



PantherPride NEWSLETTER

Fall is in the air

Dear Parents:

Mornings are cooler, leaves are turning vibrant colors, and the hallways of our schools are filled with happy, energetic students – sure signs that fall is upon us. Every day I am grateful to be a part of the Middle Township School District family, but this realization intensifies every autumn when we return to school.

As Superintendent, I'm looking forward to what the new school year will bring to our students, families, staff, and schools. MTSD is known for its' extraordinary teaching and learning practices, academic and extracurricular achievements, and traditions. At MTSD, we value our students and work together to ensure they are supported in academics, co-curriculars and social-emotional learning.

For some, the start of school can be a challenge. It can be difficult to go from long, lazy summer days to a stricter schedule. According to a [Nemours KidsHealth article](#), setting up a routine can help students feel more comfortable with a school schedule. Here are some suggestions to ease the transition:

- Get enough sleep – going to bed at a reasonable time will ensure students feel rested and ready to learn the next day.
- Eat a good breakfast – Healthy eating will keep them alert in school
- Write down important information – This can help students remember details such as locker combinations, class times, lunch times, etc.
- Use a personal planner – Keep a record of assignments, tests, and extracurricular activities.
- Organize the night before – Pack backpacks and keep them by the door, lay out clothes, pack lunches, etc. to make mornings easier

Hopefully, these tips will help all our school families have a successful and happy year. I look forward to working with you.

Dr. David Salvo

Superintendent of Schools



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UPCOMING EVENTS

NOV. 6-8 – SCHOOLS CLOSED FOR FALL BREAK

NOV. 9-10 – SCHOOLS CLOSED FOR NJEA CONVENTION

NOV. 13 – HS-VETERAN'S DAY CEREMONY/ BREAKFAST – 8:30 A.M. MEDIA CENTER

NOV. 14 – MS-VETERAN'S DAY ASSEMBLY

NOV. 15, 16, 17 – ELEM. #1 EARLY DISMISSAL – PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

NOV. 15, 16, 17 – ELEM. #2 EARLY DISMISSAL – PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

NOV. 15, 16, 17 – MS EARLY DISMISSAL – PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

NOV. 15, 16, 17 – HS EARLY DISMISSAL – PARENT/TEACHER CONFERENCES

NOV. 16 – BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING – 6:00 P.M.

NOV. 17 – ELEM.#2 MAKE UP PICTURES

NOV. 17 – HS FALL PLAY – 7:00 P.M. – PAC

NOV. 18 – HS FALL PLAY – 2:00 P.M. & 7:00 P.M. – PAC

NOV. 20 – MS MAKE UP PICTURES

NOV. 22 – ALL SCHOOLS EARLY DISMISSAL

NOV. 23-24 – SCHOOLS CLOSED FOR THANKSGIVING BREAK

NOV. 29 – HS WINTER CHOIR CONCERT – 6:30 P.M. – PAC

DEC. 7 – BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING 6:00 P.M.

DEC. 8 – SCHOOLS CLOSED FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY 2

DEC. 12 – ALL SCHOOLS COMBINED HOLIDAY CONCERT – 6:30 P.M. – PAC

DEC. 22 – ALL SCHOOLS EARLY DISMISSAL

DEC. 25-29 – SCHOOLS CLOSED FOR WINTER BREAK





PantherPride NEWS

Welcome to the MTSD Family

Elementary #1:

Kara Brown
 Abigail Fox
 Christine Marcinkiewicz
 Caitlin Przepiorka
 Ashley Stevens
 Ashley Angelino
 Ivana Bozhinovska
 Jaclyn Hayes
 Jennifer McDonnell
 Brittany O'Neill
 Elizabeth Ranalli
 Sonja Weidman
 Gianna Williams

Elementary #2:

Lauryn Atkinson
 Juliana Donohue
 Nicole Keefe
 Kyle Mallon
 Andrea Miller
 Jennifer Forte
 Pedro Tapia Huerta

Middle School:

Damien Cwik
 Elise Fiore
 Christopher Lewis
 Nicholas Matousch
 Candice Powell-Caldwell

Chloe Selover
 Christine Selover
 Jessica Edwards-Potts

High School:

Alicia Cartagena-Colon
 Cara Castiglio
 Jacklyn Ferrilli
 Michael Frankel
 Dana Gelegonya
 Steven Gurdziel
 James Marcheski
 William Neill
 Elined Rivera

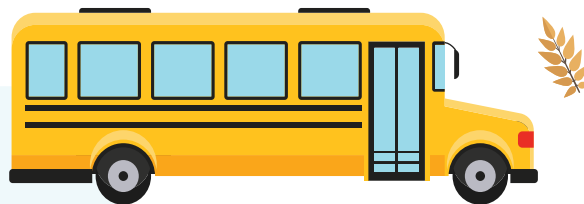
Valerie Sheets
 Alyssa Sittineri
 Ashlee Symanski
 Nathaniel Young

District:

James Loftus
 Jonathan Romero
 Andrew Smith

Transportation:

Nicole Gambino
 Michael McBride
 David O'Connell



Guidance Corner Highlights

Congrats to two MTHS students on being recognized by the College Board:

- **Dante Jackson**, junior: NAARA - National African American Recognition Award (NAARA)
- **Sophia Caldwell**, senior: NHRA - National Hispanic Recognition Award (NHRA)

MTHS hosted Financial Aid Night for all high school



students and their families in late September. Over 50 parents attended and were able to benefit from a presentation by Sharon Austin, a representative from the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA).

A special congratulations to sophomore **Julia Clarke** on being nominated for the HOBY State Leadership Seminar. The selected student will attend a three-day seminar filled with engaging speakers and leadership building activities beginning on June 14, 2024, at Drew University.





Kiwanis Club's donation keeps Elementary #1 students eating healthy

The Kiwanis Club of Cape May Court House has recently made a very generous donation to Elementary #1 to keep students eating healthy. The funds will be used to purchase non-perishable food such as granola bars, applesauce, and peanut butter. Each week, MTHS' Bible club, National Honor Society, and Key club will prepare 60 bags of food, which will be delivered to the elementary school and sent home with the students on Fridays.



Elementary #1 Hosts a Magical Pre-K Family Night

Elementary #1 hosted dozens of families for a Pre-K Family Night on Tuesday, Oct. 24. Students enjoyed a magic show performed by Ken the Magician, while parents attended a curriculum presentation presented by preschool instructional coach Octavio Liriano, as well as Elementary #1's instructional supervisor Katie Taylor. The presentation

highlighted the components of the preschool curriculum and the benefits of learning through play. Roughly 56 families participated in the event which lasted from 5:30-7:00 pm - complete with refreshments in the cafeteria provided by Samuel Farrow, brother of MTMS teacher Dave Farrow.





PantherPride NEWS

Elementary #2 Raises Awareness During First Breast Cancer Walk

Students and staff at Elementary #2 put on their pink attire and participated in the school's first breast cancer awareness walk on Oct. 13. While transitioning between special area classes such as gym, art and music, students completed laps around the school building to raise money for the Cancer Support Community New Jersey at Gilda's Club (CSCNJ). Besides the students, staff and parents and guardians also contributed, raising almost \$300 for the cause. Physical education teacher Crystal Hines collaborated with Jessica Melville from the CSCNJ to plan the walk and educate the students about how the funds will help others.



Elementary #2 Distributes New Pawsome Praise Passes

Elementary #2 students who demonstrate kindness, responsibility, respect, empathy, courage, optimism, trustworthiness, fairness and caring for others will be awarded Pawsome Praise Passes. The passes are a new addition to our Positive Behavior in Schools (PBIS) initiative and are given out by teachers. Students who earn the pass will receive a free snack at the cafeteria and a phone call to their parents informing them of their child's good behavior.



The school is also continuing to select Pawsome Panthers each week. Students can earn tickets for the weekly drawing by showing perseverance, an awesome attitude, a great work ethic, showing kindness, outstanding responsibility, minding their manners and being extra respectful. On Fridays, six students' names will be drawn, and they will receive a bracelet, panther pencil and a ticket to the monthly Pawsome Party.

One student from each homeroom who exemplifies the monthly character trait discussed will be acknowledged as a Panther Achiever. Panther Achievers are honored during the end of the month Panther Pride assembly.





Little Libraries Fulfill Middle School Teacher's Big Dream

Special Education Literacy teacher Jennifer Heun's big dream for installing Little Free Libraries across the district is coming true.

The middle school teacher has worked diligently to install these "take a book, share a book" free book exchange libraries for more than a year to support students on their reading journeys. After receiving a cancer diagnosis, Heun decided to retire, but the MTSD's teachers and administrators are continuing to complete the project she inspired.

Recently, many of those involved with the Little Free Libraries project came together at the middle school

library to celebrate as they near the final steps and give the book exchange a home in every MTSD school building. The event not only excited students and their

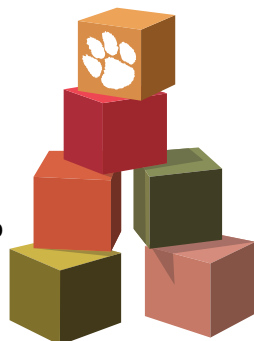
families about the upcoming addition to their schools, but it also brought joy to Heun as she continues to battle the disease.



Students use "Panther Block" to explore and more!

Panther Block is off to a great start for the 2023-2024 school year! What began back in 2019, eighth graders can use the time to take an elective class of their interest from courses like Creative Writing, ESports, Gardening, Band, Art and Drawing, and more. Panther Block also provides a time in the day for students to get extra help from their own teachers.

Students even have the opportunity learn more about the high school's Navy National Defense Cadet Corps (NNDCC) program. Those interested in the program can spend this time with cadets and ask them questions before committing the following year. The program teaches the Navy's core values of honor, courage and commitment. Students learn to be accountable for their professional and personal behavior and become mindful of the privilege of serving fellow Americans. They will develop moral and mental strength to do what is right, with confidence and resolution, even in the face of temptation or adversity. They also will learn the importance of teamwork.



Burke Subaru Makes Donation to MTSD

Middle Township Middle School (MTMS) received a donation this September from Burke Subaru and AdoptAClassroom.org (AAC) through their partnership with Subaru of America, Inc. The AAC initiative is to support students by providing teachers with financial resources to purchase supplies and learning materials. Funds are placed in an AAC credit account, and designated MTMS teachers will be able to make purchases through the AAC's partner vendor marketplace, consisting of more than 25 education specialty retailers.

The AAC's program falls under Subaru Loves Learning, whose goal is to make education available to everyone and has already supported more than 300,000 students nationwide. Subaru Loves Learning is the educational-focused pillar of the Subaru Love Promise, which is the company's vision to show love and respect to all.





MTHS senior Justen Wen earns perfect SAT math score and a place among the Class of 2024 Governor’s Stem Scholars

Congratulations to Middle Township High School (MTHS) senior Justen Wen, for receiving a perfect score of 800 on the SAT math test. This is the second time in the last three years a MTHS student has earned a perfect score on the math test.

Wen was also recognized as a Governor’s STEM Scholar, a statewide program that honors high achieving high school and college students committed to being a part of New Jersey’s Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) economy. The Class of 2024 is comprised of 131 scholars from 20 New Jersey counties.

Wen has a great interest in the engineering and computer science fields and was selected for his dedication and outstanding work in STEM. As part of the program, Wen will participate in a research/engineering design project, tour New Jersey STEM facilities and laboratories, and network with STEM professionals.



Coastal Prep Taking Students Out of the Classroom and onto the Racetrack for a Special Fall Field Trip

Normal transportation for students at Coastal Preparatory High School typically involves a school bus or van, but not on this particular sunny, fall day. Seven students had the chance to replace those normal wheels for high-speed go-karts as they grabbed their helmets at the New Jersey Motorsports Park on Saturday, Oct. 21. The outing gave students a chance to take a well-earned break from the classroom and burn some rubber on the racetrack thanks to the generous \$2,000 donation from the Greg DiAntonio Memorial Fund, a nonprofit based out of Wildwood.

Coastal Prep is one of only three recovery high schools in New Jersey and a partnership between MTSD and Cape Assist, a local nonprofit preventing and treating substance misuse and related issues. The school ensures that students recovering from substance misuse can also stay on track academically, thanks to specialized support.

The Greg DiAntonio Memorial Fund was established to honor the legacy of Pat and Kreni DiAntonio’s beloved son and member of the community who battled with substance misuse. The fund aims to support projects that promote education and recovery as well as remove the stigma from addiction in families.





Fall 2023 Homecoming Highlights



Freshmen (L-R): Isabel Miller, Madeline Bernacki, Juan Avila-Escudero, Jamar Mack



Sophomores (L-R): Kyle Pettit, Armani Young, Sam Casterline, Julia Clarke



Juniors (L-R): Ava Rusko, Dais'Jana Jones, Jamir McNeil, and Max Adelizzi



Seniors (L-R): Michael Zarfati, Olivia Robertson, Marco Juan Salgado, Amelia Rendzak, Anthony Trombetta, Camryn Rothenbiller, Tyree Moore, La'Niya Arnold, Thomas Shagren and Abigail Teefy. Homecoming King: Michael Zarfati, Homecoming Queen: Amelia Rendzak





PantherPride NEWS

Panthers Athletic Updates

This fall, eight varsity programs competed for the Panthers.

FOOTBALL: The fall season began prior to the start of the 2023-2024 school year with the Panthers hosting Cumberland Regional on Aug. 25. The season came to a close on Oct. 27 with a 35-34 loss to Gloucester City in the NJSIAA South Group 2 Playoffs. This marked the Panthers' seventh appearance in the playoffs, finishing with a 7-3 record, led by their 17 seniors.



GIRLS TENNIS: On the court, the girls' tennis team turned in another successful season, finishing with a 14-7 record, a South Jersey Group 1 quarterfinal appearance, and were co-champions of the Cape Atlantic League (CAL) National Conference for the second year in a row.



CROSS COUNTRY: In cross-country action, the girls' team ran past their conference opponents with only one loss. On the boys' side, the team picked up a Big 5 Championship on its way to finishing the conference schedule with just one loss.



FIELD HOCKEY: In field hockey, the team earned a CAL United Conference championship en route to a 14-4-1 record. The Panthers made an appearance in the South Jersey Group 1 quarterfinals, dropping a tight game to Schalick 1-0. The girls' signature win came late in the season with a hard-fought win over Cherokee.





Panthers Athletic Updates



GIRLS VOLLEYBALL: In the gym, girls' volleyball showed continual improvement throughout the season, avenging an early road loss at home to Our Lady of Mercy Academy in the last regular season match. The girls posted their best record since the 2013-14 season and qualified for the NJSIAA Group 2 playoffs.



DANCE, CHEER & POM: The Dance, Cheer and Pom team supported MTHS every step of the way this season—performing at all ten football games, the community Halloween Parade, Open House and at the homecoming pep rally. The team boasted 32 members and performed several dances throughout the season.



GIRLS SOCCER: On the pitch, the girls' soccer team faced stiff competition after being moved into the highly competitive CAL American Conference. The girls finished the season with an 8-7-2 record. Five of their seven losses were by two or less goals. The girls rose to the test of a more challenging schedule this season.

BOYS SOCCER: Moving up a conference this season, the boys' soccer fielded a young team who battled through every game. The boys finished with a 7-10-1 record and an appearance in the South Jersey Group 2 Playoffs. Half of the team's losses were by 2 or less goals.





MTSD inducts six new members to Hall of Fame

Middle Township School District inducted six new members into the Hall of Fame during halftime at the high school's football game against the Bridgeton Bulldogs on Oct. 13.

The inductees are:

Bob Metz ('59) - Metz is a former MTSD student, teacher, coach, and administrator. In addition to working for his home school district, Metz served in the U.S. Army Reserves, retiring as colonel.

Gloria Hodges - Hodges was a teacher and guidance counselor at MTHS for 43 years, retiring in 2007. Hodges has served her community as a Board of Education member since 2013.

Markal Ginyard ('05)- Ginyard excelled on the football and track and field teams at MTHS. He continued to Kean University, where he played football and earned an accounting degree. Ginyard left his friends, family, and community too soon after a tragic car accident in 2010. He was 23.

Steve Seymour ('88) - Seymour was a standout on the MTHS Panthers baseball team. He was drafted in the 1990

Major League Baseball Amateur Draft by the New York Mets organization.

Dr. PD Moore ('01) - While at MTSD, Moore was as dedicated to the classroom as he was in the weightroom and described as a true leader on and off the field. He developed into a National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I player and was a standout at Towson University.

Damon Troy ('94) - In his senior year, Troy led the MTHS Panthers football team to its first-ever playoff berth. He also excelled in the high hurdles and shot put on the track and field team. After high school, Troy played two football seasons at Pennsylvania State University before transferring to Rowan University and leading the Profs to back-to-back national championship games.

Congratulations to all the inductees! Each one has demonstrated outstanding athletic and/or nonathletic accomplishments, has served our community or country in truly outstanding ways, or has demonstrated excellence within their vocations.

