

THE POND STREET PRESS



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School News

New School Building in the Future?

By: Sienna Marshak and Grace Kiernan

Recently, The Pond Street Press was alerted that there was talk of potentially building a new Cohasset Middle/High School. We were intrigued and decided to ask around. We asked Mr. Mills, Middle School Principal, and then we asked Superintendent Dr. Sullivan, who gave us the email of the chairman of The School Committee, Mr. Craig MacLellan. We then interviewed Mr. MacLellan about the matter.

Sienna and Grace: "What is your opinion on the topic of a new school building?"

Chairman MacLellan: "I am excited by the prospect of a new Middle/High School in Cohasset and am very much in favor of it. I think we do the best we can with our current facility, but technology and teaching and learning practices have both changed significantly since the existing school was constructed, so I believe our students, and therefore our community, would be best served by a new, state-of-the-art facility."

Sienna and Grace: "If you like this idea, would you rather redo CMS at its current location, or would you rather build an entirely new building at a new address?"

Chairman MacLellan: "While this will be a data-driven, community decision, my initial research tends to show that an entirely new building is the most cost-effective solution. In terms of the physical location, that decision would be based on a number of factors and would involve the input from the community-at-large and the advice and recommendations of various construction and design professionals."

Sienna and Grace: "Also, would it separate from the High School, or would it be another Middle/High School?"

Chairman MacLellan: "This is another decision that would be based on community input and advice and recommendations from construction and design professionals. Generally speaking however, it is likely that another middle/high school would prove to be the most cost-effective and practical solution for our small community."

Sienna and Grace: "When did this possibility first come up in the Facilities Committee, and who brought it up?"

Chairman MacLellan: "I first raised the prospect of new schools in a School Committee meeting. The then-chairperson of the School Committee, Ellen Maher (Mr. Maher's mother), pointed out that Cohasset's bylaws called for the formation of a School Facilities Committee in order to explore and carry out such a project. I then drafted a charge for the School Facilities Committee, which was approved by the School Committee, and the town began to solicit volunteers to fill the 9 spots on the School Facilities Committee. In July, the School Facilities Committee was finally formed and it had its first meeting in August."



Sienna and Grace: "What is the timeline for this new possibility?"

Chairman MacLellan: "This is difficult to answer with any accuracy, as the response is dependent on too many unknown variables. What I can tell you is that the average length of these types of projects throughout the Commonwealth of Massachusetts seems to be about 5 years, from the very beginning to the opening of the new building. If our community decided to build a new middle-high school, it would probably take about 2 years to physically build, but there is a lot of planning that accounts for the other 3 years. Again, there is no way to know how long this process would be for our community - it could be longer, or it could be shorter (but probably not much shorter than 5 years even if it was shorter)."

This is a definite possibility, but the process will take many years so current middle schoolers will probably never experience this. If this plan goes through, the future middle and high school students will benefit greatly.

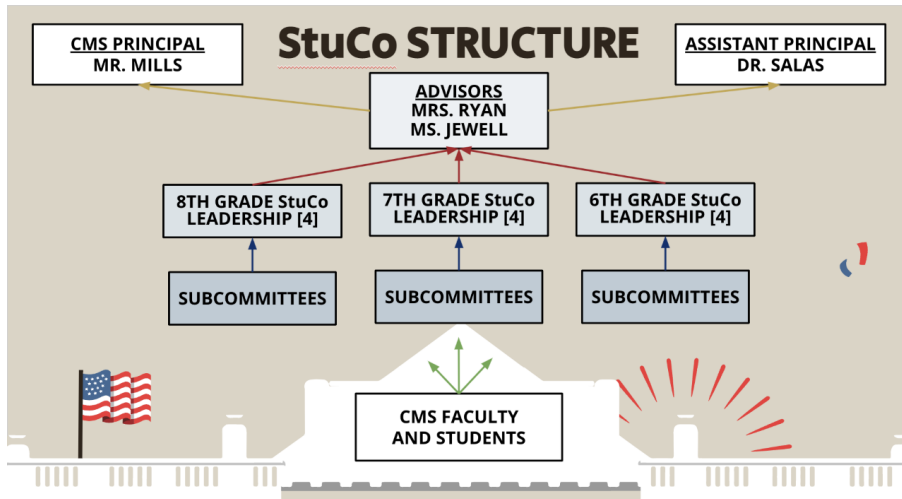
CMS Student Council Revamp

By Eli Kagel

In the past, the process of running for and outcomes of Student Council elections have been skewed. Student Council elections of the past were akin to tyranny; less popular students did not participate as popular students were guaranteed a competition among themselves.

Teachers Mrs. Ryan and Ms. Jewell are this year's advisors and have recognized the need to redevelop the election process and structure of CMS's Student Council. They are committed to giving more power to the students while effectuating parameters that ensure fair representation in the elections and therefore, the resulting Student Council.

During the October 14th utility assembly Mrs. Ryan and Ms. Jewell presented the vision behind the revamp. This presentation included an organizational chart (see below), defining the



leadership opportunities, and distilling the selection process. Promising “we will say ‘yes’ to as much as possible,” they spoke of their commitment to bestow those who obtain these leadership positions reasonable authority and influence over decision-making such as, allowing Student Council to plan field trips. This expansion of influence is enticing for all middle school students but

comes with great responsibility.

In order to obtain a leadership position on the Student Council, students must apply and be permitted to proceed by the administrative group composed of Principal Mills, Dr. Salas, Mrs. Ryan, Ms. Jewell, and last year’s 8th grade Student Council President, J.P.Giglio.

Applications will then be reviewed and vetted by a committee who will thin the herd and select those who will be admitted into the candidate pool. This mechanism is intended to ensure fairness in the representation of students from whom the student community will vote by ballot. The hope is that those who are truly serious about comprehensively representing the student community will remain as the final candidates. Accordingly, those who are committed to the impact they will have on our school community should arguably supersede those who are interested in how this role will impact themselves. Candidates who have reached this phase and subsequent phases of the election process would have inherently displayed character and performance that informed their accomplishment of succeeding through rounds of vetting. At this point in the process, the final candidates will resume more traditional processes of public speaking and campaigning. According to this design, it is believed that these candidates will, or at least should, be afforded a fair shake by their peers as to their campaigns based on merit, commitment, and campaign content rather than on social status.

Student interest has peaked and change is in the air in response to the Student Council’s revamp. Many students are optimistic that the result will be in candidates and leaders who are more focused on realizing their investment in CMS and our student community.

“I’m motivated to encourage and help the students of CMS, and driven to create a friendly environment at school to help students walk into class with a smile on their faces,” said Faisal Al Rashid.

James Lanza, a 7th grader running for student, explained, “I am running for student council because, I am looking for a leadership opportunity and to be a voice for the students.”

Faisal and James are just two of many students who are beginning their campaigns.

As Fasial explained, in the past “the quality of votes largely depended on the student’s popularity, rather than the ideas they harbored.”

The recently released design does empower students to run for the right reasons. As campaign promises are made, all must be mindful our future elected leaders have been promised greater responsibility and influence over the future of our school. Conscientious voters should be even further compelled to vote on the basis of integrity, rather than popularity, as to who will speak for them.

* Inclusion of interview does not endorse any or particular candidates.

New Digital Literacy Class a Hit!

By Myla Pimpare

As we start to get into normal routine, we get to know our teachers a little better. We even have a new class, Digital Literacy and Computer Science and the teacher for this new subject is named Ms. Kay. Ms. Kay has taught this class in other schools.

In Digital Literacy, we are learning how to code and Ms. Kay even taught us how to hack into video games and change the code. The students are using an app called Scratch that allows them to create video games and play other peers' video games.

Ms. Kay loves coffee and is very active. Being outside is another thing she loves along with her two dogs. This Computer Science teacher has a lot of good vibed posters and is very organized. In conclusion, when you pick your classes next you be sure to think about Digital Literacy and Computer Science.

Bathroom Wrecker Tik Tok Trend Hits Home

By Sari Reyes

The hottest social media platform, Tik Tok, has influenced a lot of people about many different topics. Politics, music, communities, and racism have been common victims of Tik Tok's influence. However, the newest Tik Tok trend has influenced students at schools to destroy bathrooms, public signs and just about everything.

You may have heard about the newest trend to wreck school bathrooms called the “devious lick.” This trend consists of ruining bathrooms and making trendy Tik Toks about it. All over the platform you will find multiple videos about the topic. Creators on the platform would steal the paper towel dispensers, rip off soap dispensers, flood the sinks, clog the toilets, and leave the bathroom flooded with devious crime and disgust.

These Tik Tok trends have traveled off of our screens and into our schools because two “devious lick” incidents occurred in Cohasset High School and very recently on October 4th a devious lick incident occurred at the Cohasset Middle School.

The high school recently received two devious lick attacks both held in the boys’ bathroom. The incidents were held in different bathrooms a couple of days apart. The attack featured soap dispensers being ripped off of the wall and thrown on the ground like a piece of dirt. Although they haven’t caught the criminals, they suspect that the attackers were both sophomore boys.

A sixth grade student, Luke Hurley, a fellow *Pond Street Press* staff member, reported to our news team that he walked into the Middle School boys bathroom only to discover that it was struck by the devious lick trend. Toilet paper and paper towels lined the stalls and bathroom, the trash can was misplaced and put inside of the toilet, and something similar to jam was spread on the toilet seat. While the damage wasn’t severe, the thought of the devious lick coming to the Middle School was scary and fearful.

While Tik Tok has changed the minds and the lives of many, the Devious Lick trend has brought us to think about our choices and question Tik Tok as a whole.

Locker vs. Backpacks

By Eva Harries

What’s better, lockers or backpacks? There are a lot of opinions behind the great divide between the two. Backpacks can give you back pain, but, on the other hand, lockers get stuck and take time to open.

I interviewed Dr. Salas to see her point of view on this situation.

“About once every day a person comes to me having struggles with opening lockers, and as I walk around the school I see about 50% of the students’ lockers left open,” Dr. Salas explained.

She also had ideas on how to fix this problem. She suggested, “We could make the lockers bigger and maybe use a keypad or keycard to open up the lockers.”

Her ideas are brilliant but would require a whole locker renovation that could take some time. So, to fix this problem currently, Dr. Salas assigns new lockers or writes with expo the directions to help students open up their lockers.

I also interviewed Sienna Marshak and Grace Kiernan, 7th Grade students, to see what they prefer. Grace used to prefer lockers, but now she likes backpacks. She thinks it is easier for her to carry around all her things for every class, instead of going to her locker. On the other hand, Sienna enjoys having lockers and normally uses hers, but she also agrees that backpacks save time.

Overall, backpacks are more preferred throughout CMS, but there are still very mixed opinions on this topic.

Attack of The Colonies

By Quinn Kearney and Sari Reyes

The idea of a picnic lunch holds many possibilities. From talking with friends to munching on a yummy lunch, the choices are endless. However, it's very easy to take advantage of a fun opportunity and turn it into a wreckless mess. In this case, reckless sixth graders decided to take advantage of the outdoor picnic and wreaked havoc in the form of a wasps' nest.

On the sunny afternoon of September 22nd, 2021, during a friendly picnic-lunch at CMS Middle school, a group of sixth grade students were stung many times after throwing various items at a wasp's nest. While some were chatting and eating away, others had their attention turned to aiming materials at a small golden nest.

The actions of the sixth graders attracted a crowd because everyone wanted to see what was going on. The simple truth was; they were throwing dirt, and twigs at a wasp's home. This seemed like a harmless idea, and as the days passed, nothing exciting went on. The occasional twig was thrown, but only bounced off the exterior of the nest. This pattern continued, until finally, a rock was thrown.

This wasn't as harmless as a twig, or dirt, or any of the items used previously. This was hard and could do real damage. A sixth grader who *won't be named* allegedly threw this rock and was the cause of the nest falling. The rock punctured the middle of the nest, and the momentum of the throw swung it right off of the branch it laid on. Now the nest was on the ground, with a big crack through the middle (see photo below by brave Pond Street Press photographer Luke Hurley).

Wasps came flying out of the nest and started to sting nearby sixth graders. Innocent bystanders were stung as the wasps wreaked havoc. Cole Buckley, Jack Heald, and other sixth graders were stung in the chaos. Even as people tried to get away, Cole Buckley was stung two more times, leaving three stings. Other students were stung in the process of getting away from the nest.

In the events following the wasp attack, the sixth graders have learned their lesson, with the wasp's needing a new home in the process. The nest was located at the back fields of CMS, near the forest-like area where the water tower resides.

It's unknown if there will be more nests popping up, or if the nests will once again be a subject of interest between the six graders. While we leave it up to chance, the students are keeping an eye out for nests, and wondering if the bees will strike again.



The Rec Center: A Perfect Place to Hang Out

By Sari Reyes

After a long day of school and work, sometimes you just need a fun space to settle down or play. However, there aren't many places where you can hangout in Cohasset. Until now! Come on down to the Rec Center, a place to hangout with friends and do anything possible!

If you want to hangout at the Rec Center, make sure to sign up on the Cohasset Recreation website. It's only \$49 for a whole school year! Venturing into the Rec Center will lead you to playing ping pong, foosball, cornhole or even going to a different dimension in the form of a PS5.

The Rec Center is located at 55 South Main Street just behind the Red Lion Inn hotel and open 1-6PM on week days. During the holiday season, the Rec Center will hold events, however, will closed on the actual holidays.

On November 5th, the Rec Center will hold a pizza gathering. The room will be chatting away while munching on pizza deliciousness. If you want to chill, no problem. The Rec Center provides chairs and tables that you can sit down and do your work. While you're having fun you might run into a hungry stomach, luckily you will find vending machines stocked with everyone's favorite snacks and drinks. If you get sick of being cooped up inside, then feel free to sign out and go anywhere in town. The Rec Center is in the middle of everyone's favorite shops and restaurants such as Atlantic Bagel, Anchor and Sail and French Memories!

Food, games, sports and events all lead up to the perfect place to chill and enjoy with friends. When you sign up and sign in to the Rec Center get ready to live your best life.

Editorials

Changing For Gym

By: Malone Yemini

Students have different opinions about changing for gym. I interviewed many students to find many different responses. Some kids think the rule is very necessary and think it makes a lot of sense. Others aren't very sure and don't have much of a preference. Some

kids disagree and think the rule is unnecessary and kids most definitely should not have to sit out of gym if they don't have their clothes.

Jack Clark (6th) and other students like the rule because they don't want to wear sweaty clothes for the rest of the day and think it makes a lot of sense.

Isla Ross, another student in 6th grade, doesn't like the rule at all. She thinks that it's a waste of time, and if you forget your clothes, you should still be able to participate in gym. Regan Brinzey (6th) thinks that you should have to change your shirt but changing your shorts shouldn't really matter.

I interviewed the gym teacher, Ms.Beal, to find out the reasoning behind the rule. The rule was created to encourage good hygiene later in life, and so kids are not in clothes that smell bad for the rest of the day. They have you sit out of gym if you forget your clothing to encourage you not to forget. However even if you forget your clothes you will not get a zero because you can go home and do an assignment on Google Classroom to make up for it. Overall kids have many different opinions on changing for gym and all different reasons to back them up.

Video Games Distract CMS Students

By: Clarissa Gelson

Kids shouldn't be playing video games in class. Nonetheless, I bet you've been in class, and you've been tempted to play a video game. Guess what? It's against school policies, and you could get in big trouble. There's a lot of kids at CMS who have been distracted by video games that other kids are playing in their classes. This is unfair, because while other kids are paying attention it only takes a few bad apples to distract the student that is listening in class.

Olivia Reinig, a 6th grade student, says, "I know a lot of people who play video games during class."

Cohasset Middle School students have the privilege of bringing their own devices to their classes. A lot of schools don't get to bring their own devices, so that's something special that this school gets to have. Many students say they enjoy being able to do this. However, if students continue to abuse this privilege then will we still be able to bring our own devices to school?

Sixth grader Dominique Vechiolla suggested, "We are going to lose our privileges to our computers."

Have fellow CMS students who have been playing video games in classes considered this possibility?

Scarlett Dean, a 6th Grade student, states that kids who play these games are "Being disrespectful to teachers who are trying to teach," and says, "it's unfair that they're doing this while other kids are trying to focus on their work."

A 7th grader who wishes not to be named, thinks that it's unfair for kids at school to be allowed to wear Air-Pods in classes. Headphones or earbuds when needed for an assignment in class is okay, but if kids are wearing air-pods when they don't need them then are they listening to

music while teachers are trying to teach a subject? Would this distract other students? Some students even say it wasn't just games they've seen kids playing, apparently kids have found ways to watch movies in classes as well.

Many teachers can be very strict or upset if they find you playing a video game in their class.

Mrs. Weisslinger, who teaches World Geography and Ancient Civilizations was very disappointed when she heard about this issue. She said, "It is unfortunate because it is distracting to other students. Kids who play games are only jeopardizing their own learning because they're not listening."

Have you ever been in class and seen a kid playing a video game? Have you ever felt this way? The CMS Parent/Student Handbook says on page 93, "The Internet connection is not to be used for any non-educational purposes," so if you're playing video games in class then you're violating the school handbook.

Natalia Saiz, another 6th grade student stated, "It is really disrespectful to the teachers, it is their job to teach us."

All in all, kids that play video games in classes will fall behind in schoolwork, and probably won't do well on the test if they don't pay attention. Students who play games in class are being disrespectful to teachers who are trying to teach the class, and are distracting other students that are trying to focus.

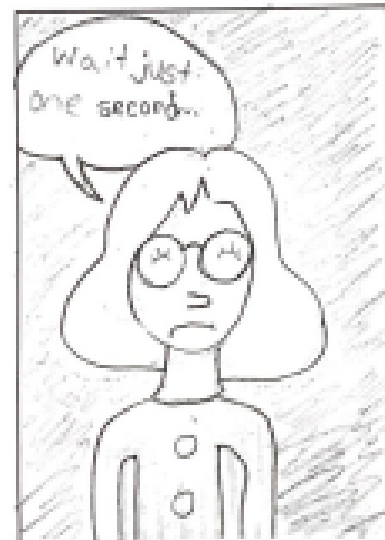
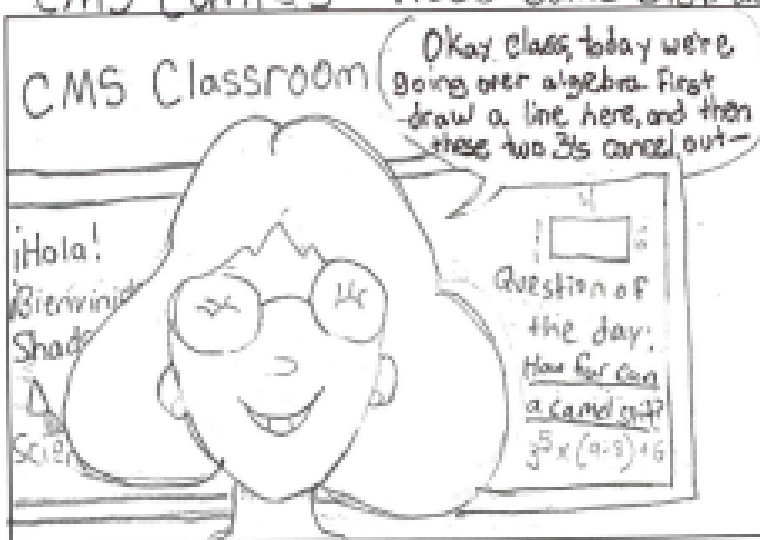
I have one last student I've interviewed before I move onto the final quote and to my personal opinion on this topic. Quinn Kearney in 6th grade and also a *Pond Street Press* member says, "I think it is disrespectful to teachers who are trying to teach, and I also think that students who do that won't learn."

I personally agree with this quote and what other students in this article have said so far. I think it is unfair to both teachers and students. Teachers who are doing their job and taking their time to teach students shouldn't have to be telling students not to play games in class. They deserve students' full attention. I also think it's very unfair to students, because when students try to do an assignment they're getting distracted by a kid in their class playing "Google Snake." That's another game I have seen kids in my classes playing.

I've interviewed lots of teachers and students in this article so far, but there is one more important person's opinion about this topic I interviewed. I talked to Principal Mills several days ago and asked him about what he thought about kids playing video games in their classes. He said, "I am disappointed that kids play games during class. It is disrespectful to teachers and disruptive to students nearby. It hurts the ability to learn."

To sum up, if students can't stop themselves from going onto a video game in class then can they handle their own devices? Will Cohasset Middle School students have to stop bringing their own devices to classes? Although playing video games can be something fun to do, this topic brings us to question if video games really are a good use of our time, and perhaps if CMS students are really paying attention in class all that well.

CMS Comics "Video Game Distractions" By Clarissa G.



CMS Arts



Have an idea for an article about the arts? Please share your ideas with a reporter from the *Pond Street Press*. Our staff list is listed on the back page.

Sports News

Cross Country Team Fun and Competitive

By: Stephanie Williams

The cross country season is here! Cross country is a running club, but with a fun twist. You get to run in the woods, as well as on the front field, and compete! This is the first time CMS has ever been in The Middle School Cross Country League.

(Photo right: CMS runners compete against Weymouth and Randolph runners at a meet in Weymouth. *Photo courtesy of Mrs. Hurley*)



The coach of the team is Mr. Sullivan, an eighth grade teacher here at CMS, and the assistant coach is a parent volunteer, Mrs. Henry. The team consists of about 20 students, ranging from all grades 6-8.

Coach Sullivan explained, "Once we get to the meets, we do a brief warm up. Normally the courses are really confusing, so we do a walk through, or the other coaches tell us where to go. The girls run first and the boys cheer them on. Then the boys go, and the girls do the same. We are supposed to run in the woods, but sometimes it will be in a field. In our most recent meet, the girls got 4th to 2nd place. Maddie Campbell got 4th, Elizabeth Struzziero got 3rd, and Molly Campbell got 2nd. For the boys, Robert Blanchard got 4th and Carter Backus got 7th."

Every Monday, Tuesday, and Friday there is practice from 3:00pm to 4:00pm on the front field. The team gets to run outside on the field, as well as through the entire town. It is a really fun workout and you also get to hangout with the team.

On Wednesday, there are Cross Country meets! The team meets up with other towns' schools and Cross Country teams, and you either go there or the team comes here for a race.

From Ciaran Bergan, a Cross Country member, "At the meets, you usually start off in the woods. It is nerve racking before the start of the first meet, but after, you feel more comfortable and you get a hang of it. It becomes really fun."

You are encouraged to go to every practice. If you need to miss it's fine. The meets are optional, and you're there to participate in the meet, but also challenging yourself to beat your personal best running time. The course is 1.5 miles long, and along the way you can build up your stamina. If you need to start with a walk, no problem. You are only trying to get your personal best.

There are no tryouts, just come to practice and have fun! If you join the team, you are encouraged to go on runs over the weekend with family and friends, but it is completely optional. It is only to try to build up your stamina.

The cross country season ends on November 3rd, with the eighth annual SSMSL invitational. It is a big meet that includes all the schools in the league. To sign up, go to bit.ly/cms-xc. Fill out the form and you're done! Happy running and best wishes to the CMS Cross Country team!

(Photo: Eighth grade boys on the Cross Country Team - Rylan Hurley, Ian Henry, Lukas Stefan, Robert Blanchard and Jack Kearney. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Hurley.)



New Gym Rock Wall

By: Kate Lombardi and Katie Kenealy

Some exciting news greeted middle and high school students this fall - a new rock wall in the gym. The wall was funded by the Cohasset Education Foundation (CEF) . We had the opportunity to speak with the President of the CEF, Kristin Quinn and find out how they funded and built the wall.

What is your role on the CEF board?

This is my 4th year on the board. It is my first year serving as President.

What was the inspiration for building the rock wall? Mr. Sweeney, Department Chair for Health, Wellness & Guidance at the Cohasset High School brought us this grant. He wanted to provide gym classes with a unique experience that encourages teamwork.

It looks like a big effort to get a project like this off the ground. How long did it take to raise the fund's? We are so proud of this, thank you! Without being able to host in-person events we were able to raise \$50,000 virtually thanks to the generosity of the community.

Who designed or built the rock wall? Project Adventure <https://www.pa.org/>. They custom design and install every wall and component. They also conduct inspection and repairs.

Can you describe some of the features of the wall? What are the dimensions? The rock wall scales one half of the High School gym wall, it's quite impressive! It's 20 feet wide by 24 feet high. The grant also funded a "Centipede" - a series of vertical wooden beams connected to each other and a "Wild Side" ropes course. A large part of the grant money went to a 2 day training session for the entire Wellness staff. They are now qualified to belay climbers on both the wall and the centipede. They were also trained on how to use the ropes course with 16 different challenges.

Can you share any future plans for school programs that will use the rock wall in physical education? The Wellness team has many different fun and exciting plans for use in the future!

It sounds like a great addition to the school. Is there anything more we should know about it before we end the interview? Cohasset does sports really well. We love to see the soccer, lacrosse, and baseball fields packed with happy kids. Not all kids are drawn to organized traditional sports, though. This Project Adventure grant will involve all students in fun, engaging, team building exercises during Gym class. We love supporting our local schools!

Gym teachers perspective of the new rock wall: The gym teacher's perspective on the new rock wall is all about teamwork as Mrs. Beal says. The new rock wall will be open to Middle school and High schoolers. Also it will be open to The public as well! Mrs. Beal and Mr. Pimental spent 16 hours of training to make sure they know how to use it and make sure it is safe for everyone.



Youth Sports Referee Shortage

By: Janet O'Carroll

If you play town soccer or field hockey, you know that there has been a Referee shortage. In many cases, there aren't any referees available to Ref youth games.

Coaches have to ref their own games in field hockey, which is a problem because, if there is only one coach for that team, then nobody can be on the sidelines with the players to tell them if they can go into the game, what position they play, or if they can come off the field. Even some of the games had to be



canceled because there weren't any referees available. The reason that there aren't any referees is because they are reffing the high school games instead.

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