

TPS SUPERINTENDENT BULLETIN

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“Your brain is like a sponge that absorbs knowledge, but that’s not exactly how it’s done.”

UPDATE FOR 5-18-15

JUMP TO SCHOOL UPDATES:

[Birch Grove](#)

[TIS](#)

[TMS](#)

[THS](#)

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SUPERINTENDENT' NOTES FOR THE WEEK

Way to go Jake Robertson!



INFO TO KNOW:

- The Superintendent lunch has been cancelled for Wednesday, May 20, 2015. There will be a Superintendent Lunch on June 11 at 12:00 pm at the board office. I hope to see you there!
- **THS Music Department News:** Congratulations to the THS Music Department on their successful trip to Chicago April 22-26, participating in the Festivals of Music adjudication. The Madrigal Singers, Women's Chorus, and Concert Band received a rating of Excellent for their performances, while the Jazz Band received a rating of Superior. Tolland High also swept the Judge's Choice Awards. Aaron Wilson received the Outstanding Soloist Award in a choral ensemble, Eric Gottier received the Outstanding Soloist Award in an instrumental ensemble, and the rhythm section of Ryan Mahoney, Owen Raccagni, Andrew Meagher, Jack Murphy, and Griffin Kopsick received the award for Outstanding Jazz Section. Congratulations to all our participating musicians for a job well done! In other news, two THS choral students participated in the All-State Music Festival from April 30-May 2 at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. Travis Tran and Felicity Roche made it into the Eastern Region Music Festival earlier this year and then had the opportunity to audition for All-State. Travis is a member of the THS Madrigal Singers and Mixed Chorus, and Felicity is a member of the Women's Chorus and Mixed Chorus. Both are also members of the THS Band.
- Click -> [TMS Fun Run](#) to find all about this awesome TMS Fun Run adventure June 13th @ 9:00 AM!

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- Click -> [Office 365](#) to find out all about your student's FREE access to the full Microsoft Office 365 Suite!
- Nationally, bullying rates are dropping: Click here:<http://www.ed.gov/blog/2015/05/bullying-rates-drop/> for more information.
- Deborah Hopkinson's Visit to Tolland Public Schools: "Readers make writers!" This was the resounding message conveyed to students in grades kindergarten through grade 8 by Deborah Hopkinson, award winning author of over 45 children's books. Deborah visited Birch Grove Primary School, Tolland Intermediate School, and Tolland Middle School on April 29 and 30. Deborah shared her stories, her life as a researcher and writer, and her inspirations while emphasizing the importance of patience and perseverance when writing. Students were well prepared for Deborah's visit. Teachers read aloud many of her books. As a result, students asked insightful questions about her characters and writing techniques. Before her departure, Deborah left autographed books in each classroom, school library, and the Tolland Public Library. The day after Deborah's visit, students learned that her newest book and one which she spoke about, *The Great Trouble: A Mystery of London, the Blue Death, and a Boy Called Eel*, was nominated for the 2016 Nutmeg Book Awards. Special thanks to the Tolland Education Foundation and Tolland Elementary PTO for providing funds for Deborah's visit and for the purchase of her books.

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ARTICLES / ITEMS OF INTEREST

- Managing Stress in Teens (From the APA, and the National PTA: <https://youtu.be/St3sVNpISSk>)
- From the community: On Wednesday, May 13, Nova is providing information for science education with a show about the effects of Man's fossil carbon emissions on the world's oceans: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/earth/lethal-seas.html>
Watch it, or record it or view it later via streaming video from the Nova website.
And for those in the Connecticut area, the Hartford Climate March and rally on May 31 : <http://www.hartfordearthfestival.org/>
John Cook's free course (Denial101X) about climate change and its denial continues for another month : EDX.org

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Tolland High School Weekly Bulletin *5-15-15*

“DIRT”

On Thursday, May 14, Tolland High School’s Student Council and **VOICES** presented the one-man show, *DIRT*. John Morello, an actor and comedian has been on stage for 15 years traveling the country and performing in crowded theatres, basements, classrooms, small towns, and big cities. He was born in Detroit, Michigan and raised in nearby Boston, Massachusetts. At one point in his life, he was a high school drop-out. He currently has a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre Arts and he has appeared in numerous productions. Although he has spent most of his life making people laugh, he has always found himself working with people whose everyday realities are anything but funny.

John considers himself a survivor of a "high-risk" childhood. As a teenager, he witnessed friends and family struggle with addiction. As a teacher in a treatment center, he saw students battle self-harm and self-medication and the impact it had on their family members. John's response to these struggles was to give voice to his and other's feelings in his one-man show, *DIRT*.

In his performance, John portrays four different characters. Jason is every town’s “stoner” who sees weed and his actions as harmless. He is a talented musician who is disconnected and drifting further away from a future filled with real potential. He spends most of his time hanging out with and helping his cousin who is a special education student which makes him likable and perhaps noble. He does this not only because he cares but it also lets him, in a way, hide from people who would expect any kind of success or life plan from him. His second character, David/Pi, is the protagonist. A high school student tangled up in ecstasy and prescription drugs. David/Pi is outside school society and angry at life in suburbia. Despite his quick wit and often harsh assessment of his peers, David/Pi is able to have compassion for others who are bullied. Although he is able to help them, he is unable to help himself. He is finding his drug use to be more frequent and more problematic. Melissa is a quiet, Goth/punk student with a dark sense of humor and an even darker past filled with sexual assault and bullying. She is sarcastic in her view of life and often fantasizes about the damage she could do to herself and others if she were pushed too far and unable to control herself. She tolerates living with her Mom and stepdad and fights an inner battle of monsters and ghosts while trying not to become one herself. Lastly, WWII veteran Hank reflects on his life, his choices, and his care for the young people in his life. He has seen his country at its most heroic and its most ignorant having lived before and after the civil rights movement. He is a husband, a father, a grandfather, and a victim of a cruel joke at the hands of the young people in town. He is living proof that a hero is not always born on the battlefield of war but in the everyday battles that our loved ones face.

Hank eventually ties up all the loose threads of the story and his connection to the other three characters comes full circle. Not only was the feedback received from both students and

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teachers very positive, everyone enjoyed John's style and sense of humor. It was a great show that THS will certainly considering having back!

IMPORTANT DATES

May 18 – LAST Booster Club Meeting of the year
 May 25 – Memorial Day – No School
 May 27 – Half Day Session In-Service
 June 1 – Class Day for Seniors
 June 2 – An Evening of Excellence – 6:30 p.m. Auditorium
 June 5 – Class Night for Seniors
 June 9 – Music Concert 7:00 p.m.
 June 10 – Sports Awards 6:00 p.m. THS Auditorium
 June 17 – End of Quarter 4
 June 17 – Exams for block 3 and block 4 (SENIORS ONLY) regular day
 June 18 – Exams for block 1 and block 2 (everybody) exam schedule
 June 19 – Exams for block 3 and block 4 (9, 10 & 11th graders) exam schedule
 June 19 – Graduation rehearsal in the morning
 June 19 – Last day of school – half day
 June 19 – Graduation 6:00 p.m. THS Gymnasium

THS BRACELETS

Back by popular demand. The THS Booster Club will be selling THS bracelets. These are silver plated bracelets that fit nicely with the popular Alex & Ani collectible bracelets.

Bracelets are available in the office at THS and can be purchased for \$25 each. Orders can be placed with Karen Lester in the main office. If your purchase is a secret, you can call or email Karen Lester at klester@tolland.k12.ct.us (860-870-6818) to arrange for purchase and pick up.

BOOSTER CLUB

The last Booster Club meeting of the school year is Monday, May 18th, at 7:00 in the THS Main Office Conference room. We are in desperate need of a new President and Treasurer for the next school year. If we do not fill these positions, the THS Booster Club will no longer operate in the 2015-16 school year. Please consider volunteering for this worthy cause. You will not only be helping your school and the teachers, but also your children. Any questions, please contact Karen Lester at klester@tolland.k12.ct.us.

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