

Students at Elementary #1 visited the local Mister Softee and discovered how to make the perfect ice cream sundae.



Panther Pride Newsletter

Bright Days & Big Achievements

Dear Parents,

In just a couple weeks, we will celebrate the completion of another successful school year. Thank you parents, teachers, school staff, friends and neighbors for teaming up to provide the best possible educational experience for our students. Highlights from this school year included:

- 🐾 Middle Township Public Schools' Dr. Diane Fox being named Business Administrator of the Year by the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials
- 🐾 Special visits from an acclaimed author and a speaker from the Esther Raab Holocaust Museum
- 🐾 Six MTHS seniors graduating with associate's degrees from Atlantic Cape Community College
- 🐾 Community partners sharing self-care information, motivational messages and life skills lessons with our high school students

As the classrooms and hallways become quiet, the district will turn its attention to creating an even better future for Middle Township students. At its June 6 meeting, the Board of Education approved a resolution to hold a Sept. 17 bond referendum, or vote. That means community members will consider and vote on a proposal to finance improvements to our schools.

The bond referendum includes additions and renovations that would expand learning opportunities, upgrade athletic facilities and modernize heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment. We will share information over the summer about the referendum and will offer community-wide opportunities to ask questions. To begin learning about the proposal, visit our special webpage, www.middletownshippublicschools.org/future.



Enjoy the last few weeks of school and have a wonderful summer.

See you in September!

Sincerely,

Dr. David Salvo
Superintendent of Schools





Panther Pride Newsletter

Upcoming Events

JUNE 10 Middle School Carnival

JUNE 10 High School Senior Awards (6:30 PM)

JUNE 11-14 District Wide Early Dismissal

JUNE 13 Middle School 8th Grade Promotion (4:00 PM)

JUNE 17 District Wide Early Dismissal

JUNE 17 District Wide Last Day of School for Students

JUNE 17 High School Graduation (4:00 PM)

MTSD's Dr. Diane Fox named Business Administrator of the Year

Middle Township School District's (MTSD) Business Administrator Dr. Diane Fox was recently honored with the prestigious School Business Administrator of the Year award by the New Jersey Association of School Business Officials (NJASBO).

A Cape May Court House resident, Fox was selected for the honor by the NJASBO executive committee due to her "long-term, continuous, exemplary service" in the profession. She was one of six business administrators in the state who recently earned the Distinguished Service Award from NJASBO in 2024. Of these six, Fox was named the Business Administrator of the Year after the NJASBO executive committee participated in a confidential vote.

Fox received a plaque, an additional \$1,000 scholarship for a student at a school of her choice presented in her name along with the initial \$1,000 scholarship awarded after receiving the Distinguished Service Award, and recognition at the NJASBO annual conference, the State Board of Education meeting and the New Jersey School Board Association's Workshop 2024 conference.

Fox began working as MTSD's business administrator and board secretary in June of 2012 following her tenure as Cape

May County Special Services School District (CMCSSSD) assistant business administrator (2004-2007) and business administrator (2007-2012). She started her school business career at Middle Township as the fiscal officer in 2000 before making the transition to CMCSSSD. Fox also served in all officer positions including president of NJASBO and former president of the Cape May County ASBO. She is a member of ASBO International, New Jersey Society of CPAs and The American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.



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Panther Pride Newsletter

Joelle's Guidance Corner

Middle Township School District has partnered with Atlantic Cape Community College and Stockton University to offer high school students dual credit courses. Dual credit courses are taught during regular school hours by high school teachers and are offered to students as early as freshman year. Thirty-four classes are available as dual credit, and students can take as many or as few as desired.

Taking dual credit courses saves students money on college tuition, textbooks and fees. Those who participate in these classes will earn credit for high school and college, and the classes will transfer to many colleges.

This year, our students earned a collective total of 843 credits through Atlantic Cape Community College. The cost per dual credit is \$66. Matriculated students attending Atlantic Cape Community College pay \$166; creating a savings of \$100 per credit. The total savings are \$84,300.

The students who took Stockton University dual credit classes this year earned a total of 140 credits. The cost per dual credit is \$100. Matriculated students attending Stockton University pay \$600; creating a savings of \$500 per credit. The total savings are \$70,000.

For more information about dual credit courses, call the guidance department at (609) 465-1852.

Joelle Tenaglia, Director of Guidance



Atlantic Cape Community College



Stockton University



Panther Pride Newsletter

Students at Elementary #1 help create surprise heart-warming family reunion

Middle Township resident and Technical Sergeant Matthew Martino has been deployed with the U.S. Air Force since October 2023. When he knew he was returning home in May, he and his wife Nicole planned a very special surprise for their son, Ethan, with the help of Elementary

#1 students. The family was reunited during Mrs. Ludman's first grade class, and Ethan's friends were thrilled to be a part of the heart-warming experience.

Thank you for your service, TSgt Martino!



Mister Softee sweetens lesson for Elementary #1 kindergarteners

Kindergarten students at Elementary #1 have been working hard on their "how-to" pieces during Writer's Workshop. The writing lesson was worth the work though, especially after they applied their knowledge to a sweet real-world experience. In keeping with the how-to theme, the young learners visited the local Mister Softee and discovered how to make the perfect ice cream sundae. After following steps to create the delicious dessert, the students further realized the importance of writing how-to articles. Events such as this would not be possible without the fundraising efforts from MTSD families.





Middle Township Elementary School #2 receives visit from award-winning author

Award-winning author and illustrator Dan Santat made a special visit to Middle Township Elementary School #2, delighting many students.

Santat visited third grade teacher Nicole DelCorio's classroom to discuss his books, art, love of reading and career journey. He also spoke about his illustrating process and gave an art demonstration. The third graders were selected to receive the visit after the school's librarian, Julie Moore, entered their classroom into a contest offered by the Cape May County Library.

Santat received a Caldecott Medal for his book *The Adventures of Beekle: The Unimaginary Friend*, and is a *New York Times* best-selling author for his works *Are We There Yet* and *After the Fall (How Humpty Dumpty Got Back Up Again)*. His artwork can be found in many picture books,

chapter books and novels including Dav Pilkey's *Ricky Ricotta* series. Santat also created Disney's animated show *The Replacements*.



Son of Holocaust survivor shares important message with Elementary #2 students

Jeff Zeiger visited with Elementary School #2's fourth graders and shared his family's powerful story of surviving the Holocaust. The students recently read *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry, a historical fiction novel detailing the escape of a Jewish family during World War II, and were moved by the resilience of Zeiger's family and the kindness of others.

Zeiger participates in the Esther Raab Holocaust Museum and Goodwin Education Center's speaker series, and visits about 20 schools a year. Zeiger is committed to telling the story of his father, who was a Holocaust survivor and only six years old when the Nazis marched into his village. Due to one man's kindness, Zeiger's father was hidden underground for 18 months and survived the harrowing ordeal of the war.

In addition to receiving a personal look at history, the students learned valuable lessons, including treating all people with respect.



Panther Pride Newsletter

Elementary #2 hosts their Spring Concert



Middle School Presents Matilda





Celebrating Freedom: Middle School Hosts Juneteenth Commemoration Event

The United Young Generation hosted their annual Juneteenth Dinner and Show on June 4 at the Performing Arts Center. Sponsored by the Middle Township Education Association, the event was free and open to the public, and featured poetry readings and dance performances by the Dance/Step Team, the Middle School's Performing Arts Class, and members of United Young Generation. Special guest and middle school special education teacher Damien Cwik delivered an impressive rendition of Bob Marley and The Wailer's "Redemption Song" on vocals and guitar, a powerful anthem of emancipation and freedom.

MTSD performing arts teacher Crystal Holmes skillfully choreographed the dance performances, while Dave Farrow, also a performing arts teacher, captivated the audience with an engaging explanation of Juneteenth's origins and a vivid depiction of life in the 1860s.

The significance of Juneteenth lies in its recognition of the enduring struggle for civil rights. Also known as Freedom Day, it commemorates the emancipation of enslaved African Americans and is celebrated annually on June 19, marking the day in 1865 when Union General Gordon Granger announced the end of slavery.



Six MTHS seniors will graduate with diploma and college associate degree

As the Middle Township High School Class of 2024 prepares for graduation day on June 17, six seniors are already celebrating their achievement of earning an associate degree from Atlantic Cape Community College.

Tyler McDevitt, Mason Blizzard, Brooke Nabb, Hannah Barrett, Thomas Barber and Carmine Fuscellaro participated in the college's annual commencement ceremony on May 16 at the Mays Landing Campus. They also were honored during a Middle Township Board of Education meeting.

The seniors took part in the Early College High School initiative, which is a partnership between Atlantic Cape Community College and Middle Township School District that provides students with an opportunity to earn both a high school diploma and a two-year associate degree (or up to two years of credits toward a bachelor's degree) in the time it takes to go to high school. This program saves students time and money.

After graduation, McDevitt plans to play baseball and study civil engineering at The College of New Jersey. Blizzard plans on attending Stockton University to play baseball and study business administration. Nabb is excited to pursue a biochemistry degree at La Salle University while playing lacrosse. Barret will study elementary education at Montclair University. Barber is heading to the University of Tampa to study political science and pre-law. Fuscellaro is interested in studying accounting at Rowan University. Congratulations to all our graduating seniors!





Community comes together to empower Middle Township High School students

Community partners recently empowered Middle Township High School students with valuable after-school activities and insightful information. District leaders, teachers and staff arranged the two-day event in March, which was filled with self-care information, motivational messages and life skills lessons.

Local business leaders led discussions on entrepreneurship, college and trades, real estate, summer work opportunities, social media, self-esteem/body image, nutrition and relationships, and financial topics such as stocks, banking and investing.

Guest speaker Priscilla Loomis headlined the “Girls Takeover” event, sharing her inspirational story of competing in the high jump at the Olympic trials. The “Boys to Men” event featured MTHS Basketball Coach LaMarr Greer, Head Baseball Coach Chris Branigan and Head Wrestling Coach Matt Wolf as keynote speakers.

Stone Harbor Yoga ran a yoga class for students, while Middle Township police officers offered a self-defense fitness class. Other activities included a flag football game and an inflatable obstacle course set up in Middle Township School District’s Performing Arts Center.

Students enjoyed food from Whitesboro native Daniel Auld’s food truck and Playa Bowls Stone Harbor, owned by MTSD alumnus Joe Wallash. They were also treated to free haircuts and fades from local barbers and Cape May Technical School District cosmetology students, and weight-room training/fitness sessions with MTHS Head Football Coach Gavin Leipe.





Gardens provide hands-on science lessons for Coastal Prep High School students

Coastal Prep High School students established a series of raised garden beds to receive hands-on biology and chemistry lessons. Through a generous donation from Church's Nursey and Garden Center in Erma Park, the students planted many herbs, fruits and vegetables including tomatoes, cucumbers, strawberries, kale, spinach, lettuce, onions, basil, dill and parsley.

While caring for the plants, the classes explored plant cells, photosynthesis, integrated pest management and plant fertilization. Two students from Cape May County will graduate from Coastal Prep High School this year.

Coastal Prep High School is one of only three recovery high schools in the state focusing on prevention and recovery. A partnership between Middle Township School District and

Cape Assist, the school ensures that students recovering from substance misuse can stay on track academically.





Panther Pride Newsletter

Athletics Season Highlights

In spring sports, several MTSD teams qualified for the NJSIAA State Championship Tournaments. **The softball team**, behind the stellar pitching of Gabby Cruz, claimed a share of their conference title for the first time since 1997; the girls are the 2024 Co-Champions of the Cape Atlantic League (CAL) National Conference. Their season came to a close on May 28 with a narrow 1-0 loss vs. Haddon Heights in the state tournament. The team ended with a 17-9 record. This year's edition of Panther Softball included seniors, Gabby Cruz, Armani Mejia, Emma Messer, Aleida Bernat, and Lilly Vogel.



On the baseball diamond, the Panthers ended the season with 9 wins behind the senior leadership of Mason Blizzard and Tyler McDevitt. The boys fell to Lower Cape May 3-1 in the first round of the NJSIAA tournament.

In **girls lacrosse** action, the team faced a tough schedule in the CAL American Conference but persevered through the season, culminating in a berth in the NJSIAA tournament.

On the tennis courts, the **boys tennis team** advanced to the SJ semifinals and ended the season with a 15-8 record. The team also claimed the Cape May Tennis Club Tournament Championship during the season. Head Coach Matt Gilbert celebrated his 300th career victory on April 26 with a road victory at Seneca.



On the lacrosse field, the **boys lacrosse team** finished the season with an 8-7 record, making continual improvement throughout the season. This spring, senior Tommy Shagren set the school career record for assists and junior Joe Berrodin also set a new school record for career ground balls.



Justen Wen, who will attend Harvard University in the fall, was named the **NJSIAA Scholar Athlete** for Middle Township. He was honored, along with his parents, at a banquet in Edison, NJ on May 19.



Panther Pride Newsletter

Athletics Season Highlights

On the track, the **girls track team** set a new school record in the 4x100 relay when Layla Hayward, Iyanna Bennett, Armani Young, and Hayley Rowlands ran the event in 54.22 at the Woodbury Relays. The **girls track and field team** also had three members qualify for the individual state championships; Daniella Oliver (SJ Group 2 Champion) and Camille Harris in the discus and Iyanna Bennett in the triple jump.



In **boys track and field** action, Aiden Hippen (100m) and Noah Nagle (Pole Vault) claimed Cape May County Championships.



In just its second year of existence, the **girls flag football team** finished the campaign with a 4-4 record. With 25 players on the roster, the future is bright for this growing program.



On the golf course, the Panthers finished with a 9-7 record against the CAL National Conference, showing a season-long improvement in their team average score. Additionally, the Panthers fielded an **all-girls team** for several of the first-ever CAL girls' golf outings this season.



On May 21 the MTHS Athletic Department recognized **21 current senior student-athletes** who plan to play at the college level next year.

