make several changes to be removed from this warning status. Three classroom teachers would be restored to the teaching roster, one each for English, Mathematics and History. This would address class sizes. In addition, there would be a (.5) Physical Education teacher restored. This would allow for the scheduling of Junior PE, which would greatly reduce the large numbers of students in general study in the Library. This was a great concern of NEAS&C.

In addition to the above staffing, we would include the costs of the Athletics and Performing Arts programs with a target of a uniform flat fee of \$250 per student for athletics and \$100 per student of activities/performing arts. This includes funding 50% of the program costs, as well as a half time Athletic Director, and the full cost of transporting students for these programs.

There is a need for expenditure for curriculum as well including a new Foreign Language Text adoption, materials for the Mathematics department and novels for the Library. This budget would also provide a new access control system for the Middle/High School Campus which would greatly increase the site security.

At the district-wide level, we have many needs regarding Technology. This has been a topic of discussion for several years, and is becoming an issue where our systems and desktops are becoming truly obsolete. We are currently developing a Refresh Plan through a leasing program to provide new desktops and peripherals every four years. This budget also includes funding for a new school information system (SIS). This new SIS would combine all databases into one, providing more accurate data for state reporting. Additionally, these new integrated systems allow for parent access. Eventually, once implemented, parents would be able to access report cards, attendance, schedules, IEP's and 504 Plans for those receiving services, as well as important announcements. This is an amazing tool for communication. It is the industry standard for higher education and is quickly becoming the same for K-12 education.

In addition to the above mentioned upgrades, the budget also includes funding for needed improvements to our email system, anti-spam control, over all network traffic management, and accounting software. Our school network has grown extensively and improvements are needed in order to continually provide students with the best access to network files and the internet.