

# ILLING MIDDLE SCHOOL

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Today's Learners,  
Tomorrow's Leaders

## *The Illing Connection*



### Illing Middle School Parent Newsletter May/June 2014

As we collectively look forward to a successful and productive conclusion to the school year for our youngsters, let's be sure to celebrate the small victories garnered by all of our students. I thought you'd be interested to know that the current eighth graders at Illing Middle School represent the last class of students I worked with since my days at Bennet Academy. They have certainly grown up quite a bit. It has been my pleasure and honor to watch my kids blossom into young adults. I cannot wait to see them apply their magic in classes at MHS!

As 2013-14 draws to a close I would like to express my appreciation to all teachers, staff, and parents for the privilege of working with you this past year. It has been a rewarding partnership with a wonderful and dedicated group of educators and community members. Looking back over the year, I am thrilled with our positive changes to school climate. I am excited about the new technology classes introduced to the curricula. Procedures and protocols continue to be streamlined and fine-tuned. Although all the lockers have not been re-painted, the project should be completed this summer. The entire back of the building will finally receive its overdue makeover. The open classrooms will be walled off so students are exposed to more educationally-sound and sensibly-conducive instructional spaces. We will no longer need to walk through classrooms to get to other classes! Furthermore, *Chromebooks* will find their way into ALL of our students' hands. Technology will be (and must be) the common thread to how we teach as we move students toward acquiring 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills preparing them for high school, college, and the workforce.

Illing Middle School staff continues to pursue current and relevant instructional strategies to link with the *Common Core* and to stretch student thinking and application of new learning. To sum it up - we aim to be a collaborative, cooperative, productive society of educated and diverse people who eagerly contribute to a district that lives in harmony, peace, and prosperity!

Sincerely,

*David A. Welch, Principal*

## FROM THE ATTENDANCE OFFICE



If your student is feeling ill or needs to be absent or late for any reason, PLEASE contact our attendance secretary,

Mrs. Barbara Stufflebeam, at 647-3413

## SCHOOL SUPPORT STAFF

### School Counseling Center

Ms. Zalewski <b>Guidance Counselor</b>	<b>Team Central and Tufts</b>	647-5087
Ms. Petito <b>Guidance Counselor</b>	<b>Team Cornell and UCONN</b>	647-3418
Ms. Scholtz	<b>Guidance Secretary</b>	647-3417
Ms. Cody	<b>Registrar</b>	647-5085
Mr. Anger <b>Social Worker</b>	<b>Team URI and Dartmouth</b>	647-3420
Ms. Owen <b>Social Worker</b>	<b>Team Princeton and Syracuse</b>	647-3421
Angella Manhertz	<b>School Psychologist</b>	647-3414
Sharon Goodwin- Griffin	<b>Community Outreach Counselor</b>	647-3400
Loren Conlon	<b>Community Outreach Counselor</b>	647-3400

### Coach's Corner

Nancy Ahlquist, Danielle Maguire, and Claudia Millette

### Ways to Motivate Your Teen to Read at Home

For a multitude of reasons, some teenagers go through periods without showing much interest in reading. Don't panic! Time and the following suggestions may help to rekindle their interest.

View pleasure reading as a value in itself: Almost anything your teen reads, including Sunday comics, helps build reading skills.

Read some books written for teens: Young adult novels can give you valuable insights into the concerns and pressures felt by teenagers. You may find that these

books provide a neutral ground on which to talk about sensitive subjects with your teen. Not to mention, some of them are really great reads! In addition, there are some great websites to help you choose books for your teen. Here is just one of them:

***Reading Rants! Out of the Ordinary Teen Booklists!***  
[www.readingrants.org](http://www.readingrants.org)

This website, which has been in existence since 1998, is in a blog format. Teens can respond to book reviews in each blog post. The sidebar has a list of top ten books for each of the past eight years. The site has also recently partnered with [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) so that if your teen sees a book they like, they can click on the cover, check out other reviews and purchase the title if they choose. The blog is updated weekly, and if your teen would like to, they can sign up for email reminders whenever a new review is posted.

### Ways to Maintain Math Skills Over the Summer

In addition to frequenting those sites listed on the Manchester K-8 Resource Page, parents and students might want to check out [www.sumdog.com](http://www.sumdog.com).

This site enables students to play fun math games against their friends, or students from around the world. Because the games are so engaging, students will enjoy maintaining, as well as continuing, to develop their mental math skills over the summer.

Students have the flexibility to choose from 25 different games to practice the same skill. While skills for students in grades 3 through 8 are covered, those most appropriate for your illing student would be: fractions, percents, and expressions and equations. Games stay the same, but the questions within them change based on your child's progress.

Teens love choice and competition: Sumdog provides both while also making lots of room for real math practice. Games are individualized for each student's ability level, so users can play against opponents who have the same skills. Each game is timed; creating a sense of urgency and excitement as well as helping kids build their speed and increase their math fact fluency. Sumdog does provide a number of different types of games which address various learning styles. There is also a coin incentive to go shopping for a virtual avatar. Best of all, it only takes minutes for a parent to sign up their child for free.

### EMERGENCY CARD

If you have an e-mail address, phone number or mailing address on file that needs to be updated, or if you would

like your information added, please contact the registrar, Ms. Sabrina Cody at [scody@manchesterct.gov](mailto:scody@manchesterct.gov). This will also allow teachers to contact you directly via your e-mail address.

### Team Tufts



We can't say it enough. Thank you for your continued support all year long. We truly want your children to be as successful as they can be. As this school year comes to a close, please keep checking those planners and contact us with your concerns. We have enjoyed teaching your children and wish them the very best in the years that follow. Have a safe and peaceful summer vacation from all the Team Tufts teachers.

Our end-of-the-year Lake Compounce trip is shaping up nicely. The trip is scheduled for Friday, June 13. Please refer to the permission slip for details or contact Mr. Watson at Illing.

**Social Studies – Mrs. Dudzik:** With the SBAC testing upon us and parent conferences just a fond memory now, the months of May and June promise to be exciting for Tufts geographers. Students continue to learn more about the diversity of the African continent and the challenges its people must face. Students look forward to creating their Social Studies contribution to the Family History Museum presentation: a Family Map Crest, which is a Japanese cutting activity project. Students will end the year with a review of the current events of Southwest Asia and quick look at Russia and India. Our Indian marriage ads are always a big hit on the last day of school. Just keep mind that this activity is done just for fun, so be creative. Thank you for your participation ahead of time!

**Mathematics – Mrs. Peralta:** Students are working on a Statistics Unit. They will learn to collect data and analyze the data base on the measures of central tendencies. Pre-algebra students learned about surface area and volume of three dimensional shapes. Our students will be finishing the year with the “What Do You Expect?” unit which consists of theoretical and experimental probability. Students will use experimental and/or theoretical probability to explain whether specific games are fair or not.

Students have been reflecting on their assessments to understand their performance level. These reflections have helped them make changes to become more successful in

their learning. It has been a pleasure working with your students. I hope you have a wonderful and safe summer.

**Science - Mr. Watson:** Our Team Tufts scientists are wrapping up their study of the human body by investigating how the Nervous System communicates to and controls the other systems of the body. We will finish the school year with a look at some earth science topics: earthquakes, volcanoes, etc. This should provide each student the opportunity to understand what's happening in certain areas of the world. Thanks for a great year, scientists!

**Integrated Language Arts – Ms. Gill:** During the month of May, Ms. Gill's class will be reading *Monster*, a novel by Walter Dean Myers. Students are encouraged to discuss the innocence or guilt of the main character and to synthesize their personal definitions of justice. Afterwards, students will explore classic fairy tales in their original text and write creative scripts in which they put fairy tale characters on trial. In June, Ms. Gill's class will close out the year by reading stories from Greek and Roman mythology and engaging in an in-class "academic olympics" which will test their knowledge of grammar, spelling, and mythological characters. Also, please mark your calendars for the upcoming Family History Museum event on the evening of June 11th. Students will proudly display their original essays and poems, written during their personal explorations of their familial backgrounds.

**Integrated Language Arts – Mrs. Bombria:** Students have been learning strategies to support *claims* and have enjoyed a few friendly debates. Students are encouraged to continue researching information which supports their claims and remember to be GREAT listeners in order to grow and understand others opinions.

If you find books labeled *Illing Middle School*, or *Bombria*, please return them to Mrs. Bombria's attention, as many of our borrowed books have been on loan for a long time and other students are waiting to borrow them. We would like all books back into our classroom inventories by **June 10th**.

For the remaining weeks in school, your child will be required to continue to complete homework assignments which will include reading 20+ minutes every evening. Your child may need your assistance in finding a time and place to read and concentrate each day. Your encouragement and modeling will help foster your child's success with good work habits. We hope this practice will grow into lifelong success.

Remember...Our Family History Museum date is **June 10<sup>th</sup>**, in the Illing Cafeteria. Your child may be asking for your assistance in finding family artifacts. These items do not have to be of monetary value, simply of meaning. Students are creating their writing projects- *I Am From...*poem, **traditions, family recipes**, and a *Family*

**Story**, which they will display at our family event. We look forward to seeing you and celebrating our diverse families! Watch for the invitation with an RSVP and sign up form for your cultural food to share.

It has been a pleasure getting to know your child. We wish you continued success in the next school year. Have a great summer!

### **Team Dartmouth**

## **“The Big Green”**

Thanks to all the Team Dartmouth students and teachers for their participation in celebrating Earth Day just before vacation. We learned about how individuals as part of a community can make a difference. Team Dartmouth students did a fantastic job planting pansies in front of Illing and they are beautiful!

Homework club will continue to officially meet on Thursdays until the school late bus stops running. As always, students will still be able to make arrangements, on an individual basis, with their teachers to get extra help after school on other days. Also, school supplies are wanting. Help your child stay on task and be successful by replenishing pens and pencils. Most importantly, our recent town meeting stressed to the students that we should be striving for a strong finish both academically and behaviorally as the year closes.

Everyone is looking forward to the school-wide 7<sup>th</sup> grade Lake Compounce field trip Friday, June 13th! Be sure to dress comfortably for the weather, school dress code applies, and pack a lunch or bring money to buy lunch-free soda all day at the park. We would love for parent chaperones to join us, so please contact us as soon as possible if you are able to volunteer.

Mrs. Avakian reports: The students are investigating the history, culture and economics of the Middle Eastern region. Students will be developing their skills in understanding and interpreting the variety of perspectives in the surrounding region. Included in our study of the Middle Eastern Region is a mini unit on economics and oil which incorporates concepts of managing energy resources, supply & demand, and limited resources. Students will continue to use their prior knowledge and improve their skills in interpreting and comparing a variety of types of maps for the Middle Eastern region. We will finish out the year studying India, China, Japan and the Pacific Rim.

Ms. Nobilio's and Ms. Burdacki's language arts classes are continuing their interdisciplinary study of survival in

Sudan by reading *A Long Walk to Water*. As we finish the novel, our classes will be taking part in fishbowl discussions and a creative assessment activity. We are also gearing up to take the Smarter Balanced pilot assessment, as well as the last installment of the NWEA tests.

Dartmouth's Battle of the Books team is hard at work preparing for the final competition. After successfully defeating not one, but two seventh grade teams, they will now challenge the winning eighth grade team for the school championship. Team members Cecilia Klotzer, Adebba Reza, Gianna Burti, Yeliannie Luna, Kevin Hamilton, Bryan Gleba, Jared Kozlin, Ben Hayes, Darien Thomas, and Ethan Hughes along with alternates Enisa Volgi and Anijah Thompson are gearing up for this final round. Team Dartmouth plans to regain our title and trophy from two years ago. Go Big Green!

In Mrs. Martindale's math class we are still two units away from the end of the year. We finish with our two shortest units: statistics and probability. The overarching goal of the statistics unit is to understand data collection and generalize about a population from a sample. The probability unit is full of games and analyzing outcomes to compare experimental and theoretical probability. Homework is still assigned almost every night as we plan to finish the year strong.

Dartmouth science students are wrapping up their unit on the human body systems, and will soon shift gears to the study of earth science. Tectonic plates, fault lines, earth layers, and earthquakes will be examined. Team Dartmouth is looking forward to our annual visit to Lake Compounce, so please, parents, emphasize the importance of finishing the year strong both academically and behaviorally to ensure your child's attendance on this trip!

### **Team URI**



Science: In Mrs. Kapa's science class the students are finishing up a unit on body systems. Our classes examined a chicken wing and compared it to the structure of the human arm and completed a lab report. Over the next several weeks students will be working on energy and the Earth's systems. Students will construct models to demonstrate rock folds and faults. They will create a flip book that shows the process of weathering and erosion and create a map indicating earthquake and volcanic activity to predict the location of tectonic plates.

In math we recently completed a unit on ratio and proportion. Over the next several weeks we will be studying populations and the statistics that can be analyzed using a set of information. To finish the school year, students will be working with probability by playing and analyzing a variety of probability games.

**Social Studies:** Students are currently studying the natural environment and natural resources. In the coming weeks, we will be moving on to the people of the world, including their culture, population, and how the worlds' natural resources impact economies.

**Language Arts:** Students are wrapping up the final pieces to our Argument Unit. In Ms. Okwuazi's class, students are working on a "Pay it Forward" mini project while learning the art of being humble. Then, the class will begin working in literature circle groups. In Ms. Ziegler's class students have just finished their second novel study. They will begin their last novel in the upcoming month. The theme for these novels will be survival. Along with the reading, students will write an essay and complete an independent project.

**S.T.A.R.S. Expectations:** Please review the S.T.A.R.S. program that we follow at Illing to help your child to be successful. As we approach the end of the year, there are many fun activities for students. In order to participate we require that students continue to follow S.T.A.R.S. everyday. Let's have a strong end to our year!

### Team Yale



**In Mr. Diaz's 7th grade Language Arts** classes, students are currently studying argumentative writing. They are reading various articles which make claims about a specific topic. Students are working to analyze these articles in order to identify the claims, counterclaims and supporting evidence. Students are then writing argumentative essays to reflect their analyses of the articles they read and their understanding of the topic at hand.

**In Mr. Diaz's shared 8th grade Language Arts** class, students are currently in the midst of a social justice unit. Students are reading excerpts from the nonfiction text *Amazing Grace: The Lives of Children and the Conscience of a Nation*. Students are performing a close reading of the text and analyzing it for content in an effort

to draw comparisons between contemporary examples of oppression and the Holocaust.

**Mr. Parker Language Arts:** Helloooooo YALE family!!!! Yale **Language Arts** students have completed their main idea unit and are currently working on argumentative writing. In addition, we are in the midst of studying the Holocaust and will proceed with practicing and applying a variety of active reading strategies to strengthen reading comprehension. As we close out the year we will zone in on analytical reading, writing and discussion and will also work on developing strong research skills. In addition, students will actively read a novel titled *Bronx Masquerade* with a special focus on characterization and providing text support for trait claims. Students will also become poetic analysts and performing poets, enhancing their public speaking skills along the way!

We are at the final stretch of the year, however, there is still a lot of work to be done and we are focused on finishing strong so that we can be prepared for the high school and the world! I strongly encourage parents and guardians to have conversations with their children about school. Ask them what they are learning and how they connect with their learning. Ask them what they have for homework and ask to see their agenda so you can see what they have for homework and communicate with teachers through writing. In addition, I would like you to encourage your children to read at least 35 minutes every day. I appreciate all that you do to work as a team with your child's teachers so that we can ensure behavioral and academic success! Before I sign off I leave you with this quote: "*Fall down sometimes. ALWAYS get back up.*"

### **Peace, Love, Parker**

**Mr. Vickers Social Studies:** In 7<sup>th</sup> grade social studies we are completing our study of China. Ask your child if they remember anything about the Chinese and pollution. We will soon be starting our unit on Japan and learning about calligraphy and etiquette rules for eating. Japan is the third largest economy in the world.

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade social studies we are almost finished expanding America from "sea to shining sea." We are moving now to the conflict over slavery which radically transformed our nation: the Civil War. It was America at its best and its worst.

**Ms. Regan Math:** In 7th grade Math classes, students are currently learning to define, write, simplify, and evaluate: ratios; rates; unit rates and prices; and proportions. Students are expanding their knowledge by applying proportional thinking to both real-world and mathematical situations. Next, students will focus on percentages and applying the concept of percent to real-

world application such as sales tax, discount and simple interest.

In **8th grade Math classes**, students are studying algebraic equations and inequalities. Students are currently using the correct order of operations to simplify algebraic expressions and solving equations and inequalities for a specified variable. Additionally, students are solving real-world application problems by defining a variable, setting up and solving an equation and interpreting the results. Next, students will be learning about linear equations and the various methods to write and graph a linear equation.

**Ms. Brown Science:** Team Yale's **7<sup>th</sup> grade science classes** are finishing up learning about our respiratory system, and moving into the cardiovascular system. Students will be participating in a "Feel the Beat" lab, where they design and experiment on factors that affect heart rate.

The **8<sup>th</sup> grade science classes** have begun our investigation of the Genetics unit, starting with a review of the structure and function of a cell, as well as cell division. We just finished studying mitosis, the process of cell duplication, and meiosis, the special process of producing reproductive cells. Next, we will be investigating genetic inheritance, including a study of human traits which are controlled by known genes. After all of the background study is complete, we will be learning about the physiology of the male and female reproductive systems, embryo growth and development, and the hormones which influence this process

**Mr. Lee Enrichment:** Students are putting the final touches on their current Enrichment projects. They are creating and presenting "Paper Bag Book Reports," a creative twist on a traditional book report. Our students have picked a book for their Paper Bag Book Report and are using pictures, items, and symbolism to summarize and explain what they liked most about the book. They have done a great job putting their presentations together!!

### Team Central



Team Central Science News: Before I get into the news of Spring Science, I have to give a shout out to my 6th period class that is taking the SBAC test with me--You guys are awesome!!! I could see your effort every day, and those

that finished before others were quiet and respectful of their classmates who were still testing. I am so proud of your sustained efforts!

Now for Science: It's the fourth quarter, hurray! But we need to stay focused right up until the end. We will finish the human body and cells, then on to Earth Science. The focus during the Earth Science unit is why the Earth looks as it does now with plate tectonics, weathering, and erosion being major topics. Students have been reminded that they should be well aware of the class routines by now: pencil and folder every day, work completed on time, and put your name on your work.

Planning for the big seventh grade Lake Compounce trip is underway. Be sure to return permission slips and money by the deadline set forth on the permission slip. Remember also, your behavior is a condition of the trip, if you cannot be a STAR here at Illing, you are jeopardizing your ability to take part in the trip. Don't miss out!!

Mrs. Kalt's students have completed two performance tasks. They had a class task regarding the use of plastic bags and an SBAC task about monuments. Students behaved very well during the SBAC testing. I'm proud of the effort they showed and their excellent behavior. In preparation for the national test (NWEA) they will take in May, students will continue to focus on building their vocabulary and analyzing fiction and non-fiction texts. Please encourage your children to watch the news and shows about science and history. Watching documentaries improves background knowledge which helps everyone better understand what they read. It has been a pleasure working with my students and their families this year.

Social Studies: We have just finished our journey of Japan, the Koreas, and the region of Russia. The students were fascinated by the technological advances of Japan. They learned the people of Japan maximize the success of their economy by their strong work ethic. Students also came to the realization that they would rather live in South Korea vs. North Korea. We are now in the midst of exploring the subcontinent of India. Students learned about the history of the region and the importance of Mohandas Gandhi. We will soon be off to study the region of Southwest Asia. Students will enjoy learning about the rich culture of Arabian Peninsula and the countries that surround it. Students are going to explore the resources this region has to offer and their importance to our economy. The fourth and final quarter has just begun. Encourage your child to finish the school year strong. I hope you and your family have enjoyed the Illing experience. Have a great summer.

**Mr. Menefee**

Marvelous Mathematics with Mrs. Webster!

I am so excited to be joining Team Central and begin anew with your child for the remainder of the year! We have so many exciting activities to accomplish highlighted by creating an interactive notebook. This notebook will track all of the progress, notes, activities and class work your child completes in class. Your child will be exploring proportions and ratios, calculating percent increase and decrease, and developing strategies to calculate tax, tip and commission. Using the real world to guide, combined with rigorous instruction, students will develop their own math strategies and problem solving skills. This will enable them to learn and apply the Common Core Math Standards. To close out the year, your child will be investigating probability and statistics. We are going to have a grand time.

Illing Parents and Guardians,

The end of the year is almost upon us! Students have been working hard in Language Arts building a solid foundation of essay writing and verbal persuasive skills. Their vocabulary and grammar skills have improved tremendously throughout the year. We will continue to address these areas of persuasiveness, vocabulary, and grammar as we close out the year. Students spent a lot of time crafting arguments of their own over the last quarter. This quarter we will spend time analyzing the arguments of others. How do they influence us? How do they deceive us? Students will be able to take these skills with them to help them navigate the tricky congested landscape of modern influence. With so many people and sources vying for their attention, the goal is to get students to be able to quickly make smart decisions using critical thinking and common sense. Thank you for all you do, and all you have done, to help them throughout their 7<sup>th</sup> grade journey.

Sincerely,

Mr. Morsbach

Team Princeton



**Science students on team Princeton** are wrapping up an investigation of energy with an extensive engineering project as we undertake the Mousetrap Car Challenge. Students will be designing a car powered by the energy in a mousetrap spring, while attempting to have their car

travel as fast and as far as possible. This challenge is a chance for them to have a great time, of course, but it will also teach them valuable life lessons. Perhaps the best lesson they will learn is resilience in the face of failure as they continue to try new strategies when the car doesn't cooperate. They will also develop their teamwork and communication skills. While it's a fun project and great way to wrap up science class for the year, I hope that students will grow and mature through this challenge, and take away skills that will serve them in their successful lives no matter what they pursue.

The end of the school is fast approaching, along with all the fun 8<sup>th</sup> grade activities!! All classes will be finishing up this year's curriculum as well as preparing for their first year of high school. For the remainder of the year, **Algebra I students** will continue to hone skills using quadratic equations and then will be moving on to a statistics unit that will be focusing on systems of equations and polynomials. We will then be preparing for a final exam in the last weeks of school. Lastly, Connected Math students will be finishing up their unit on linear equations and will be moving on to studying functions and systems of equations to finish out the year. Thank you to everyone for making this year so successful and memorable!!

In **Social Studies**, after studying the American Revolution, one of our greatest stories ever, we proved that with perseverance and determination, just about anything is possible. After the hard work of defeating the British is done, we have an equally difficult and important task – forming a government. We will find that it is not an easy task at all. Classes have been examining the shortcomings of the Articles of Confederation and the need to create a document that would better address the needs of our new nation. What followed was a series of heated debates and compromises that eventually led to the foundation of our government – our Constitution.

**Language Arts** students will soon be wrapping up our study of the Holocaust. We hope your children have been coming home and sharing with you what they have been learning about hate and how it can spread like a contagious disease. Our hope with this unit is that students will remember that each word they speak and write holds tremendous power and so to use them wisely to help and not to hurt.

In the next two months, we will revisit using argument in our writing by completing an essay arguing a point from events that took place during World War II. As well, we will explore how to use sources to support what we say and write in class. We look forward to ending the year with reading novels such as, The Outsiders, by S.E. Hinton.

As this year starts winding down ~ days are longer and warmer weather beckons us to play, we want to remind students that **work is still due on time** and there are plenty of opportunities to complete assignments and get extra help. Using your time wisely and attending Homework Club when you want a quiet, supportive place to work are always good decisions. Parents, please continue to check planners and feel free to contact us with any concerns.

### Team Syracuse



What a great year it has been. We, the teachers of Team Syracuse want to thank you for the privilege of teaching your children this year. We have reveled in watching them grow and change from middle schoolers to adolescents who are ready to progress to the next chapter of their lives at the high school of their choice. We have enjoyed their creativity, their joy for life, and their sense of humor.

We have worked ceaselessly to prepare them, but we are ever aware that the greatest job has been yours because parents and guardians are the single most important influence in any child's life. Never doubt that while they may appear to be ignoring you, they hear, believe, and absorb everything that you say, and they take something from every lesson that you teach them.

We will spend May and June with a variety of classes and projects that will bring closure to our learning for this year, and we look forward to hearing about the accomplishments of you children in the future. As always, please contact us by telephone or email if you have any questions or comments.

Again, we thank you. **The teachers and staff of Team Syracuse.**

### Team Cornell



Spring brings a great deal of activity as we move down the home stretch until the end of the year. We completed our

SBAC testing just before the April break and our students put forth an outstanding effort. They handled the four day testing period extremely well dealing with a modified schedule and a two hour testing period for four days. A special team day was held with a film presentation and refreshments as a reward for a job well done!!! We have been very pleased with ALL our students this year as they have been part of a process that will prepare them for what lies ahead as they begin a new chapter in their lives with High School. We will continue the rigor of academics but continue to build on all the positive connections we have made with your students as we progress toward the end of what has been a great school year!!!

### Team UCONN



In Language Arts, students will begin reading The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton. It's still one of my favorite books to teach, and students really enjoy it every year. It's also important to make sure that students finish the academic year in good form. Sometimes grades have a tendency to slip as we move closer to summer vacation. Remember, if you have any concerns please feel free to contact any of the teachers here at Illing.

In Science class students will be exploring a series of mini topics to complete our year at Illing Middle School. Such topics experienced will include "The Physics of Flight," "Density," "Domino Derby," and the "Construction of Hot Air Balloons." In addition, we will study and participate in a unique mini unit of The Holocaust learning about Eugenics, and war crimes experiments that were committed. And very importantly, we will continue to hone in on our science study skills to prepare us for the upcoming high school year

Social Studies classes have completed their study of the United States Revolutionary War. Classes will be exploring the formation of the United States Constitution and the system of government we use to this day. As we complete the year, we will explore westward expansion of the United States through the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark exploration. Students will be examining the westward march of the United States through the question, "How does expansion change human experience?" Team UCONN students along with the rest of the eighth grade class will be traveling to Washington DC to explore, firsthand the founding of government.

Mrs. Brisee's Algebra I students will continue to work with quadratic functions through mid-May. We will finish

the year with a unit on statistics. A final exam will be given for this group of students during the week of June 9<sup>th</sup>, exact date to be announced soon. Currently, CMP students are learning about linear equations. The math concepts they learn in this unit will assist them in their final two units—functions and systems of equations. Time flies! The 2013-2014 school year is winding down. We are practicing good habits, be they study habits, homework habits, behavior habits, in preparation for high school, just a few months away!

### Art Department



We are now in the midst of the fourth marking period and we are enjoying our students as we are hoping they are enjoying us. Spring is now upon us and all the craziness that goes with it. Between field trips and other spring activities the time will fly by and we will be ending the year. We take it all in stride and do our best to keep the stream of learning flowing through the Art Department.

8<sup>th</sup> grade students are experience the joys of working with perspective, One Point for now, and have made the connection with elements of design. Some are exploring the realm of Folk Art with the creation of Piggy Banks that are both utilitarian, as well as a decorative addition to any home. These creative beauties are inspired by the students' own interests. Starting with pinch pots, they create a closed form and then add faces and all sorts of sculpted appendages. These glazed works of art will stand the test of time. Mr. Atkins and Mr. Lafontaine put as much as they can in to each project.

7<sup>th</sup> grade students are focusing on the art and culture of Asia. Students will experience making a connection with several cultures and create projects that are influenced by of these cultures. Learning new techniques and working with the elements of design will give them the tools to have a successful art experience. Mr. Lafontaine's students are creating marvelous festooned pachyderms. These decorated elephants would make any Indian Parade proud to include. Mr. Atkins is exploring outer space with a domed city on alien planets through the exploration of watercolor techniques. Exploring the world can take many forms and use many media.

Mr. Atkins is offering Art Cub on Tuesday afternoon from 3:00 – 4:00pm. Come and enjoy discovering you creative side.

The Art Department returned to an old tradition last school year with our annual Student Art Show. Mr.

Lafontaine and Mr. Atkins have been saving art work throughout the year to be displayed at the Art Show. This exciting event will take place on the evening of Thursday, June the 5<sup>th</sup> in the cafeteria from 5:30 – 7:30 pm. This will give us the best opportunity to squeeze all the creativity we can out of our students. Please be patient with us if we retain your students' work. All art work may be picked up in the Art rooms the day after the art show. Students need to retrieve their work before the final day of school.

### Computer Technology



John Dewey once said, "If we teach today's students as we taught yesterday's, we rob them of tomorrow." It's this philosophy that we keep front and center as we get ready to finish this pilot program. The first year of this new computer-based technology course has been a monumental success. Due to the fact that the course covers so many topics, students have had the opportunity to experience many things for the first time, and it's very inspiring to see them discover new talents and skills that they didn't know they possessed. Because it is only a one semester course, Mr. Spada encourages students to take their learning beyond the classroom and continue to learn new skills and programs on their own.

As the program continues to grow and morph to meet the needs of our students, we'd like to thank all of the parents and faculty members who have provided their support for the program. The success of the program would not have been possible without the support of so many wonderful helping hands.

### Family and Consumer Science



The Healthy Chef Cook Off in February was a huge success and a lot of fun for all. Manchester's own Cory Wry (restaurant owner and chef of Catsup & Mustard, Pastrami on Wry and Chops-N-Catch) was our celebrity judge! As promised, here are the winning recipes:

Snack category

#### **Summer Mango Tart**

Justin Diaz, Sean Chambers, Anthony Beaulieu Russo

1 ripe mango, peeled and thinly sliced

Tangy Cream:

1 pint strawberries, thinly sliced  
4 oz cream cheese  
6 sheets phyllo dough 1/c cup plain low fat yogurt  
1/4 cup melted butter  
1/4 cup sugar or honey  
sugar 1 lime, zest and juice  
salt

1. Thaw frozen phyllo pastry dough according to the package instructions 2 hrs at room temp or overnight in the fridge. Before you start, make sure your station is set up with a damp towel, a small bowlful of sugar, some melted butter and a pastry brush, and a baking sheet lined with a silpat or parchment paper sprayed with Pam.

2. Carefully unroll the phyllo dough and immediately cover it with a sheet of plastic wrap and the damp towel. Phyllo sheets are incredibly thin and will start to crack if you let them get dry, so be sure to replace the towel each time you remove a sheet.

3. Put the first sheet of phyllo down on the baking tray and gently brush it with a thin layer of melted butter. Sprinkle a fine dusting of sugar over the pastry, and then place another sheet on top. Repeat the butter/sugar process until you have five or six sheets brush the top layer with butter but don't sprinkle it with sugar. Fold the edges in to give it a finished look, but you also can bake as is.

4. Bake the tart shell at 350° F for 20 minutes, until the pastry has turned a deep golden brown color.

5. While the pastry cools, whisk together the cream cheese, yogurt, lime juice and zest, sugar to taste, and a pinch of salt. You can experiment with strained Greek yogurt, sour cream, goat cheese, or anything else you think might taste good with the fresh fruit.

6. When the pastry is completely cool, spoon the cream mixture evenly over the crust, then placed the sliced mango and strawberries on top. Finish with a dusting of lime zest and serve.

Main dish cataogory:

### **Vegetable Greek Panini**

By, Paige Tyler and Aylin Sandim

Spinach leaves  
Feta cheese  
1/4 cup Kalamata olives, thinly sliced  
1/2 container each yellow & red grape tomatoes, halved  
1 green bell pepper  
1/4 red onion  
Fresh thyme; 1/4 tsp finely chopped  
Fresh oregano; 1/2 tsp finely chopped  
olive oil  
2 TB red wine vinegar  
Whole grain ciabatta roll

1. Cut pepper and onion in strips and sauté in 2 tsp oil in med high pan. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside to cool.  
2. In a mixing bowl add tomatoes, olives, thyme, oregano, vinegar, 2TB olive oil and reserved peppers. Season with salt and pepper and mix well.  
3. Build the panini by layering feta cheese, spinach leaves, prepared veggie mixture and another layer of feta cheese. Warm in panini maker before serving.  
\*mixes well with a parfait of plain low fat Greek yogurt, blackberries and sliced almonds

For an awesome video of the cook off, please view the link below and enjoy the video-making skills of our extraordinary Ms. Zappulla!

<http://publicschools.manchesterct.gov/page.cfm?p=887>

While the year is counting down many events still remain. The 4<sup>th</sup> quarter has begun and the students in Mrs. Pickett's class are working hard in the sewing room. Many are practicing threading a sewing machine and working on their sewing projects. Ms. Stepanski's classes have begun in the kitchens and they have done a review of the food pyramid and healthy eating in their lives.

With the weather getting warmer and sunnier it isn't easy for any of us to stay focused. One way to do this is to have the student schedule some break time into their daily schedule. For every hour of work, everyone should get at least a 5-10 minute break. This will keep your student more motivated to finish the task at hand, rest their eyes and think about the next step.

### **Physical Education**

**Coming May 1<sup>st</sup>**

### **ACES**

***(All Children Exercising Simultaneously)***

*Project ACES began back in 1989 by Physical Education Teacher Len Saunders, of New Jersey. Len wanted to get one school in every state to exercise at the same time on a specific day in May to motivate his physical education classes to exercise. The program was also designed to show the importance of Physical Education in school!*

**On Thursday, May 1 at approximately 10:00 a.m., the entire school will experience what schools around the country are involved in - EXERCISING SIMULTANEOUSLY! May 1 Aces grade level dance off!**

**May 22-23**

**Illing Team Olympics!**

**The second annual Illing Team Olympics will be on May 22nd and 23rd. 7th and 8th grade teams will compete against each other over two days in events like track and field, basketball, kickball and Quidditch. Dartmouth and Princeton, get ready to defend your titles!**

**Music Department**



Dear Choir Parents and Students!

I would like to thank you so much for your support in our many performances (those that we have had and the ones to come!)

Congratulations to the Illing Singers on a beautiful performance at the Town wide Choir Concert. Their performance was OUTSTANDING!!

On May 8th, the Spring Choir Concert will take place at MHS beginning at 7:00 pm. There will be information coming home as a reminder for times/concert dress...

May Dates:

May 1st – Boys' Choir sings at the Bennet Orientation (6:00-7:00pm)

May 2nd – Illing Singers to perform at Great East Festival and 6 Flags Park (7:00 am - 9:00pm)

May 29th – Illing Singers/Boys' Choir to sing at the NJHS Induction

May 30th – Boston Trip for after school Choirs

June 3rd – Elementary Tour

Thank you for your continued support in fund raising or allowing me to borrow your children while we continue to offer beautiful performances!!

**Cheryl Hilton**

Hello String Families—

I am so pleased with how all of the 8th Grade Orchestra students behaved and performed at the Townwide Concert in April! They did a fabulous job representing Illing and I could not be more proud of all they have accomplished.

**Tuesday, May 6th, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.** will be the Spring Instrumental Concert. Make sure your calendar is marked correctly! A reminder that concert attire is white tops with black pants/skirts. Class expectations will continue after the concert as we are in class until the end of the school year. We will continue to advance our skills and focus on preparing ourselves for music selections for next year. Attention 7th Grade Parents: To aide my long term substitute for the fall of 2014, I will be looking to set up students in need of renting school instruments in June. However, this is also a great time to consider purchasing instruments as students continue to advance. If you need assistance with this, please send me an email to [b57hsica@manchesterct.gov](mailto:b57hsica@manchesterct.gov) or call 860-647-3400, and I will be happy to help.

I look forward to seeing you all in May!

**Mrs. Sica-Leonard**

**Science Club**



This has been a busy year for the science club. Whether we were in the classroom after school building a car to race, or dissecting squid; or bird banding (see our scientists with the professors from Trinity College), or doing something else. We have had a busy time.

Some of the highlights were seal counting at Avery Point, going to the Quinebaug Fish Hatchery and "fishing", learning how to be an oceanographer at Project Oceanology down at the coast. We discovered exciting changes in oil with density and learning about acids and bases.

Some of our club participated in the North East Regional Science Bowl Competition at University of Connecticut. Meetings are usually Thursdays and anyone can join. Come when you can next year and have some fun.

**World Language**

Sra. Alejandro, Sr. Blanco, and Sr. Ramos are delighted to work with your children.

7<sup>th</sup> grade Spanish Exploratory Students will count to two million, tell the time & date, discuss the weather, and describe themselves.

In 8<sup>th</sup> grade Spanish Exploratory, the students will simulate preparing themselves to become exchange students, learn about the Spanish-speaking countries, identifying the clothing and necessary items they will pack, making trip plans and details for their travel, and even writing a letter of presentation.

The 8<sup>th</sup> grade High School Spanish 1 classes are working on units covering the school, after school activities, food, and leisure time activities through June. They are speaking Spanish more and more each day!

To succeed in class, students need to be on time and prepared. They should have a pocket folder in which to keep their work, a notebook to take notes, and a pen and pencil to write with. They should each have a Spanish-English dictionary to help them with vocabulary. A dictionary makes a great gift! At home, each student should have glue, tape, and scissors available.

In addition, B207827317 is the access code for our online text at [www.glencoe.com](http://www.glencoe.com).

The International Fun Fest on April 22 was a total success! Muchas gracias to the following: all who participated in the Talent Show (We have muchos estudiantes talentosos!), those who worked on the displays, all who helped in set-up (Great helpers!), the Alejandros who donated the Raffle prizes (That framed, signed photograph of Puerto Rico es muy bonito!), to the custodial staff who set up for the activity, and to all those who attended – staff, faculty, friends, and families alike! Gracias also to those who worked on the display boards and to the Association of Puerto Ricans and Latinos of Manchester (APLUM) for their participation every year! Muchas gracias to those who donated food for the International Food Fair—the pastelillos were sabrosos! The Multi-Cultural Club prepared German snickerdoodles! Danke! And muchas gracias to Feliciano's Restaurant of East Hartford (1010 Main Street) for their Food Preparation Demo—the chicken tortilla soup was deliciosa! Make plans to attend next year's International Fun Fest! You'll be glad you did!

Have a wonderful rest of the school year and a safe summer!

¡Hasta luego! ¡Chao! ¡Adios! ¡Hasta la vista!

## **MANCHESTER PUBLIC SCHOOLS NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT**

Manchester Public Schools is committed to a policy of equal opportunity/affirmative action for all qualified persons. Manchester Public Schools does not discriminate in any employment practice, education program, or educational activity on the basis of race, color, religious creed, sex, age, national origin, ancestry, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability (including, but not limited to, intellectual disability, past or present history of mental disorder, physical disability or learning disability), genetic information, or any other basis prohibited by Connecticut state and/or federal nondiscrimination laws. Manchester Public Schools does not unlawfully discriminate in employment and licensing against qualified persons with a prior criminal conviction. Inquiries regarding Manchester Public School's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to:

Terri Smith, Human Resources Specialist/Title IX Coordinator

Manchester Public Schools  
45 North School Street  
Manchester, CT 06042  
860-647-3595

Shelly Matfess, Assistant Superintendent for Pupil Personnel Services

Section 504 Co-Coordinator  
Manchester Public Schools  
45 North School Street  
Manchester, CT 06042  
860-647-3452

or

Suzanne Valade, Coordinator of School Health Services

Section 504 Co-Coordinator  
Manchester Public Schools  
45 North School Street  
Manchester, CT 06042  
860-647-3324

*Words from Welch continued...*

### **A Sad, Unexpected Loss**

It is with a very heavy heart and tremendous sadness that we experienced the untimely passing in April of Mr. Jerrod Greider, an Eastern Connecticut State University student teacher under the tutelage of Ms. Noelle Avakian, Team Leader for Team Dartmouth. Mr. Greider had worked at Illing Middle School for the entire Spring 2014 semester and touched the lives of all students on his team. Jerrod was a solid student at ECSU majoring in history/social science and secondary education. He planned to become a high school history teacher. He was interested and involved our IMS Wrestling Team, since he was a former, avid wrestler himself. The loss of Mr. Greider has been especially difficult because of his youth, exuberance, and positive spirit. He established important and lasting connections with many of our Team Dartmouth students and staff. He will be missed but his legacy and impact will live on in the hearts and minds of all of us at Illing Middle School.

### **Congratulations to our Illing Middle School Scholar-Leader Recipients!**

The Connecticut Association of Schools established the Scholar-Leader Banquet in 1985 to give public recognition to one boy and one girl from each middle level school in Connecticut who has distinguished themselves in *scholarship* and *leadership* in school and the community.

The two Scholar-Leaders, their parents and school officials will attend a statewide awards banquet on Sunday, June 8, 2014. Each Scholar-Leader will receive an award signifying the honor, as well as, an individual photograph commemorating the event. The Commissioner of Education and other dignitaries are included in the evening's program.

For their academic prowess and outstanding contributions to the life of our middle school and the Manchester community, *Taylor Keyt* and *Joey Pearl* have been selected by eighth grade teachers to represent Illing Middle School. Both Taylor and Joey are excellent students with positive attitudes and a zeal for achievement and natural success! They are well-deserving of this honor and we are proud of their accomplishment!

### **Board of Education Award Recipients**

**Congratulations!** – to the following Board of Education Award recipients who were honored at the Manchester Board of Education Student Award Recognition Program on Tuesday, April 29, 2014, held at the Bailey Auditorium at Manchester High School:

***Marriana Echevarria, Team Tufts***

***Tim Rowe – Team Cornell***

***Cecilia Klotzer – Team Dartmouth***

***Michael Agosto – Team Yale***

***Mitchell Bouchard – Team Central***

### **Congratulations to Ms. Samantha Greco!**

Ms. Greco, a Physical Education teacher at Illing Middle School was recently recognized by the Connecticut Association of Schools for her work with the Unified Sports Program at Illing. Each year, the CAS staff selects a new school to receive the Ann Malafronte Rookie School Award for demonstrating excellent participation and school wide enthusiasm. CAS has bestowed this honor on Illing Middle School's Unified Sports Program and the work initiated and facilitated by Ms. Greco. From CAS: *Your school's team and coach have gone over and beyond to make this year very special for athletes, partners, parents and school personnel. Your student body has also embraced your Unified Sports team and has helped to change attitudes and change lives.*

## Reaching Our Goals

Let's take pause to celebrate our students' academic success at Illing Middle School this year. Here is a snapshot of our Fall-to-Winter NWEA Scores:

- ✓ **7.1% increase in Math**
- ✓ **15.7% increase in Reading**
- ✓ **13.3% increase in Math for our African-American Population**
- ✓ **33.3% increase in Reading for our African-American Population**
- ✓ **14.6% increase in Reading for our Hispanic/Latino Population**
- ✓ **Special Education and ELL increased significantly!**
- ✓ **Our Achievement Gap closed well beyond the 5% goal set!**

## Another Successful Goal Attained!

One of our multiple school goals this year was to be sure we received valuable feedback from our parent community with regard to school climate and overall school structures. With the help of faculty and staff this year, we worked to encourage parents and guardians to share input and opinions by participating in our standardized school-wide survey. Our measure for success: *Increase participation rate from 22.5% in 2012-13 to 40% in 2013-14. The results: **Completed Parent Surveys** –*

Online: 125  
Hardcopy: 287  
**Total: 412**

**Translation: we had 53% of our parent completed the survey! Thanks for your input and support, parents!**

## **Student of the Month**



Central	Mitchell Bouchard
Dartmouth	Nick Chesworth
Tufts	Zachary Rodick
URI	Jacob St. Laurent
Yale	Darren Sourinho
Cornell	Nhasean Murphy
Princeton	Sierra Petro
Syracuse	Morgan Finkbein
UCONN	Janiya Haynes



Central	Asiana Flordelis
Dartmouth	Jocelyn Gentile
Tufts	Iram Chowdhury
URI	Salma Manu
Yale	Stephen Maura
Cornell	Jordan Bartley
Princeton	Bella Papineau
Syracuse	Dylan Benton
UCONN	Bryan Rodriguez



We are so proud of our Students of the Month! They strive for success everyday and shine as stars each month. Congratulations to their parents as well.

### *Illing Middle School S. T. A. R. S. Award Winners*



Congratulations to the following students who received a **STARS Award** at Illing Middle School over the past few months:

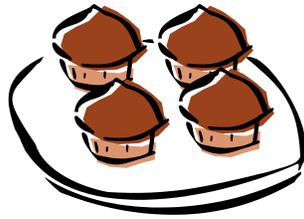
Angela Bonsu, Riley Crockwell, Rachel Mattison, Grace Goldberg-Doyle, Deysha Rivera, Nora Hartnett, Patrick Gordon, Hailey Ngo, Riley Johnson, Chance Eason-Jones, Bailey Ruiz, Leyshann Quinones, Makayla Farrell, Olivia Boyle-Michaud, John Watson, Jonathan Estrella, Iliana Gonzalez, Francis Rodriguez, Darwing Ortiz, Gianna Burti, Jackie Hutton, Yelianni Luna, Arlena Ayala, Jacob Haslett, Kevin Hamilton, Cambria Andrews, Galen Evans, Jacob St. Laurent, Kyle Lappen, Chad Hahn, Delaney Faulkner, Cora Menasian and Lucas Johnson.

### **Illing Middle School's**

#### ***Muffins for Moms on a Monday Morning in May!***

**Monday, May 12<sup>th</sup>, 2014** is designated as a morning for our students' moms and the Illing Middle School Principal to have some light breakfast and just chat a bit. In its second year, this is a spin-off of *Doughnuts for Dads with Dave in December*. Moms demand equal rights and muffins are the answer! Principal Welch invites his school moms to the Faculty Cafeteria (adjacent to the student cafeteria) anytime between 7:15 and 8:00 a.m. with an agenda that

merely asks moms, “Whatdya think?” and “Whatup?” Come on in moms and have a muffin (or two) on a marvelous Monday morning in May with me (Dave).



To all my Illing Middle School kids and parents - have a great summer. May it be filled with laughter, family, and love. Make it safe and memorable. Thank you, once again, for making our school so special.

# Order your

## Illing Middle School yearbook!!!

### Dear Parents and Students,

The 2013/2014 Illing Middle School yearbook is in FULL COLOR and is packed full of the memories you never want to forget.

Order **NOW**, before they sell out!

#### Ordering Options:

Option 1: Fill out the form below and return it with your payment enclosed, to your child's teacher.

Option 2: Order Online, and avoid having to send cash to school with your child. Go to [www.JostensYearbooks.com](http://www.JostensYearbooks.com), find (your school name) and place your order easily and quickly!

Book Price: \$25.00



*Order NOW! Don't get left without a book.*

**Yearbooks have sold out in the past, so make sure you get yours!**

---

**Fill out this form and return the envelope, with your payment enclosed, to your child's teacher ASAP.**

\*Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ \*Homebase Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

TEAM NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Order Info:

Yearbook: Qty \_\_\_\_\_ @ (Price) \$25.00 per book

Total Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

\*REQUIRED INFORMATION

## Health Kits for Hope Drive a Success

Thank you to all of the students, staff, and family members who helped to make our recent Health Kits for Hope Drive a tremendous success! Together with the greater Manchester community, we were able to collect enough donations to assemble and pack 13 dozen (156) personal hygiene kits to be shipped for use by people who have suffered from natural disasters throughout this country and the world. A special thanks to Illing Principal Dave Welch who allowed Illing Middle School to be a community collection point; and to the 25 Illing students who gathered after school to help assemble and pack the kits.

Pictured are the Illing Health Kits for Hope Helpers (in alphabetical order) and some of the boxes of kits that were packed: Rachel Adams, Nyah Brown, Andrea Calderon, Michael Christy, Lauren Diana, Aysa Dunne, Callie Engelbrecht, Jonathan Estrella, Salmera Estrosos, Arron Henry, Marissa Mazzetta, Melanie Morales, Ben Mushinski, Duku Nyarko, Darwing Ortiz, Joey Pearl, Leyshann Quinones, Emily Reynolds, Frank Rodriquez, Maria Sequoia, Kyle Smith, Joana Topanxlna, Max Toth, Nijzire Van Allen, and John Watson.



## PTSA

"We are happy to congratulate Illing parents, teachers and students on winning several awards at the Annual statewide CT PTA Awards Night. Illing PTSA was the ONLY school in the state to win the PTA Membership Incentive Program Award. This involved increasing membership by at least 10%, having 10 outside community members join Illing PTA, having at least 5 BOE/BOD members join the PTA and having 100% Teacher Membership! Illing also won an award for having 10% student membership in our PTSA. Thanks to the entire Illing community for supporting our school and our PTSA. "

Isn't this exciting news and nice PR for Illing? I am going to drop off a flyer in the teacher mailboxes with this info as well. Thanks for all your support!

Mary Klotzer

### **Illing Middle School Progress Report/Report Card Schedule**

**Dates are based on original schedule set according to the school district calendar**

#### **4<sup>th</sup> Quarter April 7, 2014 to June 18, 2014**

- May 13, 2014 Progress Report quarter closes
- May 16, 2014 Progress Report deadline to enter grades/comments by 3:00 p.m.
- **May 26 Memorial Day Weekend**
- June 13, 2014 Report Card quarter closes
- June 18, 2014 Report Card deadline to enter grades/comments by 3:00 p.m.
- **June 19, 2014 Graduation per superintendent**

**\*Last Day of School (pending snow days): June 19, 2014 \* NOTE\* Official last day is adjusted.**