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News from May 2018

Dear Parents, Guardians and Community Members,

This month, I am sharing many examples of accomplishment and achievement across our district. We have much to celebrate. I feel, however, that I must start this newsletter by acknowledging the May 1 incident of vandalism and hate speech at Arlington High School. The internal damage and external graffiti perpetrated by 14 students troubled all of us. It quickly became clear, however, that these acts do not represent our community. The AHS student government, club leaders and captains expressed their solidarity with *all* students. Many spoke about the strength, values and inclusive spirit at AHS. Students gathered outside the building to write messages of love and caring. They wrote "thank you" messages to the custodians who had to respond to the destruction. They led assemblies, reached out to others and encouraged dialogue.

The response from across Arlington was rapid. As the Arlington Police Department investigated, the [Arlington Human Rights Commission](#) and the Arlington LGBTQAI+ Commission held a Solidarity Gathering in front of Town Hall and spoke out at Town Meeting. One of our trusted partners, the [Anti-Defamation League](#), was asked to assist us in determining the best course of action. On May 21, the Town of Arlington released a statement describing how the incident will be resolved. It reported that the restorative justice process will be used with the offenders, and that each student would be disciplined by the schools ([statement](#)).

While this sad and hurtful incident shocked our community, the response of our student body and our town was inspiring. The commitment to both inclusion and diversity was affirmed. All of us can be heartened by the knowledge that we stand together against hate speech and in our desire to ensure the safety of all our young people. I want to thank everyone who worked hard to determine the appropriate resolution, and to those who will be involved as the restorative justice process unfolds.

Early this month, we were informed that Arlington High School is ranked in [ninth place in the state of Massachusetts](#) in the annual [U.S. News & World Report Best High Schools Rankings](#). AHS has been steadily moving up in the rankings over the last few years, and there are many things to note about this current rank. Only four public schools have a higher ranking than AHS. The other schools are either exam or charter schools. This ranking also tells us that Ottoson and our elementary schools are performing at a very high level and are preparing our young people to succeed in high school.

We are particularly gratified to see this ranking because the U.S. News & World Report [methodology](#) looks at how well *all* students perform. Schools are assessed as to whether or not their historically underserved students are performing better than the state averages, as well as whether students overall exceed expectations on state proficiency tests, the school offers challenging coursework and graduates their students. Massachusetts had the highest number of schools in the U.S. that earned silver and gold medals. We can be very proud to be one of the top performing schools in the top performing state. I want to thank the wonderful community of teachers, staff, parents and students who work so hard to make Arlington High School, as well as all of our other schools, special places of learning.

We received some other good news as well. First, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education announced that Arlington Public Schools was named a [2018 Massachusetts Green Ribbon School](#) district. We received this honor in recognition for our leadership in reducing environmental impact and costs, improving the health and wellness of students and staff, and delivering effective environmental and sustainability education that incorporates Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), civic skills, and green career pathways.

The state designation qualified us for nomination as a national award winner, and I am happy to announce that we were one of six districts across the country to receive the [U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Award](#). This honor recognizes three areas of excellence: reduction of greenhouse gases, efforts to address the nutrition, fitness, mindfulness, and overall health of students and staff, and the incorporation of curricula that addresses environmental topics at all school levels. We are very proud of our work in recycling and composting, improving heating and lighting efficiencies, and water conservation. Programs such as Fit Girls, mindfulness and Open Circle, the presence of a diabetic care coordinator, the provision of Heart Rate Monitors for ninth grade physical education students, and the collaboration with Arlington Eats for daily snacks are among the many ways the district works to keep our students and staff healthy and safe. Environmental topics are addressed in science classes and AHS electives.

Rachel Oliveri, our School Sustainability Coordinator, is a tremendous resource for our school Green Teams as they pursue environmental learning and action. I urge you to read two articles in this newsletter to learn more about our Green Team activities: ***Green Teams Spread Awareness, Reduce Waste, Plant Gardens and Win Awards*** in the [Department News](#) section and ***Peirce Wins the District-wide Textile Recovery Competition for the Second Year*** in the [Awards & Distinctions](#). Please also see the [state](#) and [national](#) award press releases. Receiving this recognition is very gratifying, and I thank all our students, teachers, staff, parent volunteers and Ms. Oliveri for the work they have done to earn the state and national Green School district awards.

I am always happy to share some examples of service work that our students and staff engage in throughout the year. This spring, the Peirce Elementary community came together to collect toiletry items that were distributed to low income Arlington seniors by the Council on Aging. This was wonderful support for individuals in our community who struggle to afford daily items like soap, toothpaste and shampoo. The Arlington High School baseball team collected gently used hats and new socks for distribution by the [Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless](#).

The funds collected by the AHS National Honor Society during their Cakewalk were donated to the [Malala Fund](#), an organization co-founded by Pakistani student and education activist Malala Yousafzai to champion every girl's right to an education. The AHS Scoops Club held their fourth annual Scoopermania to raise money for the [Jimmy Fund](#) that will go toward cancer research and treatment. This all-you-can eat event is generously supported by local businesses who donate ice cream and toppings. I thank everyone who took part in these and other efforts of caring and concern.

I hope that many of you were able to see the documentary on anxiety in children and teens that aired on NBC and NECN this month. The program included mention of the Hardy School's work in reducing anxiety in elementary students through a variety of strategies, including mindfulness and the use of consistent language across the building, that are based on the adoption of the [Responsive Classroom](#) model. It is gratifying to see this important work to address the social emotional needs of our young people recognized in this manner.

Best regards,

Kathleen Bodie, Ed.D
Superintendent of Schools

Headline View

Safe & Supportive Schools

Discussions on the Dangers of Underage Drinking Are Routine for Arlington Survey Respondents

This month's featured response from the spring 2016 [Arlington Youth Health & Safety Coalition](#) (AYHSC) Parent Norm Survey is that 88% of Arlington parents regularly talk to their child about the risks and consequences associated with underage drinking. [Learn more>](#)

Department News

Green Teams Spread Awareness, Reduce Waste, Plant Gardens and Win Awards

Our school Green Teams are participating in EcoFest, revitalizing school gardens, implementing recycling and composting, performing energy audits and planting milkweed (among other activities) as they learn about, and act upon, things we can do to protect our planet. [Read more>](#)

Awards & Distinctions

Peirce Wins the District-wide Textile Recovery Competition for the Second Year

Congratulations to the Peirce community on winning this year's Textile Recovery Competition with their collection of over 1,000 pounds of [acceptable items](#) that [Bay State Textiles](#) will put to good use as clothing, car seat stuffing, household insulation and wiping cloths. [Learn more>](#)

First OMS NAQT Team Performs Well at National Competition

The first ever OMS [National Academic Quiz Tournament](#) (NAQT) team placed well and came home with individual distinctions after competing in their first national competition. [Read more>](#)

OMS Generation Citizen Participants Present Recommendations and Findings at Civics Day

Joining several hundred young people from participating districts, [Generation Citizen](#) students presented the work they had done on improving safety, sanitation and functionality of the Ottoson bathrooms during [Civics Day](#) at the State House. [Learn more>](#)

AHS Jazz Band Opens for Renowned Bassist at Arlington Jazz Festival

Congratulations to the Arlington High School Jazz Band who shared a bill with Grammy-winning bassist [John Patitucci](#) on the last night of the [Arlington Jazz Festival](#). [Learn more>](#)

AHS World Language Awards Night & Expo Celebrates Competence and Culture

Over 100 students who had achieved various levels of [biliteracy](#), were inducted into an honor society or had achieved [Global Competence](#) were recognized at the second annual World Language Awards Night & Expo. [Read more>](#)

AHS Students Serve on Committees, Introduce Bills, Debate and Win Awards at PENNMC

Serving on committees and introducing and debating bills were part of the experience for the young people in grades 9-12 who practiced their public speaking and civic engagement skills at [Penn Model Congress](#), the nation's most competitive model congress competition. [Learn more>](#)

AHS 84 Club Educates Legislators during "Kick Butts Day" at the State House

Three members of the [AHS 84 Club](#) met with State Representative Sean Garballey and Senators Dave Rogers and Cindy Friedman to discuss their concerns regarding young people's use of juuls and other vaping devices during [Kick Butts Day](#) at the State House this month. [Learn more>](#)

AHS Best Buddies Participate in LABBB Education Collaborative Special Olympics

Members of the Arlington High School Best Buddies Chapter joined approximately 215 competitors and 300 Best Buddies from all of the elementary through high school programs at this spring's [LABBB](#) Special Olympics. [Read more>](#)

Academics & Enrichment

World-Readiness Standards Support Shift to Proficiency-Based Language Learning and Teaching

Using the [World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages](#) as our foundation, our World Language Department has undertaken a multi-year process to change our approach to teaching and learning and to develop and revise the 6-12 curriculum across five languages. [Read more>](#)

APS Welcomes Japanese Students during 14th Annual Arlington-Nagaokakyo Exchange Program

Visits and performances at Bishop, Ottoson and Arlington High School, staying with host families and taking in Boston sights helped 21 middle and high school students from our [Sister City](#) build friendships, share their culture and learn about ours. [Learn more>](#)

"Bridges: Growing Together" Strengthens Relationships between Dallin Students and Seniors

Seventy-eight fifth grade students and 75 second grade students had the opportunity to interact with seniors once a week for six weeks during [Bridges: Growing Together™](#), a program designed to promote positive attitudes about aging, expand learning opportunities and strengthen community ties. [Learn more>](#)

Science Events Inspire Experimentation and Exploration at Bishop and Thompson

Balloon Kebabs, Strawberry DNA Extraction, walking on "oobleck" and creating animation videos are just a few of the exciting things attendees could see, do, and learn at Bishop Science Night and Thompson Science Explo. [Read more>](#)

Traveling Monet Exhibit Left Lasting Impression on OMS Students and Staff

A beautiful [traveling exhibit](#) of paintings by Monet hung in the Ottoson lobby this month, where they served as inspiration for a variety of activities in French classes and were enjoyed by all students and staff members. [Learn more>](#)

Creative Highlights

Stratton Spring Concert Highlights Skills Developed in Music Classes

The young people performing in Stratton's spring concert delighted their audience as they demonstrated their skills as vocalists, lyricists, wind players and percussionists during last month's concert. [Read more>](#)

Exciting Ensemble Numbers Thrill Audiences at OMS "Bye Bye Birdie" Performances

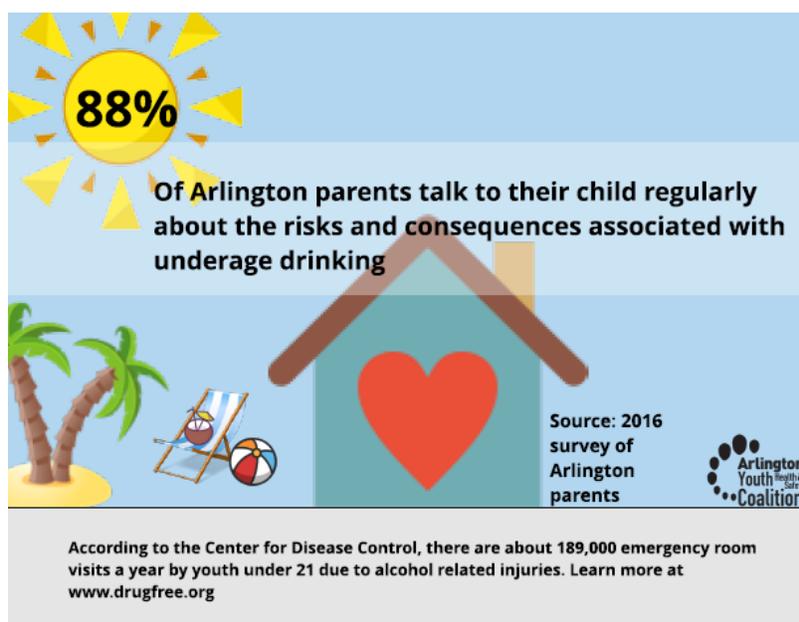
Seventy-seven tap dancers, complex sets, and more large ensemble numbers than ever before were some of the highlights during the fun-filled performance of *Bye Bye Birdie*, this year's spring musical at Ottoson. [Learn more>](#)

Talent, Joy and Caring on Display at AHS Pops

Tap dancers performed, a lost classmate was remembered, and the seniors were recognized during the beautiful Town Hall concert that included the AHS Concert Band, Honors Orchestra, Jazz Band, Symphony Orchestra, Madrigal Singers and Arlington Chorale. [Read more>](#)

Continue to read the full News from May 2018 Newsletter

Safe & Supportive Schools



Discussions on the Dangers of Underage Drinking Are Routine for Arlington Survey Respondents

Every year, alcohol related injuries result in almost 190,000 emergency room visits by young people less than 21 years of age. It is critical, therefore, that our children understand the risks. I am happy to report that 88% of respondents to the spring 2016 [Arlington Youth Health & Safety Coalition](#) (AYHSC) Parent Norm Survey report that they routinely talk to their child about both the risks and consequences associated with underage drinking.

I have been happy to feature one of the many positive responses from the AYHSC survey every month since September. These indicate that Arlington families have a high level of understanding around the dangers of substance abuse and a willingness to take action. Arlington Public Schools is committed to working along with AYHSC to provide education and support to help our young people make healthy choices and stay safe. We are grateful to have the strong support of parents in these efforts.

Department News



Green Teams Spread Awareness, Reduce Waste, Plant Gardens and Win Awards

Thanks to the efforts of interested students, parent volunteers and the School Sustainability Coordinator Rachel Oliveri, our district's Green Teams are going strong! I want to share some examples of how these

groups solve problems and educate their school communities about the role each of us can play in protecting our earth.

During Arlington EcoFest this spring, Green Team students from Brackett and Ottoson led the community in an activity to transform old T-shirts into reusable bags. This project raised awareness about the town's plastic bag ban and promoted the fact that six of our nine schools have textile collection bins on their grounds. (See ***Peirce Wins the District-wide Textile Recovery Competition for the Second Year*** in the **Awards & Distinctions** section in this newsletter for more information about textile recycling in Arlington.)

The Trashformation Student Art Exhibit at EcoFest is a fun way for our young people to show what creativity can do with trash. This year's theme was Ecosystem Superheroes, and the Green Teams from four of our schools displayed their unique artwork. A tree sculpture from Brackett, pollinator diorama from Bishop, sea turtle egg-carton creation from Peirce and a decomposers display with comic strips from Thompson were all on view.

The Arlington Garden Club (AGC) launched an annual school garden grant initiative this year, and Stratton, Bishop, Thompson, and Hardy are the first recipients. The Club believes that supporting school gardens is a meaningful way to further their mission of promoting garden growth and education throughout town. The funds for the grant come from dividends that the AGC receives annually from button battery recycling. The grants are being used to plant pollinator gardens, revitalize gardens that suffered during school construction projects, and acquire garden tools, soil and perennials.

The [Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection](#) has awarded the Bishop Green Team, just launched in January, a Green Team Grand Prize in recognition of the great work the members have been doing. In five short months, the team has learned what can be recycled in school and at home, assessed classroom-recycling practices and posted informational signage, presented what they learned about Bishop lighting, heat and water use to the Town Energy and Project Manager Ken Pruitt and Town HVAC Technician Kyle Wade, and planted a pollinator garden. As a Grand Prize winner, Bishop will receive a Peter O'Malley Recycling and Conservation Show for students in grades K-3.

Members of the Peirce Green Team have been active making presentations about lunchroom recycling in all classrooms. After parent volunteers conducted a Waste Audit, the program, including the use of compostable trays, got off to a good start. The team is also conducting a school energy audit.

With school administrative, custodial, and town support, a lunchroom-composting pilot suggested by AHS junior Maya Pockrose got underway. Since April 27, students have had the option to choose a compostable tray and deposit their food waste in collection totes every Friday. The pilot will test rates of participation and provide data needed to determine whether to continue the program in the fall.

The Dallin Green Team has just transplanted milkweed seedlings, as they continue their work in support of monarch butterflies. Team members and their parent coordinators were featured in an ACMi Arlington Public News segment to highlight the Green Team activities that are going on across the district. I urge you to watch this short [video](#) and learn more about how our young people are becoming knowledgeable about environmental issues and contributing to waste reduction.

Green Teams are a wonderful way for students and adults who care about the environment to come together for learning and action. Our young people are passionate about topics that include recycling, composting, gardening, and protecting our oceans and wildlife. Perhaps the best demonstration of the enthusiasm that Green Team members have is a song that the Thompson Team wrote last year after learning that their Zero Waste Day efforts had led to lunchroom composting. These lyrics say it all: "We are awesome, we are powerful, we can change the world, we can do it together." I thank everyone involved with the Green Teams and salute their efforts.



Awards & Distinctions



Peirce Wins the District-wide Textile Recovery Competition for the Second Year

They've done it again! For the second year in a row, the smallest elementary school has collected the largest amount of textiles in the Textile Recovery Competition. The Peirce community came together to collect 1,160 pounds (3.84 pounds/student) to capture the title. [Bay State Textiles](#) and the Arlington Department of Public Works recognized this good work with a gift of \$200 that was presented during an award ceremony at the school on May 15. All nine schools participated in the Competition, collecting a total of 7,200 pounds of textiles that were diverted from the waste stream.

Peirce, Bishop, Brackett, Ottoson, Stratton and Thompson schools all have collection bins on school grounds that are available for the community to use throughout the year. Bay State Textiles records the weights of the donations at each location and returns a share of the profits to the schools. The donations of [acceptable items](#) are put to good use as reusable clothing, household insulation, car seat stuffing, and wiping cloths. Please see the School Recycling News [webpage](#) for more information.



First OMS NAQT Team Performs Well at National Competition

In my March newsletter, I reported on the first ever OMS [National Academic Quiz Tournament](#) (NAQT) team, and how their performance at a local competition earned them an invitation to compete on the national level. This month the team traveled to Chicago where they joined 1,000 students (192 teams) in competition that consisted of 20-question matches between two teams.

I am happy to report that the OMS team missed making the playoffs by just one question! Two members, Cameron Connell and John Cha, ranked in the top 25% of all middle school students that took part. These distinctions and their 119th place finish were remarkable accomplishments for a team that didn't begin preparing for NAQT competition until April. Congratulations Lizzie Seward, Rafi Nelson, Victor Chelariu, John Cha and Cameron Connell on your strong performance. Lizzie, Rafi and Cameron, all seventh grade students, are showing interest in fielding a team again next year. I want to thank OMS ACE teacher and sponsor Amy Duke, parent Coach Dr. Michael Connell and parent coordinator Rosemary Connell for providing leadership to the OMS NAQT team.



OMS Generation Citizen Participants Present Recommendations and Findings at Civics Day

In my March newsletter, I reported on the project to improve safety, sanitation and functionality of the Ottoson bathrooms that the [Generation Citizen](#) participants tackled this year. This month, the students who worked on the project traveled to the State House and presented their findings and recommendations at [Civics Day](#). Throughout the course of their work, the students accomplished the following:

- Surveyed students to determine areas of improvement
- Created a labeling system for the halls, bathrooms, and stairwells
- Began implementation of a new electronic sign-out form with a reporting feature to tackle the issues of low stock supplies, overflowing trash, general disorder, and graffiti
- Recommended the purchase of new, larger trash barrels, which were ordered by Principal Woods

- Had stall locks and some doors repaired

The students worked on this project with a college student instructor who teaches a curriculum focused on civic advocacy. This year's project is especially notable since the eighth grade students who completed the work will be moving on to high school and unable to enjoy the improvements they recommended and implemented. Participating in Generation Citizen is a powerful introduction to civic engagement for our young people and I thank History & Social Science teacher Eric Bakke for his leadership of the group. Congratulations to all the participants on a job well done.

AHS Jazz Band Opens for Renowned Bassist at Arlington Jazz Festival

The Arlington High School Jazz Band helped to close out the [Arlington Jazz Festival](#) by opening for bassist [John Patitucci](#) on April 29. Mr. Patitucci is an internationally known musician and Grammy winner who has played with jazz legends that include Chick Corea and Wayne Shorter. His daughter Grei joined him on guitar and vocals at the Town Hall concert.

It was a great honor for our students to be on the bill with a renowned talent such as Mr. Patitucci. The four-day Festival was the seventh annual event dedicated to celebrating jazz in Arlington with performances by established artists, local talent and school groups at venues throughout town. I am delighted that our students were asked to participate and congratulate AHS Instrumental Director and Jazz Band leader Sabato D'Agostino and all the members of the Jazz Band on being part of Festival.



GLOBAL COMPETENCE
 CERTIFICATE

AHS World Language Awards Night & Expo Celebrates Competence and Culture

The evening of April 30 was very special for AHS language students. The second annual World Language Awards Night & Expo recognized over 100 students who had achieved various levels of biliteracy, were inducted into an honor society or achieved Global Competence. Organized by Latin teacher and faculty leader of the [AHS National World Language Honor Societies \(NWLHS\)](#) Cassandra Mea, the night was also a celebration of culture, with current honor society students staffing language tables filled with food, information and games. AHS Principal Dr. Matthew Janger got things started with opening remarks that stressed the importance of language learning. NWLHS President Kira Solovay, who told the group how her joy of language learning was ignited by speaking Pig Latin with her brother, followed him.

Arlington High School has been fortunate to participate in the three-year Massachusetts Seal of Biliteracy Pilot. This program originated in California as an initiative to recognize the literacy of immigrants in English and their native language. Interest spread across the country, and in 2014, several Massachusetts educational associations formed a [Language Opportunity Coalition](#) to advocate for a state Seal here. This Coalition developed guidelines for Arlington and the other pilot districts, and the effort began in the 2015-2016 school year. Thanks to the advocacy of the Coalition, Massachusetts passed the [LOOK Bill](#) last fall, and joined 31 other states across the country who are establishing an official state Seal. The work of the Pilot school systems will inform the guidelines for the Massachusetts Seal.

The [Arlington High School Seal of Biliteracy](#) program recognizes students who have studied and attained proficiency in two or more languages by graduation. Both English Language Learner students and foreign language students are eligible. Proficiency is demonstrated by performance on standardized assessment tests, and this is described in the [Seal of Biliteracy Guidelines](#). Latin assessment includes reading

comprehension. This reflects a movement away from translation towards comprehension, which is in alignment with modern languages. This year over 60 students received these awards.

Seal Awarded	Definition	Number of Students
Platinum	Advanced Low Proficiency	22
Gold	Intermediate High Proficiency	23
Silver	Intermediate Mid Proficiency	18

The awards received by these students spanned 12 languages: Spanish, French, Portuguese, Mandarin, Italian, Latin, Hebrew, Croatian, Farsi, Nepali, Korean and German. One student qualified for the Seal in three languages and three students qualified for the Seal in two languages in addition to English.

The two students who achieved Global Competence were also recognized. The [AHS Global Competence Program \(GCP\)](#) is designed to foster students' global awareness and provide our graduates with the skills they need to participate and contribute to an increasingly globalized society. It is open to all students who wish to expand their ability to think globally, communicate effectively across cultures and contribute responsibly with open mindedness, understanding and flexibility in behavior and thinking. Students must complete 15 credits in World Language, 20 credits in classes from a GCP approved list, perform 10 hours of community service, and complete a final research project. The projects completed this year were *The Role of Women in Lebanon* done by Gabriella Awad and *The Impact of the Spanish Civil War on Salvador Dali's Artwork*, completed by Claire Wilson.

I want to congratulate all the students honored at World Language Awards Night & Expo, and thank Ms. Mea for organizing the event. Language study improves analytical and communication skills and creates positive attitudes and reduces prejudice toward people who seem different--all important elements of global citizenship in the 21st century.

AHS Students Serve on Committees, Introduce Bills, Debate and Win Awards at PENNMC

Congratulations to the 21 students from grades 9-12 who attended the [Penn Model Congress](#) conference (PENNMC) at the University of Pennsylvania this year. Each student spent four days as a member of an assigned House or Senate Committee, and presented and debated bills just as they would if they were sitting legislators. AHS English teacher Rebecca Walsh Bradley reports that the students had a wonderful time engaging in productive debates with young people from across the U.S. and were excellent representatives of Arlington Public Schools.

PENNMC is the nation's most competitive model congress competition and the most difficult to gain entry into. Approximately 800 students take part, and many are experienced debaters from elite high schools. Each participant brings a bill forward for consideration--first in their assigned committee, and then if the bill passes committee, to a full session where it is debated and voted on by 60-70 students. This is the tenth year that AHS students have traveled to Philadelphia to take part.

The AHS model legislators served on a variety of committees: Education and the Workforce; Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; Environment and Public Works; Oversight and Government Reform; Ways and Means; National Economic Council; Homeland Security and Government Reform; Agriculture; Science, Space, and Technology; Judiciary; and Energy and Commerce. Our delegates also introduced bills for debate. One such bill, *An Act to Extend Presidential Term Limits*, put forth the idea that the 22nd amendment of the U.S. Constitution should be repealed and a 28th amendment added that would extend term limits in order to allow the President more time to pursue his or her agenda. *An Act to Invest in Alternative Forms of Nuclear Energy* called for the development of domestic processing of thorium ore and research into the funding of thorium reactor projects as a possible alternative to uranium reactors.

I want to congratulate Felix Moisand, Koyla Shields, Neil Tracey and Lucy Voges on the awards they received for their committee work. The students were designated Best Delegate or Runner-up to Best Delegate in recognition for their solid performance as strong, well-informed debaters. Ms. Bradley reports that all the AHS attendees worked hard to get ready for the trip. She states, "These students are so well

informed, they listen to each other, they partake in actual debate, not just speaking over each other or just talking to hear themselves talk, they listen and then they thoughtfully respond."

I want to thank Ms. Bradley for accompanying the students and for her work throughout the school year helping the group with bill writing parliamentary procedure and debating. Participating in PENNMC is a wonderful way for our young people to enhance their skills in public speaking and civic engagement.



AHS 84 Club Educates Legislators during "Kick Butts Day" at the State House

Every year, over 250 high school students who take part in local chapters of [The 84](#) gather on [Kick Butts Day](#) to rally and educate legislators about tobacco industry tactics that they see in their communities. I am delighted that Abi Hodgdon, Erika Siegal and Elizabeth Liakos of the [AHS 84 Club](#), one of the most active chapters in Massachusetts, met with State Representative Sean Garballey and Senators Dave Rogers and Cindy Friedman to discuss their concerns regarding young people's use of juuls and other vaping devices. The AHS Chapter was nominated for a Peer Outreach Award during the event. Anna Collins of the [Arlington Youth Health & Safety Coalition](#), Child Health Advocate Dr. Carole Allen, and Representative Garballey appear with The 84 members in the pictures above.

The members of The 84 Club have been active educating their peers on these dangers, and I reported on their [anti-vaping poster campaign](#) in my March newsletter. The 84 is a statewide movement of youth fighting tobacco in Massachusetts. The number 84 refers to the 84% of state students who did NOT smoke when the movement began. Today that number is 92%. It is wonderful to see our young people advocating with legislators on this important public health issue. I thank our representatives for attending *Kick Butts Day*, and thank AHS History and Social Sciences teacher John Amirault for his leadership of the Club.

AHS Best Buddies Participate in LABBB Special Olympics

[LABBB](#) is an educational collaborative dedicated to "Design and deliver special education services that Promote Academic, Social and Career Independence in the most Inclusive Settings Possible." The name comes from the five member districts of Lexington, Arlington, Burlington, Bedford and Belmont, and the Superintendent of each district serves as a Board member. Programming is provided for special needs students from age 3-22, and operations take place in 16 different school buildings.

The Recreational Program provides social opportunities after school and on weekends (including overnight trips) and is a highlight of LABBB's work. In 1978, LABBB and Lexington student leaders started a Special Olympics that ran until 1984. The event was re-introduced at Lexington High School 12 years ago in conjunction with Best Buddies, a program that is offered in many of the LABBB schools.

I am happy to report that members of the Arlington High School Best Buddies Chapter joined approximately 215 competitors and 300 Best Buddies from all of the elementary through high school programs at this spring's Special Olympics. Special guest Rene Rancourt and a LABBB student performed the national anthem. Mr. Rancourt sang the U.S. and Canadian national anthems at the Boston Bruins games for over 40 years.

LABBB Executive Director Patric Barbieri says that the spirit of Best Buddies comes from the vision of Eunice Kennedy Shriver. In 1962, she started a summer camp for students with special needs. The camp was free and all the volunteers were high school students. Ms. Shriver wanted all the campers to compete in sports, and the first Special Olympics, which drew 1,000 athletes from the U.S. and Canada, was held in Chicago at Soldier Field in 1968.

I want to thank all the young men and women who participate in Best Buddies at Arlington High School. Each Best Buddy establishes a one-to-one relationship with an intellectually or developmentally challenged AHS student. The goal is to promote social inclusion and provide everyone with a key element in life--friendship. Many young people who participate in the Best Buddies programs in LABBB host districts have gone into the field of Special Education because of their experiences. Thanks also to AHS Physical Education teacher Will Darling for his leadership of this life-changing group.

Academics & Enrichment

World-Readiness Standards Support Shift to Proficiency-Based Language Learning and Teaching

The APS World Language Department has embarked upon a multi-year process to change our approach to teaching and learning and to develop and revise the 6-12 curriculum for five languages. Over the past decade, there has been a significant paradigm shift from an achievement, or textbook-based approach to one that is proficiency, or standards-based. The latter approach focuses on what learners can do with the language rather than what they know. The goal is to educate students to be linguistically and culturally equipped to communicate successfully in a pluralistic American society and abroad.

The [American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages](#) (ACTFL) collaborated with 16 other language organizations to develop the [World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages](#) that is the foundation for our world languages program. The Standards provide a roadmap for students to learn to communicate effectively and interact with global competence. Developing literacy, real world applications and 21st century skills is the focus. The goal areas are the 5 C's: Communication, Cultures, Connections, Comparisons and Communities. Eleven content standards describe the knowledge that students should acquire within these goals. The Standards also include sample performance and progress indicators so that language ability and maturity can be measured and tracked.

Integrating the 5 C's into instructional programs helps students become world-ready, educated citizens. The ACTFL recommends thematic units for curriculum that are communicatively purposeful, culturally focused, intrinsically interesting, cognitively engaging and standards-based. As I reported in my News from April newsletter, the Arlington Education Foundation has generously awarded our World Language Department a grant to pursue this area. Our teachers will work with national world languages consultant Laura Terrill to develop a shared understanding of the rationale for, definition of, and approach to thematic unit design. All World Language teachers will be supported in designing daily lessons that integrate elements of thematic units. A smaller group of teachers will develop thematic units to be piloted later in the year.

The Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition believes that proficiency-based instruction helps students learn to communicate meaningfully, effectively and creatively for real-life purposes. I am pleased that World Language Director Dawn Carney and our teachers are committed to implementing this student-centered approach that will prepare our young people to communicate appropriately and accurately in an increasingly global world. You may wish to visit the [Arlington World Languages webpage](#) and view a short video that describes the *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages*.

students to share stories and experience each other's culture. I want to thank Ms. Routenberg and all the others who made this year's visit such a success.

"Bridges: Growing Together" Strengthens Relationships between Dallin Students and Seniors

The Dallin Elementary School has just concluded its second year of [Bridges: Growing Together™](#), an amazing six week program designed to promote positive attitudes about aging, expand learning opportunities and strengthen community ties. Seventy-eight fifth grade students took part in the fall and 75 second grade students participated in the spring. In each session, the young people met with 21-24 seniors once a week for forty minutes. The program for the older students concentrated on conversations between the children and adults, using a set of themes such as *Schools Then and Now* and *Family Traditions*. The children shared their stories and the seniors shared their values and experience. The program for the second grade was organized around classic picture books, such as *Ferdinand*. After reading a book, the students and adults discussed the themes and did a book-related craft together.

Building and strengthening relationships among generations is the major focus of *Bridges: Growing Together*, and Dallin Librarian and program coordinator Rebecca Aaronson observes that the interaction between the children and the elder volunteers is extremely positive. She has seen a marked change in the attitude of the young people toward seniors, and the volunteers report that they enjoy the program immensely and look forward to it every week. There are two stories she particularly likes to share to illustrate how meaningful it is when children interact with an age group they see infrequently. One student made Whoopie Pies using a volunteer's recipe and delivered them to the senior's house. After enjoying her program experience last year, one fifth grade student decided to volunteer at the Council on Aging over the summer.

Ms. Aaronson and Dallin Assistant Principal Samantha Karustis report that the students go home and share what they have done in the program with their parents and grandparents, expanding the "circle of love". I want to thank Ms. Aaronson and parent volunteer Lisa Leblanc, who brought the program to Dallin, for their leadership, and I thank the Arlington Council on Aging for helping to recruit volunteers. In the words of one senior participant, "Every day there is *Bridges Together* is a good day!"

Science Events Inspire Experimentation and Exploration at Bishop and Thompson

This month I want to share two more examples of the way our elementary schools are celebrating science, technology, engineering and math. The [Bishop Science Night](#) combined student projects with live demonstrations and an egg drop competition. Sixty students from grades K-5 participated in the Poster Session where 49 personal experiments were presented. Some students investigated cooking ingredients or made slime, while others explored the environment, outer space, simple machines, magnetism, and electricity. Viewers were encouraged to leave comments for the young scientists on the Index cards at each at each poster.

Balloon Kebabs, *Van De Graaff Generator*, *Color Chromatography*, and *Strawberry DNA Extraction* were among the 16 interactive demonstrations. Science Night Co-Coordinator Rosemary Foster reports that *Popsicle Stick Catapults* and *Build Your Own Kaleidoscope* were especially popular. There were about 35 entries in the *Egg Drop* competition that ended in a tie between a team of fourth grade students and a team of fifth grade students. Ms. Foster estimates that there were about 150-200 attendees, and she has received a lot of positive feedback about the event.

Laura Fuller joined Ms. Foster as Co-Coordinator for the event. Lead parent volunteers Skye Stewart, Brecky Peabody, Maggie Yuan, Kevin Morrison, Rich Onofrio and Nomi Martin assisted them. Additional parents, AHS students and fifth grade volunteers helped with the demos, egg drop, pizza dinner sales, and set-up and clean up. The Co-Coordinators are grateful to Bishop Principal Mark McAneny and PTO Co-President Meredith DiMola for their solid support of the event.

Thompson's Saturday afternoon Science Expo included over 30 exhibitions on physics, robotics, chemistry, biology, earth science and more. Student scientists lined-up to walk on "oobleck" (a mixture of

cornstarch and water), programmed circuits, created animation videos, and explored chemical reactions and circadian cycles. The event included a science-themed raffle with baskets featuring biology, chemistry, physics, programming, geology, astronomy and more. Yael Beals, PTO Vice President, played a key role in coordinating and planning the event, and she is grateful to members of the Thompson Community, Empow Studios, Einstein's Workshop, the MIT Museum, and the New England Aquarium, among others, for their donations to the raffle baskets.

There was plenty of food to enjoy at the Brain Fuel Cafe, which featured a delicious and nutritious lunch provided by Something Savory Catering. Volunteers contributed scientific goodies to the bake sale that included galaxy bars, dinosaur fossils cookies, periodic table cupcakes and more.

I want to thank the many volunteers who come together each year to plan and execute STEM events like Bishop Science Night and Thompson Science Expo. These are wonderful ways to bring our school communities together and inspire exploration and experimentation in our young people.

Traveling Monet Exhibit Leaves Lasting Impression on OMS Students and Staff

Ever since 2014 when she attended the week-long Summer Teacher Institute on Impressionism at the National Gallery of Art, OMS French and Spanish teacher Anne Zachary has wanted to incorporate more art lessons into her classes as authentic cultural resources. She was very excited when she discovered that a [traveling Monet exhibit](#) could be brought to schools, as she knew that this would be the ideal way to accomplish this. Thanks to a grant from the [French Cultural Center/Alliance Francaise de Boston](#) and a mini-grant from the Ottoson Parent Advisory Committee, reproductions of wonderful Monet pieces on satin fabric hung in the OMS lobby for two weeks. Everyone who passed by was able to view and enjoy *Bathers in the Frog Pond*, *Waterlily Pond: Pink Harmony* and *Waterlilies: Morning*, and *The Rue Montorgueil*.

Ms. Zachary and OMS French teacher Paula Nicholas used the beautiful paintings as inspiration in their sixth, seventh and eighth grade French classes. Ms. Zachary held most of her classes in the lobby so that the paintings were easily viewed during student activities that were done in English, French or both.

These included:

- Sharing observations of what they saw, asking questions and creating poems
- Learning new French vocabulary for words and concepts that the students associated with the works
- Interpreting a French article about the artists Monet, Manet and Renoir
- Researching additional impressionist artists and paintings, noting the subjects, colors and whether or not they liked them

The in-house Monet exhibit followed a field trip to the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA) that Ms. Nicholas and Ms. Zachary hosted for several students last fall. The visit to the MFA permanent Monet collection was very well received, and so was the traveling exhibit. Students and OMS staff members were very disappointed to learn that they couldn't keep it! Ms. Zachary loved the fact that students who were NOT in her classes took pictures of the display, asked her questions about it, and even sat-in on a lesson when she was holding class in the lobby. She hopes to be able to bring the exhibit to Gibbs where she will be teaching next year.

Ms. Zachary also wants everyone to know that the MFA will be housing an [exhibition of French pastels](#) featuring Monet and many other Impressionist artists from June 30, 2018 until January 6, 2019. Teachers with current teacher identification can [visit the MFA free](#). Admission is free for young people ages 7-17 on weekdays after 3 pm, on weekends and on Boston public school holidays. I want to thank Ms. Zachary for bringing this wonderful exhibit to Ottoson.

Creative Highlights

Stratton Spring Concert Highlights Skills Developed in Music Classes

Last month I reported on the wonderful concerts held at Brackett, Peirce, Bishop and Dallin. This month I want to share what took place at Stratton under the direction of Music teacher Rebecca Muranaka. The audience got a chance to see how creative the Kindergarten students can be as they listened to the new rhyming verses the young lyricists wrote for their first number, *Little Red Caboose*. The first grade turned to roots music, starting with Woody Guthrie's *Mail Myself to You* complete with hand motions, and finishing with the gospel song *Woke Up This Morning* that included new lyrics from the Civil Rights era talking about the dream of liberty and justice for all. Traditional music was the theme of the set delivered by the second grade, whose performance opened with *From a Lovely Root*, sung in Yiddish with hand motions.

After intermission, the third grade presented *Wind on the Hill*, a song that wonders about the location of the wind as it comes and goes. This was sung expressively, with changes in tempo and dynamics. The students then demonstrated their skill on recorders, playing along with a rocking background track. Rhythm instruments added to the performance of the song *Side by Side* presented by the fourth grade, and the group asked the audience to sing along with Woody Guthrie's *This Land is Your Land*. These songs reflected the fourth grade focus on national music that includes patriotic songs and connects with the work on U.S. geography in Social Studies classes. Fifth grade students got to show the skills they had developed during their World Beats unit when they presented *Tongo*, sung in two parts with the young people either clapping rhythms or playing percussion instruments.

It is always a joy to watch our children share what they have been learning in Music, and see and hear how their skills develop over the years. I thank Ms. Muranaka and our other dedicated elementary Music teachers for their work throughout the school year, and for creating and leading the wonderful Spring concerts.



Exciting Ensemble Numbers Thrill Audiences at Ottoson "Bye Bye Birdie" Performances

Seventy-seven cast members tap dancing to the song *Put on a Happy Face* was one of the many audience highlights at the Ottoson performances of *Bye Bye Birdie* last month. In preparation to create this amazing moment, OMS English teacher and Director Jenna Fernandes and Special Education teacher and Choreographer Randi Flynn took tap lessons last summer, and started transferring their skills to the cast in December. Although most of the students had never worn tap shoes, Ms. Fernandes says they accepted the challenge, worked incredibly hard and created a number that she describes as a "showstopper."

Ms. Fernandes, Ms. Flynn and Music teacher Greg Condakes had been talking about bringing *Bye Bye Birdie* to the OMS stage for a few years. It was a favorite of theirs, and they knew that middle school children would have lots of fun with it. They loved the characters and the choreographic challenges it presented, and believed that this year was the time to give it a go. Their instincts turned out to be right on

target, with the cast and 20 crew members coming together to create, in the words of Ms. Fernandes, a "HUGE success."

There were more large ensemble numbers in this show than ever before, and it was clear to the dedicated actors and crew members that every single student was important. Everyone came together as a family to tackle the challenges. The very complex set was due to the efforts of Ms. Flynn, Special Education teacher Jeff Babbin, Math teacher Kelly O'Keefe and parent volunteer Simon Horsburgh. They built a kitchen that included a refrigerator and oven with opening doors, created a train that students could board that could be rolled away off stage, and the flats had very detailed 3D wooden accents and a donated Plexiglas window.

The musicals presented at Ottoson really bring the entire school community together. In addition to Ms. Fernandes, Ms. Flynn, Mr. Condakes, Mr. Babbin and Ms. O'Keefe, I want to thank Music teacher Cori Smith, Math teacher Julie McDaniel, Tech Engineering teacher Brandy Whitney, Special Education teacher Lisa O'Neil and OMS Music Technology teacher John DiTomaso for the wonderful work they did to bring *Bye Bye Birdie* to the stage. I applaud the cast and crew on a splendid production.

As soon as the curtain closed on *Bye Bye Birdie*, Ms. Fernandes turned her attention to the One Act Play festival that will be held on Saturday, June 16. This year, six shows directed by 15 eighth grade students will be presented that include 81 actors from all three grades. You can purchase tickets from Ms. Fernandes or any of the directors. Next year's fall play and musical will be announced at this show. Additionally, the Drama Club will be Facetimeing with Broadway performer [Rachel Schur](#) and 51 students and five teachers are going to New York City to see *Anastasia*. It is wonderful to see such an exciting drama program at OMS!

Talent, Joy and Caring on Display at AHS Pops

One of the events that we all look forward to in May is Arlington High School Pops, held at Town Hall. This year's concert featured wonderful performances by the Concert Band, Honors Orchestra, Jazz Band and Symphony Orchestra led by Instrumental Director Sabato D'Agostino and the Madrigal Singers and Arlington Chorale conducted by Choral Director Madalyn Kitchen. It was great fun to watch the tap dancers accompany a song. The ability to choose a song to be performed at Pops was a raffle prize earlier in the year, and the winner's choice was presented at the concert.

The video tribute for Jeremy Kremer-McNeil prepared by some of his classmates was extremely moving. Jeremy took his life before school began in September 2015. Music had been an important part of his school experience. He served as first trumpet in the Ottoson Band and was a member of the Ottoson Jazz Ensemble before moving on to the AHS Concert Band. This year Jeremy would have been a senior. His loss was deeply felt by his fellow students and teachers. It was wonderful to see him remembered in this way.

The AHS Pops concert is very special for the participants, their teachers and the audience. This is the last time the seniors in the instrumental and vocal groups perform together. In keeping with tradition, the seniors are asked to stand and be recognized individually when their names are called. Many of them have participated in our district music program throughout their school careers.

It takes the work of many individuals to make AHS Pops such a wonderful celebration of music. I want to recognize Karen Schoonmaker, Christina Hurley, and the other members of PAPA who organize, decorate and contribute time and talent to the event. Thank you also goes to Patsy Kraemer at Town Hall who is always ready to help with whatever is needed. I salute Mr. D'Agostino and Ms. Kitchen for their dedication to helping our young people discover the joys of music and performance, and congratulate everyone who took part.