

Principal's Annual Report
Old Rochester Regional High School
2020

Michael Devoll – Principal
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Our Towns

Our school serves three southeastern Massachusetts towns: Mattapoisett, Marion and Rochester. All three towns have maintained their individual charm through careful and thoughtful community planning. Marion and Mattapoisett are quaint, close-knit seaside communities. Rochester has a more rural landscape surrounded by scenic farms, cranberry bogs, pine forests and fresh water ponds. Residents are proud of their school systems and have been very supportive in passing legislation to insure its continued success.

Our School

The 2019-2020 school year featured a student body made up of 741 students, including 84 students attending Old Rochester Regional High School through the School Choice Program. Our student body resides in the communities of the Tri-Town: Marion, Mattapoisett and Rochester. Through the School Choice Program the school was able to welcome residents of the following communities to our school: Acushnet, Fairhaven, Lakeville, Middleboro, New Bedford and Wareham. In 2020, ORRHS graduated a class of 175 seniors, which represented a graduation rate of 100%. ORRHS offers a comprehensive curriculum with a wide selection of Honors and Advanced Placement courses. During the 2019-2020 school year, 177 ORRHS students took 339 Advanced Placement tests with 79% of students receiving a qualifying score of 3 or better. In 2020, approximately 95% of ORR graduates continued their education at two or four-year colleges.

Our Faculty

Of the 61 faculty members at ORRHS, 78% have their Master's degree and 3% have their Doctoral degree. The school has a 14.5 to 1 student to teacher ratio.

Principal of Old Rochester Regional High School in Mattapoisett, Massachusetts, Michael Devoll was pleased to report that the New England Association of Schools and Colleges, voted for continued accreditation for Old Rochester Regional High School at their April 2019 meeting. The New England Association of Schools and Colleges, founded in 1885, is the oldest accrediting agency in the country and is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a reliable agency to award accreditation to New England Schools. The Association is a voluntary accrediting agency of more than 2000 public and independent schools, colleges and universities, and vocational, technical, and career institutions. Of these, approximately 630 high schools, middle/high schools and PreK-12 schools have been accredited through the Association's Commission on Public Schools.

Unified Basketball

The 2019-2020 school year introduced a new sport to Old Rochester: Unified Basketball. The school community rallied around this new sports team that integrates student athletes with and without disabilities. The first kick-off game of the year included a huge outpouring of support from the students and staff at ORR. In fact, everyone lined the halls and cheered the athletes and partners on as they

headed off to their first game at Middleboro. Each and every game that the ORR Unified Basketball team played was met with a large and encouraging audience. The experience for the student partners and athletes was nothing short of awesome. Watching the team work together, learn, and build bonds was one of the most positive and memorable experiences of the year.

Mock Trial Club

The Mock Trial club participated in a multi-day tournament at Falmouth District Courthouse in January and February while competing in turn as both the prosecution and defense in a simulated civil case involving cyber bullying and free speech in schools. Juniors Daphne Poirier and Maya Blouin stepped in to become student leaders of the club, replacing a number of outgoing seniors from the 2018-2019 season.

Debate Team

The Old Rochester Regional High School Debate Team had a successful year in 2019-20 within the Eastern Massachusetts Debate League (EMDL). This season the debaters argued the following resolution, Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially reduce Direct Commercial Sales and/or Foreign Military Sales of arms from the United States. Strong debate performances were made by Emma Vivino, Eddie Gonet, Bess Pierre, Payton Lord, Mackenzie Wilson, Sophia Martins, Katelyn Luong, and Serena O'Connell. Graduating seniors included: Elise Mello, Emily Wilson, Byanca Silva and Emily Kirkham. In 2020-21 the Debate Team is arguing the following resolution: Resolved: The United States federal government should enact substantial criminal justice reform in the United States in one or more of the following: forensic science, policing, sentencing.

Southcoast G.R.I.T.

Southcoast G.R.I.T. (Growth while Running and Inspiring Together) High School Marathon Club has been "running" for five years. The program included two road races: Mattapoisett 10 mile & Veterans 5K Race and Frosty Road Runner Race 10.5mile/5K in Rochester. In each race there were four students plus mentors who participated. The 2020 season concluded in March with running a total distance of 14 miles. Unfortunately the students and mentors were not able to participate in the New Bedford Half Marathon or the Providence Marathon/Half Marathon/5K in May. Students and mentors participated in the first virtual 5K race: ORR for Fallen Patriots, which was sponsored by the sophomore class. G.R.I.T is made up of volunteers and mentors from the school and the greater community. The program challenges students to reach their full potential, physically, socially, emotionally, and academically, through a mentor-supported marathon-training program. G.R.I.T mentors run alongside youth and help them train for and complete all the races by providing companionship, motivation, and support. This program is entirely funded and run through community support, fundraising, and donations. Three members of the graduating class of 2020 had been participants of the Southcoast G.R.I.T/Dreamfar program. One senior had run a marathon and the other two had run a distance of a half marathon. Southcoast G.R.I.T has not started as of yet for 2021.

American Field Service

The American Field Service is dedicated to creating understanding and friendship between cultures and people across our great country and abroad. A.F.S. raises money to participate in short-term domestic school exchanges with other AFS schools across the country. The group also support and welcome any foreign exchange students at ORRHS. AFS is open to all students who enjoy travel and meeting new people. In the fall of 2019, ORR welcomed the following students from abroad:

Emmanuelle Bailly	Belgium
Manuel Delgado	Portugal
Athena Ip	Hong Kong
Martina Montonio	Italy

The only traveling we did during the school year was to New York City to tour the United Nations. Unfortunately, Covid-19 cut our year short and our exchange students went home in March. A.F.S. was unable to travel to Goodland, Kansas for our annual school exchange. Long-time advisor, Kim Corazzini retired at the end of the school year and was replaced by Mike Nailor.

Class of 2021

In the 2019-2020 school year, the Class of 2021 made an active effort to continue fundraising in anticipation of future senior events. In fall of 2019, the class held a dine-in night at Nick's Pizza and competed in the annual Homecoming Skit competition. The class chose a theme of "Area 51" and earned second place. Furthermore, in the winter months, the class student council held two bake sales at Tabor Academy's public skating and raised money for the Neediest Families Fund by caroling in the Marion Village. The class also hosted a Photos with Santa event in December, which was both a fundraiser and an opportunity to engage with the local community. At the beginning of 2020, the class also held a glow-in-the-dark yoga event (Glowga) to continue fundraising efforts. Additionally, just before the start of the pandemic, the class launched a coupon book fundraiser, which was eventually completed in fall of 2020. Unfortunately, as a result of COVID-19, the class was unable to hold a Junior Semi, which typically is the cornerstone of junior class fundraising efforts. Despite this setback, however, the Class of 2021 has remained resilient and sought out alternative fundraising opportunities for senior year.

Paw Prints

Paw Prints, the student newspaper, was able to publish three editions of the paper prior to the COVID closure, but didn't let the pandemic shut the publication down. The journalism staff continued to meet & work remotely and even published a deep-dive report on our district's efforts to confront issues of social justice at a sensitive time for both our school community and the nation as a whole. Paw Prints longtime editor was able to pass the reins on to a pair of new editors.

Sci-Fi Club

This year's Sci-fi Club brought in several new freshman members, and took a special interest in strategic gaming. We spent most of our meetings introducing an assortment of board and card games. We also spent some time learning about different role-playing games and were able to complete one game night prior to the COVID-closure.

National Honor Society

During the 2019-2020 school year, the National Honor Society was busy serving their peers, school and community through many initiatives and activities. In the fall of 2019, our members competed in the South Coast Honor Bowl. Students continued many of our established outreach programs, such as a peer tutoring lab and mental health initiatives here at the school. In order to make students aware of the growing threats to the environment, members hosted educational films during Bulldog Blocks. They also worked with the junior high to meet with eighth grade students to facilitate their transition to the high school. In March, the N.H.S. hosted a Read Across America event at the high school -- a marathon reading of *The Great Gatsby* complete with live performances in the auditorium, reading in the library,

costumes, food, and games. Both staff and students took part in this successful event. The N.H.S. also welcomed our junior members to the organization in the spring. Despite the limitation of Covid, these new members have carried on many of our initiatives. The society has also begun new outreach programs. In the fall of 2020, we expanded our tutoring program to include all of the schools in our district. Students also reached out to local nursing homes during the holidays and sent cards to those people who have been so isolated during the pandemic. In order to foster community and positivity, the students started a rock painting campaign where students paint positive messages on rocks and leave them in places throughout the community thereby encouraging elementary school students to find these rocks and make rocks of their own. Members also created packets, complete with activities for elementary students to complete over vacation and sent these to our district schools. They are supporting and promoting the Book Dash campaign begun by our librarian, Allison Barker, this year to ensure access to books. Students are currently working with our school psychologist, Phil Alessi, to promote and host zoom events to help students de-stress during these difficult times. N.H.S. members have also started an Instagram page and maintain our Facebook page to promote our events.

Music Department

During the 2019-2020 school year, the Jazz Band performed an October concert with the Tri-County Symphonic Band, and the Music Department had a great December Concert and successful performance trip to Faneuil Hall. The district Music Departments were even able to squeeze in the FORM Choral Concert before school was closed down. The Music Department had eight students accepted to the Southeast District Music Festival and two to the All-State Music Festival in Boston. In February 2020, the Jazz Band received a Silver rating at the MAJE Cape Cod Coastal Festival. During remote learning in the spring, several ensembles were able to put together virtual performances, culminating in a virtual Senior Farewell video, honoring the senior Music students.

Gender-Sexuality Alliance

The ORRHS Gender-Sexuality Alliance and Writing Club hosted a very successful Hocus Pocus Movie Night in October, which raised funds for both clubs for field trips and activities. Students celebrated and raised awareness during GLSEN's Ally Week and on Transgender Day of Remembrance by handing out stickers and information. Students also worked with HS admin to create better signage around our gender-neutral bathroom and locker room. Students lead and attended DESE's Safe School regional meetings, which focused on mental health, education, and inclusive curriculum. The HS GSA collaborated with the Healthy Tri-Town Coalition and the JHS GSA for the Pronoun Project, which focused on creating pronoun pins, and would have culminated in a community screening of Gender Revolution (2017) directed by Katie Couric in the spring, and was unfortunately postponed due to COVID-19.

ORRHS Writing Club

The ORRHS Writing Club, originally the Poetry Club, focused this year on developing creative writing skills each week with prompts and raising funds for a spring field trip to the Emily Dickinson Museum.

Student Council

Although the 2019-2020 school year was unlike any other, the Old Rochester Student Council still managed to have a productive year. In September, Student Council held freshmen elections and conducted its first general board meeting. STUCO formed a TV subcommittee that worked with the technology department to learn the Mvix software and started utilizing our new digital signage that we

purchased for the school. Clubs are now able to submit electronic posters to be added to the daily rotation, saving paper and time. On September 26th, STUCO hosted ORR's second annual Club Hub, where students were given the opportunity to explore all of the different clubs ORR has to offer. This provided an amazing opportunity for clubs to showcase themselves and for new students to become more involved in the school community. STUCO awarded \$350 to the clubs with the best overall presentation/booth. Once again, the feedback from club members, students, advisors, faculty and staff was overwhelmingly positive. STUCO collaborated with the Booster Club to purchase another Hydration Station, which was installed in the gym.

During the month of October, STUCO planned, organized and hosted the annual Homecoming dance and events. STUCO collaborated with the CSL club for Socktober, offering discounts on homecoming tickets for bringing in sock donations. Students participated in our fun spirit week through theme days and the always-popular pep rally and skits. On October 26th, over 600 students attended a space themed Homecoming dance in the cafeteria. During the dance, students used an innovative new selfie station made in conjunction with the Art Club.

On October 30th, 45 students attended the COPES rope course and team building day in Yarmouth Port. STUCO members had a rewarding day working together and pushing their personal limits on the ropes course and zip line while building valuable teamwork and leadership skills.

For the weekend before Veteran's Day, STUCO sponsored a trip to Bourne National Cemetery where students volunteered their time to help Operation Flags for Vets by planting over 60,000 flags by veterans' graves. STUCO donated \$1200 to the organization in honor of ORR alumni, PFC Becket Kiernan. STUCO also donated \$400 to the Racial Equity Student Coalition for All Hands and Hearts, a Hurricane Dorian relief charity.

During the holidays, all four classes worked together to raise over \$1300 for the Neediest Family Fund, which went back to families in our own community. As a thank you for the classes' commitment to community service, STUCO again hosted an ice cream social for everyone in the school the day before winter break. The class that raised the most money was also rewarded with hot chocolate prepared by the OR transition program students and funded by STUCO.

In response to the devastation of the Australian wildfires, STUCO conducted a 50/50 raffle and donated all proceeds to the Australian Red Cross.

In February, STUCO held another spirit week leading up to the annual Class Olympics. Classes enthusiastically cheered on their classmates as they competed in a variety of team building activities and contests and won money for their classes. Classes also participated in the Random Act of Kindness Week, with each class performing random acts of kindness throughout the week. Lockers displayed positive notes; cafeteria staff received succulents; bus drivers were provided with snacks, and new mechanical pencils were handed out to all students during the season when most pencils seem to mysteriously disappear. After a current student organized a school wide assembly, STUCO sent \$100 to Positive Action Against Chemical Addiction, an organization dedicated to helping those struggling with drug addiction.

STUCO continued to meet virtually during the Covid Lockdown. Board members set up a Go Fund Me to raise money for a local food pantry and raised over \$500. In May, STUCO collected thank you messages from the student body and shared them electronically with teachers and staff in honor of Teacher Appreciation Week.

Despite the new online meeting format, STUCO successfully ran E-Board elections, three class elections, and SERSAC elections using video speeches and websites created by the leadership team. The group also met to make changes to the constitution, which provided more leadership opportunities for students.

At the end of the year, STUCO decided to double the number of scholarships that it usually presents and honored four 2020 graduating seniors with individual \$500 Unsung Hero Awards. STUCO also donated \$750 to the graduating class for their efforts to create alternative senior events during the pandemic.

During the 2019-2020 school year, Student Council was once again able to fund a number of valuable school activities, projects and programs including:

- Tea and supplies for optimized student zen (\$100-Tea Club)
- A Hocus Pocus movie night fundraiser (\$350-GSA & Writing Club)
- Brushes, paint, and canvas supplies (\$500-Art Club)
- A bank robbery themed escape room event (\$300-Conspiracy Club)
- Winter Blues Film Festival (\$300)

All in all, Student Council worked through a challenging school year and remained committed to building a positive school climate.

DECA

DECA had a unique but rewarding experience participating in a virtual version of DECA this year. Weekly meetings are held on Friday afternoons via Zoom, and attended by as many as 60 students from Grades 7-12. These meetings are used to conduct practice role-plays, discuss upcoming events, and brainstorm fundraising ideas. Students have just finished participating in Districts, which is a competition held between nearby schools in Southeastern Massachusetts. The competitions have consisted of two major parts, a role-play and a written test. Role-plays are events in which students are tasked with a business-related scenario that they must creatively resolve using collaboration, communication, and critical-thinking skills. The written portion of the competition consists of a series of multiple-choice questions relating to specific topics, such as business management, marketing, or accounting. While students have not been able to compete face-to-face this year, they have certainly learned many valuable skills, including advanced technology usage, time management, and how to create an effective virtual presentation. Students who excel in their events will even have the opportunity to attend a virtual statewide competition in the upcoming months. 34 of our students placed in Districts, and we will be holding an awards ceremony in the cafeteria this upcoming Friday to celebrate this achievement.

Community Services Learning

The 2020-21 school year began with a different format, meeting virtually, but with the same excitement, energy, and commitment to give back to our Tri-Town community. CSL has continued during the Pandemic while following all safety precautions and protocols with the yearly volunteer opportunities and even added new ones so students can participate on their own, as well as in-group projects. The club meets once a week virtually after school. The CSL co-advisors, Karen Browning and Andrea Moniz help to advise students as they take on student leadership roles on various community service projects that are new and on-going projects. Once again this year, under the leadership of two students, the CSL Club collected pairs of socks for their "SOCKTOBER" event in October. It was another huge success and the socks were donated to The Women's Center in New Bedford. As October came to a close, the CSL Club turned its focus to our December group event in collaboration with Toys for Tots called "Stuff a Cruiser". This year CSL was able to collect even more toys for local children than previous years! We appreciate the generosity of our Tri-Town residents for making this our most successful year yet! We would like to especially recognize Turks Restaurant for donating over \$500 in

toys for our event! Among these group volunteer activities, CSL has had several individual volunteer opportunities brought to the group by students and led by students, such as volunteering on weekends at Damien's Pantry. The CSL Club also has been informed of opportunities brought from the community, such as with the Mattapoissett Land Trust and Sippican Land Trust properties and at the Mattapoissett Library. Moving forward the CSL Club, under the leadership of student leaders, is taking part in letter writing for children in hospitals with an effort called "Cards for Hospitalized Kids" at several times over the next few months. There are other student leaders also taking the initiative to write letters to one of our own faculty members, Micah Kidney, of the math department, who is serving our country for the next year abroad. The club will plan a beach clean up in the spring and we will cap off our successful year in May of 2021, where the club will honor students who have submitted their community service hours that have earned them the "President's Volunteer Service Award", an award where students earn either a gold, silver, or bronze medal depending on the amount of their volunteer hours along with a signed letter from the President of the United States thanking them for their community service.

Once again, the Old Rochester Regional High School proved to be first-class and continued the school's history of excellence. Students and staff congratulated Math teacher Fran Guilbert and Nurse Kim Corazzini on their retirements after long and storied careers at Old Rochester.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Devoll
Principal