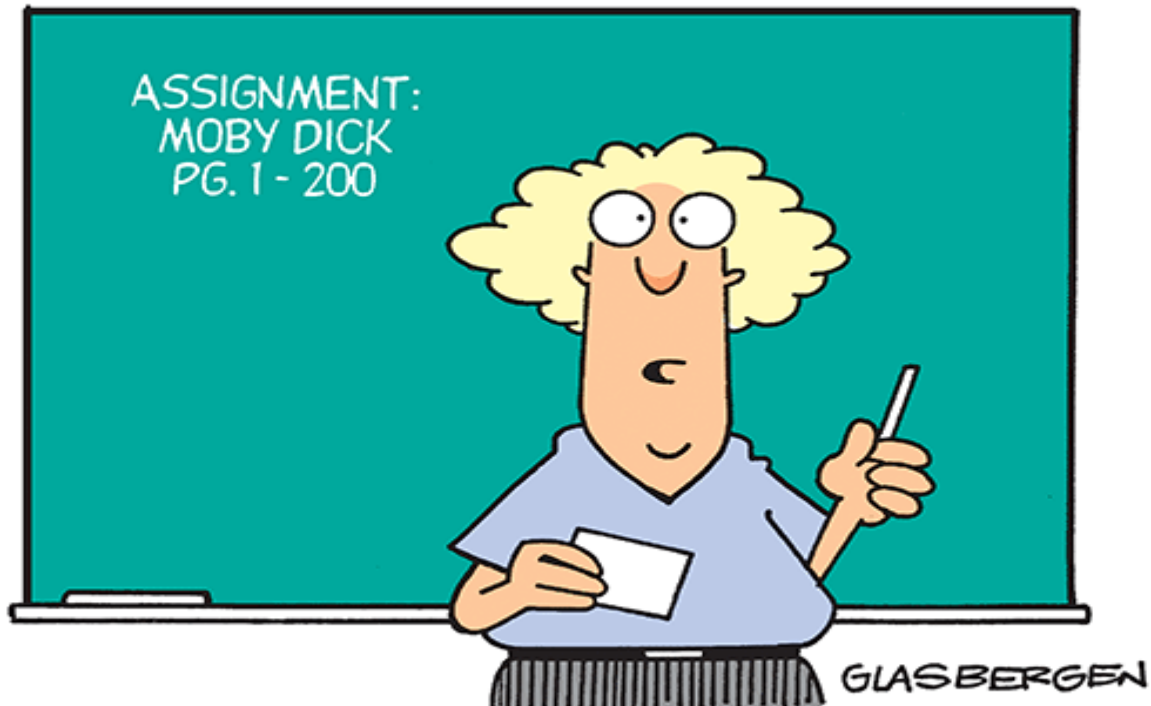


TPS SUPERINTENDENT BULLETIN

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"I don't like to give a lot of homework over the weekend, so just read every other word."

UPDATE FOR March 15, 2015

JUMP TO SCHOOL UPDATES:

[Birch Grove](#)

[TIS](#)

[TMS](#)

[THS](#)

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Superintendent's Note

I had some wonderful experiences this past week in the Tolland Public Schools. The Town Council and Board of Education had a joint meeting to discuss the budget. I felt the Town Council and Steve Werbner did a great job of considering the BOE budget, and public input. I applaud Mr. Werbner and the Town Council for their hard work and efforts.

Another great experience this week was the opportunity I received to be the *Mystery Reader* for Mrs. Arner's and Mrs. Kolasinski's class at Tolland Intermediate School. I read *The Book With No Pictures* and truly enjoyed working with the children.

The DECA *Tolland Triumphs Over Hunger* event was heartwarming. I had the pleasure of helping unload a food sack or two, and of seeing the dedicated staff and students of THS helping to make meals for the homeless and others in need of help. With music blaring to motivate them, they packed 111,744 meals!

Last but definitely not least, I had the pleasure of seeing the student high school production *Back To The 80's*. As a lover of the 80's I thought our young actors did an absolutely fantastic job. The music brought back some memories, that is for sure – and the kids did a great job of making everyone laugh. It also gave me a chance to wear an old "Atari" shirt. Not sure what I will do with it now.

Looking forward, please come to the **Pizza with the Superintendent: Community Discussion about Standardized Testing: April 27th, 6:30 pm**, LOCATION-TBD, RSVP to my secretary Jennifer Palumbo at jpalumbo@tolland.k12.ct.us by April 20, 2015. Please include your name, how many will be attending, phone number and email address. I look forward to seeing you there!

Please see some more of the great things (below) going on in the Tolland Public Schools

- RAGE Robotics, based at Tolland High School, took first place this past weekend at the North Shore District competition in Reading, Mass. Forty high school robotics teams from all across New England came together for two days of head-to-head matches between robots to determine who had the best robot and drive team. The winning alliance of teams included RAGE (173); Overclocked (246) from Boston, Mass.; and rookie team The Outliers (5687) from Portland, Maine. (See more on the THS link).
- Check out the Tolland Middle School HOOPS Challenge fundraiser student vs. staff basketball game!
 - [Hoops Challenge Game](#),
 - [Hoops Challenge Half Time Show](#)

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- **Tolland Triumphs Over Hunger – Over \$12,800 Raised**
 - On Thursday, March 12, the Tolland High School DECA club hosted a large-scale community service event called *Tolland Triumphs Over Hunger*. The project empowered students, staff, and community members to work together to positively affect change in the lives of others. Guided by the charity organization, Feeding Children Everywhere, more than 900 Tolland students, staff and community members participated in a meal packing event in the school's gymnasium. Our goal was to raise \$10,000 in order to package 40,000 meals. Students raised a total of \$12,801.60 through student and community donations and corporate sponsors. J.P. Morgan Chase matched the school's donation through the campaign known as "Step Up for World Hunger". In less than two hours, 111,744 meals were packed. Thank you to all those individuals, corporations, and organizations who donated.



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INFO TO KNOW:

2015 Cider Mill Road Race T-shirt design Contest

CONTEST RULES

GOAL: To have a Tolland school child design the T-shirt for our 15th anniversary race!

ELIGIBILITY: Any K-8th grade student may submit a design for a chance to have art work chosen and display on the t-shirt.

I. Design Requirements

A. Design must:

1. Be 8" x 10", Vertical on white copier paper, equivalents can be used.
2. Use materials in color or black (felt tip markers, pen and ink) No more than 3 colors including black. (no shading/no pencil)
3. Include the theme title "Cider Mill Road Race 5k & Family Fun Run" – "15th Anniversary".
4. Do not use replicas of copyrighted or registered characters or logos.
5. Be reproducible.

B. Each design submitted must show legibly on the back:

1. Student's name
2. School name
3. Student phone number
4. Teacher's name & grade

II. Contest Procedures

- A. Each student is allowed to submit one (1) design.
- B. One (1) BGP design/student, one (1) TIS design/student and one (1) TMS design/student semi-finalist winners of Contests will be entered in as finalists. One (1) student will have their art work chosen as the t-shirt design and the other runner ups will be given a free entry to the race of their choice (5k, 1 mile or fun run).

III. Dates and Deadlines

- A. Deadline to submit t-shirt design to school art teachers is 3/9/15.
- B. The winner will be announced by 3/20/15.

IV. Rights and Awards

- A. All entries become the property of the Cider Mill Road Race Committee and will not be returned.
- B. The decision of all judges will be final. The contest will be judged by the Cider Mill Road Race Committee.
- C. If you have any questions please ask your art teachers (they may be available to help you after school on this contest) or call the Co-Director at (860)-872-6787 Kelly
Or email me at kellypablonia@yahoo.com

Sincerely,

Kelly Pablonia and Ngoc Heuer (Co-Directors)

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ARTICLES OF INTEREST

- **Racism may accelerate aging in black men**, according to a study led by University of Maryland researchers. Investigators asked 92 black men age 30 to 50 about their experiences of discrimination in different domains, including work and housing, as well as in getting service at stores and restaurants, from the police and in other public settings. They also measured internalized racial bias using a test that gauges unconscious attitudes and beliefs about racial groups. Even after adjusting for participants' age, socioeconomic factors and health-related characteristics, the researchers found that the combination of experiences of high racial discrimination and internalized anti-black bias was associated with the shortest life expectancy, based on the length of the participants' telomeres — the repetitive sequences of DNA capping the ends of chromosomes, which shorten progressively over time (*American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, February).
- **Reading a novel appears to have lasting effects on the brain**, finds a study by researchers at Emory University. Scientists asked 21 college students to read the same novel, giving them a new 30-page section to read each day over nine days. Each morning, and then for five additional mornings after the students had completed the novel, the scientists used fMRI to scan participants' brains. On the mornings after the reading assignments, the researchers found heightened connectivity in the left temporal cortex (associated with language receptivity) and in the central sulcus of the brain (the primary sensorimotor region). These neural changes persisted for the five days after the participants completed the novel, indicating the novel may have had a biological effect on the brain (*Brain Connectivity*, Dec. 9).
- **A fear of being too skinny may put some teenage boys at risk for depression**, according to a study conducted at Harvard University. The research was based on a nationally representative sample of 2,139 16-year-old boys who were followed for 13 years. Researchers followed up with the boys three different times to assess depressive symptoms, body image perceptions and the participants' body mass index. Boys who perceived themselves as very underweight, but actually were average weight or higher, reported the highest level of depressive symptoms. These findings remained constant across the span of the study, which ended when the participants were close to 30 years old (*Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, online Dec. 23).
- **Children believe the world is far more segregated by gender than it actually is**, suggests a study conducted at Michigan State University. The researchers examined classroom friendships among 426 second- through fourth-graders at five U.S. elementary schools. They found that children were nine times more likely to be friends if they were the same gender. However, when asked about their friends' friends, a child was 50 times more likely to believe two classmates were friends when they were the same gender (*Child Development*, online Dec. 9).
- **Prescribing a stimulant and an antipsychotic drug to children with physical aggression and attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) may reduce aggressive and serious behavioral problems**, according to a study led by Ohio State University researchers. Scientists divided the study's 168 children, ages 6 to 12, who had been diagnosed with ADHD and displayed significant physical aggression, into two groups. All participants received a psychostimulant drug (OROS methylphenidate) and all parents received behavioral parent training for nine weeks. A subset of the participants also received the antipsychotic drug risperidone. The group that received both medications showed a greater reduction in aggression and other disruptive behaviors (*Journal of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, January).
- **Thirty minutes of daily meditation may provide as much relief from anxiety and depression symptoms as antidepressants**, according to a Johns Hopkins University study. Researchers analyzed 47 clinical trials with 3,515 participants that evaluated the effects of an eight-week mindfulness meditation training on depression, anxiety, stress, pain and other issues. Even with controls for placebo effects, the meditation training improved symptoms of anxiety and depression — providing as much relief as what previous research has found from antidepressants (*JAMA Internal Medicine*, online Jan. 6).

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- **Anxiety appears linked to a higher long-term risk of stroke**, according to a study by University of Pittsburgh scientists. Over a 22-year period, researchers asked more than 6,000 people age 25 to 74 to take part in interviews, undergo medical examinations and complete psychological questionnaires to gauge their anxiety and depression levels. They found that people who had the highest third of anxiety symptoms had a 33 percent higher stroke risk than those with the lowest levels. People with high anxiety levels were also more likely to smoke and be physically inactive, which may partially explain the link between anxiety and stroke, the authors suggest ([Stroke](#), online Dec. 19).
- **Psychology researchers and practitioners still don't see eye to eye on repressed memory**, according to a study led by University of California, Irvine, researchers. Investigators recruited clinicians and psychotherapists, research psychologists and alternative therapists to complete an online survey on repressed memory. The researchers found that roughly 70 percent of clinicians, psychoanalysts and therapists surveyed agreed to some extent that traumatic memories are often repressed and can be retrieved in therapy, while less than 30 percent of research-oriented psychologists believed that to be true. In a separate part of the study, researchers found that the general public still largely believes that memories can be repressed ([Psychological Science](#), online Dec. 13).
- **Rediscovering feelings of self-worth can boost performance among the poor**, according to research led by a University of Washington scientist. Researchers asked nearly 150 people at a New Jersey soup kitchen to privately record a personal story with a tape recorder before completing a variety of problem-solving tests. Compared with a control group, the participants who were randomly assigned to "self-affirm" by recounting a proud moment or past achievement performed dramatically better on the tests, equivalent to a 10-point increase in IQ. They were also more likely to seek out information on aid services from the local government ([Psychological Science](#), online Dec. 19).
- **People who tell themselves to get excited rather than relax seem to do better at public speaking and other anxiety-inducing activities**, finds a study performed at Harvard University. In one experiment, researchers asked 140 participants to prepare a persuasive speech on why they would be good work partners. To increase anxiety, a researcher videotaped the speeches and said they would be judged by a committee. Before delivering the speech, participants were instructed to say, "I am excited" or "I am calm." Those who said they were excited gave longer speeches and were more persuasive, competent and relaxed than those who said they were calm, according to ratings by independent evaluators ([Journal of Experimental Psychology: General](#), online Dec. 23).
- **The recession made people feel physically ill**, according to a study by San Diego State University scientists. The researchers counted Google searches for stress-related health problems such as abdominal pain, chest pain and migraines and then tracked how the numbers of searches for those terms changed during the recession — December 2008 through December 2011 — from levels before the recession began. The researchers compared changes in the counts with changes in all Google searches over the period. They found that queries about stomach ulcer symptoms were up 228 percent during the recession, and questions about headache symptoms were up 193 percent. Hernia and chest pain were also among the top 10 health concern searches during the recession ([American Journal of Preventive Medicine](#), February).
- **Consistent routines improve your sleep**, according to a study led by psychologists at the University of Alabama, Tuscaloosa. Researchers asked 50 younger and 50 older adults to record their daily activities for 14 days, including when they went outside, started work and ate dinner every day, as well as several sleep measures, including how long they slept at night, sleep quality and how many times they woke up at night. They found that keeping a consistent daily schedule — in which you eat, start working and go outside around the same time each day — was associated with better sleep quality and fewer night-time awakenings ([The Journals of Gerontology: Series B](#), online Dec. 10).

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Tolland High School Weekly Bulletin *3-13-15*

Tolland Triumphs Over Hunger – Over \$12,800 Raised

On Thursday, March 12, the Tolland High School DECA club hosted a large-scale community service event called *Tolland Triumphs Over Hunger*. The project empowered students, staff, and community members to work together to positively affect change in the lives of others. Guided by the charity organization, Feeding Children Everywhere, more than 900 Tolland students, staff and community members participated in a meal packing event in the school's gymnasium. Our goal was to raise \$10,000 in order to package 40,000 meals. Students raised a total of \$12,801.60 through student and community donations and corporate sponsors. J.P. Morgan Chase matched the school's donation through the campaign known as "Step Up for World Hunger". In less than two hours, 111,744 meals were packed. Thank you to all those individuals, corporations, and organizations who donated.



Co-chairs Kayleigh McManaman
event.
and Jordan Lyonnais



Members of DECA help out before the meal-packing

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Rage Robotics

RAGE Robotics, based at Tolland High School, took first place this past weekend at the North Shore District competition in Reading, Mass. Forty high school robotics teams from all across New England came together for two days of head-to-head matches between robots to determine who had the best robot and drive team. The winning alliance of teams included RAGE (173); Overclocked (246) from Boston, Mass.; and rookie team The Outliers (5687) from Portland, Maine.

In this year's *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC) challenge, teams had six weeks to design, build, and program a robot to play *Recycle Rush*. In the game (played on a 27' x 54' field), teams remotely operating their robots had to stack one-foot-tall plastic totes up to six high on special scoring platforms. They could triple their stack score by additionally placing a full-size recycling container on top of the pile. Teams could also earn points by placing "litter" (pool noodles) inside the recycling container and by throwing them into their opponent's zone.

High school students work side by side with teachers, experienced engineers, and parents to learn STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) concepts in a hands-on environment throughout the school year. The robots can measure up to 28" by 42" by 78" high and weigh as much as 120 pounds. Matches are played between alliances made up of three teams each (six robots on the field). The alliance makeup varies match to match, so requires the teams to work with each other in addition to against each other.

During its six-week build season, which lasted all of January and half of February, RAGE had to deal with multiple snow-day cancellations, a high school evacuation and closure which forced to the team to move its entire build operation to another site for several days, and a sharply reduced budget for parts and supplies. Even through these adversities, the team came together to create a highly functional robot and a very effective drive team.

RAGE will be competing again in the Hartford District competition taking place March 28 and 29 at Hartford Public High School, then in the New England District Championship on April 9–11 at Worcester Polytechnic Institute.

RAGE (Robotics And Gadget Engineering) is made up of high school students from Tolland, Ellington, Vernon, East Hartford, Manchester, and surrounding towns. The team is a member of the nonprofit *FIRST* organization, which promotes science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) to students of all ages through various types of robotics programs. In the *FIRST* Robotics Competition (FRC), teams of high school students are given a new challenge each January and then have six weeks to design and build a robot to meet that

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challenge. The 2014/2015 school year marks RAGE's 20th anniversary. The team is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit entity that relies solely on corporate sponsorship and receives no funding from the schools or towns. More information is at <http://ragerobotics.com>.

FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) was founded in 1989 by inventor and entrepreneur Dean Kamen in an effort to inspire young people's interest and participation in science and technology. Programs exist for students of all ages from first grade through high school. See <http://usfirst.org> for more information.



IMPORTANT DATES

March 13-14 – School Musical
 March 16 – Baseball Conditioning Begins
 March 17 & 18 – **CAPT Testing**
 March 20 – Mr. THS – 7:00 p.m. Auditorium
 March 23 – All other spring sports start
 March 23 – Booster Club Meeting – 7:00 p.m. Conference Room
 March 25 – Half-Day Session – In-Service
 March 26 – Music Concert – 7:00 p.m. Auditorium

SCHOOL MUSICAL – BACK TO THE 80'S

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Back to the 80's is a musical with lyrics written by Neil Gooding. The musical tells the story of the 1989 graduating class of William Ocean High as seen through the eyes of the narrator, Corey Palmer Sr., who is now living in the year 2001. Corey Sr. reminisces on his senior year of high school, as well as his love for Tiffany Houston. However, Tiffany barely notices, as she is too busy mooning over Michael Feldman, the hottest guy around. Will Corey Jr. work up the courage to ask Tiffany to be his girlfriend? Overall, will Corey Jr.'s senior year be everything he hopes for? The musical consists of many pop songs from the 1980s, including "You Give Love a Bad Name", "Footloose", "Total Eclipse of the Heart", just to name a few!

Show times: March 13th and 14th at 7:00 p.m. in the auditorium. Snow date March 15th at 2:00 p.m.

Tickets are on sale during lunches and in the main office, and will be sold at the door on both nights. Ticket prices are \$10 for adults and \$8 for students and senior citizens.

CAPT TESTING

A letter was sent home to all students in February outlining the testing schedules.

CAPT testing will take place on Tuesday, March 17th and Wednesday, March 18th for all 10th graders. All 10th graders should arrive to school before 7:15 a.m.

Any 9th graders participating in the SBAC practice test should arrive to school by 7:15 a.m.

Any 11th graders taking the SBAC practice test, the CAPT alternative assessment, or those attending the college planning seminar should all arrive by 7:15 a.m.

12th graders and any other students not participating in testing should arrive no later than 8:30 a.m.

The bussing schedule will not change on these testing dates, so students who cannot arrange their own transportation to school will need to take the bus to school and remain in the cafeteria or gymnasium until the testing session is over.

Any student that has senior option will not be allowed to leave until after the lunch block is over.

PROJECT GRADUATION BOTTLE DRIVE

Saturday, March 28th – Birch Grove Primary School

Volunteers needed: 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Collection of Bottles/Cans - Open 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

No set shifts – Volunteers needed to work a 2 hour shift or ALL DAY from 8:15 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. A pizza lunch will be provided. Bring a friend and spend a few hours helping Project Graduation

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sort bottles and cans. No experience needed. A great way for students to earn those community service hours needed for school or church.

THS Seniors: Each time you volunteer for any project graduation event (bottle drives, football games @ Rentschler, basketball @ Gampel), your name will be entered into a drawing for a cash prize to be awarded at the senior assembly in June. If you volunteer once, your name goes in once, if you volunteer 3 times, it goes in 3 times. The more you volunteer, the better your odds!

Please email Mrs. Lotreck at tpg.bottledrive@gmail.com if you can help!

Thank you for supporting Tolland Project Graduation!

BOOSTER CLUB

The next meeting is scheduled for March 23rd at 7:00 p.m. in the THS main office conference room.

Please join us to learn about what we do and how you can help in raising funds for our students at THS.

We are looking for a treasurer and a new president for next year.