

# Pond Street Press



COVER BY: MADISON WILLIAMS

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# School News

## M.C.A.S., The Sequel

By ~ Sari Reyes



A short delay has kept MCAS away for some time, but just like a cockroach, MCAS continues to thrive nonetheless. A couple weeks ago, there was an announcement about the return of MCAS. While many were hoping for the absence of these long assessments, we couldn't help but wonder if another year without MCAS was too good to be true.

From a district's perspective, the exams are to see how well teachers are teaching the curriculum and helping the students' understanding of the subject that is being taught. For the teachers, MCAS is a test that shows how well they have taught the students the standards in the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework. However, to students the test is a dreaded time to test your intelligence.

MCAS is changing up the schedule a little bit in future weeks. Eighth graders will be testing Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday on the week of the 17th of May. Due to MCAS Monday of that week will be flip flopped meaning that the day will start with period 3 and go 3217 Utility Lunch 654. The schedule will go back to normal for the rest of the week. The reasoning behind this schedule change is to make sure that everyone will be able to see all of their classes.

Grades six and seven will be testing the following week (24th of May). Similarly, sixth and seventh graders will also have a flip flop day however, on Tuesday of the week of the 24th. Sixth and seventh graders will only test for ELA and Math while eighth graders will have had to test for ELA Math and Science the week prior. The week of the 24th will begin with the seventh grade testing, Monday for ELA and Tuesday for Math. Sixth graders will test on Wednesday and Thursday; ELA on Wednesday and Math on Thursday.

While the return of MCAS is stressful for most, we can only hope to do well and thrive like MCAS has all these years!

# Learning: The Inside Out

By ~ William Chisholm



Large tents can be seen on the fields and open spaces outside Cohasset Middle and High School. The tents make it possible to hold classes outside as the weather gets nicer. I interviewed CMS Principal, Mr. Mills, about having classes outside and here are some of his responses.

My first question to Mr. Mills was why he started the classes out on the fields. Mr. Mills said that he started the classes on the field because Covid guidelines made it necessary to get outside whenever possible.

The next question I asked Mr. Mills was his opinion in the outdoor classes. Mr. Mills said he thinks they're great and also a good change of scenery for students. The third question I had for Mr. Mills was, are all the grades able to use the outdoor classrooms

and he said all grades will be able to use the tents on the field to learn. Teachers can bring their students to the courtyard tent and the back field tent and soon teachers will be able to bring their students on the front field.

The last question I asked Mr. Mills was whether we will still go out to the outdoor classes even if it is raining. Mr. Mills said probably not, unless it had to do something with what you are learning, then you might go out.

In the coming weeks, students will be seen learning outside in the sunshine!

# Janitor Appreciation

By ~ Isla Veitas



Janitors are crucial to CMS and many other places, yet a lot of people take them for granted. They protect us from viruses, clean up messes, and work tirelessly to keep us safe.

Due to the pandemic, janitors have been more important than ever. Because of COVID-19, they've had to sanitize surfaces, wipe down desks more, and do lots of deep cleaning. Without janitors, students would still be on Zoom all day!

Here are three amazing janitors who work at our school. Jean is from East Bridgewater, MA. Her job is to sanitize surfaces to get rid of the spread of COVID-19. Her favorite part of being a janitor is seeing kids saying hello to her and thanking her. At

home, she has two cats named Bella and Oreo and a German Shepherd named Lola. Another one of our janitors is Devin. Devin is from Marshfield, MA. He's been working at this school for 3 years. Every day he cleans the bathrooms, picks up trash, and then works on other details. He has a Shitzu and a Yorkie whose names are Jackson and Brody. Finally, Greg, who joined us this past year, grew up in Cohasset and went to school here. He's been a janitor at CMS for nine months so far. He has a dog named Otis.

If you see a janitor around the school, say hello and thank them for all that they do for us. They are critical to CMS, after all.

(Photo above: Devin hard at work cleaning the building after all of the students have left for the day.)

# My Mom: A Frontline Healthcare Worker

By ~ Michael Owens

When the sixth grade was faced with the task of nominating a lightbearer for ELA class, I chose to nominate my mother. A lightbearer is a person who spreads light in the world. In the sixth grade reading book, *A Wrinkle in Time*, the characters list people from history who are considered light bearers, like Mahatma Gandhi and Madame Curie.

I believed that my mother should be nominated because of the hours that she works in the Emergency Department. The main reason why I chose her is that she dared to be floated up into the most densely populated floor with the COVID patients in all of South Shore Hospital. She has facilitated the recovery of many COVID patients.

When COVID began in Spring 2020, South Shore Hospital had approximately 100 COVID patients that came through the Emergency Department daily. South Shore Hospital is a 400+ bed hospital, so statistically this is one-quarter of the patient capacity every day.

My mother's work impacts the world because during COVID, humanity can use all the help it can get from the first responders. Additionally, my mom would come home from work after working 40+ hours a week and was always so meticulous about coming into the house to not potentially spread the virus.

In conclusion, this is why I nominated my mother for my Lightbearer assignment because she is not only smart, dedicated, and compassionate, but she had the courage and strength to work on the front line when everybody else was afraid.

# Assistant Principal Week Featuring Our Own AP - Dr. Salas

By ~ Grace Kiernan & Charlotte Gallagher



The week of April 5-9 was Assistant Principal Week. I talked to Dr. Salas, our Assistant Principal, about her career before CMS, her favorite things about being an Assistant Principal, and her thoughts on full in-person learning.

After college, Dr. Salas went through a Principal Program and got her Doctorate Degree at Northeastern University. Dr. Salas was a counselor for 15 years before becoming an Assistant Principal. She decided to become an Assistant Principal so she could be a bigger advocate

for students and staff.

Dr. Salas was an Assistant Principal for four years in Cape Cod and has been working at CMS for two years. Day-to-day, she supervises students in the morning, at lunch and at the end of the day, visits classrooms, works on the schedule, helps solve problems, supports students and staff, and much more. Dr. Salas's favorite part about being an Assistant Principal is being a part of students' fun part of the day, seeing kids and making time for fun.

I interviewed Dr. Salas on April 5, the first day of full in person school. She expressed to me how happy she was about everyone being back and how the building already felt so much more fun and had so much more energy. Kids love seeing their friends in other cohorts and feel more comfortable and normal in this weird time.

In conclusion, Dr. Salas is an amazing contribution to CMS and is always there for students and staff. She deserves to be celebrated this week and every week for everything she does and for all of her hard work.

## Project 351 Ambassador - Lucy Royston

By ~ Georgia Royston

Lucy Royston was chosen to represent Cohasset Middle School as Ambassador for Project 351. Project 351 is a service leadership program for 8th graders living in different

parts of Massachusetts. Hometown educators nominate one 8th grade student based on gratitude, kindness, humility, compassion, and more.

The student ambassadors across the state work together on projects to help people. Project 351 is leading a transformative impact for Cradles To Crayons, MA Military heroes fund, Martin Richard Foundation, Pine Street In, Greater Boston Food Bank, Meals of Hope, the Wonderfund, Fresh Truck, Y2Y Cambridge, Hope & Comfort, and hundreds of hometown Food Pantries. Ambassadors like Lucy help millions by leading programs and initiatives for donating to foundations, charities and supporting those who are less fortunate. Actually, Lucy is working on a clothing drive for Cradles to Crayons in May, so look out for posters around the school for further information!

I asked Lucy some questions on how she feels about this leadership program.

Q: What is the most rewarding part of being involved?

A: I get to help and educate others on serious matters as a result of being a part of Project 351.

Q: What have you learned?

A: I have learned that I am very privileged and lucky. When we meet we talk about what it is to be a leader and people who need leaders because of issues that have impacted their lives. They are teaching us to become those leaders to help the world.

Q: How do you feel about being an ambassador?

A: I feel very happy and proud to be representing CMS as a Project 351 Ambassador. I think this is a really good opportunity to find what I am capable of as a leader.

Q: What kind of time commitment do you have as an ambassador?

A: It started off as hour long Zoom meetings with people who were important to the foundation. We got to hear from them about their lives and what it is like to work with Project 351. We also had interviews with prior alumni. Now we are starting the phases of the first service, such as the clothing drive.

Lucy is very excited to continue her year full of helpful services and team projects. I have got big shoes to fill as I continue school and keep working hard, being her younger sister.



8th grader Lucy Royston as Project 351 Ambassador

## Earth Day Contest

By ~ Janet O'Carroll



In April of 2021, CMHS had an Earth Day contest for grades 6-12. In order to win the contest, you had to create your own Earth Day logo design that was out of this world. The winning design was created by a high school student named Ava DeSalvo. In third place, from our very own CMS, was 8th grader Mary Williams.

Mr. Mills said, "It is such an important issue for everybody on Earth, and I am so proud that so many students want to protect the Earth. I am thankful to Mary for showing us her talents." If that isn't a happy principal, I don't know what is. If you were wondering, this is the logo that she made.



# Minecraft for the Sixth Grade

By ~ Saoirse O'Duggan

After years of asking administrators and IT, Ms. Weisslinger, the Sixth Grade World Geography Teacher, was finally able to assign sixth graders the unique project of building a Minecraft world as part of the study of Ancient Egypt.

Each class was divided into five groups. Ms. Weisslinger organized the groups using "G.R.A.P.E.S," an acronym for geography, religion, achievements, politics, economy, and social structure. Each group was assigned a letter, which they then built a section of the Minecraft world upon.

Sixth grader, Jacob Tam, expressed how much he enjoyed this assignment. He said, "It was great to take something we love to do at home, Minecraft, and use it to learn about Ancient Egypt. It was just a relief from all of the regular homework and tests."

After asking Ms. Weisslinger how she thought it was going along, she responded, "It's exceeding expectations." When I asked her if she preferred tests or Minecraft, Ms. Weisslinger stated, "It depends on what we are studying." She plans to assign this project again in following years with minor adjustments. Ms. Weisslinger believes that Minecraft was an efficient, fun way for students to prove their knowledge of Ancient Egypt. She added, "Students have the chance to physically enter into a world of knowledge."

Student representatives including Grace Kiernan, Charlie Manewal, Molly Campbell, and Colton Blind presented the Minecraft project to the Cohasset School Committee. They explained the assignment and how students learned as they built. Minecraft is a unique, interactive, and efficient way of learning a subject. Overall, from this student journalist's perspective, this assignment was a great way for students to express what they learned. (Image below is a Minecraft student creation)



## Vaccines Getting Us Closer to “Normal”

By ~ Eva Harries

(Image credit: CDC)

With students coming back to school full-time and staff becoming vaccinated, things are starting to get back to “normal.”

I interviewed the High School Nurse, Mrs. Judy Collins and she said, “I believe most of the staff are vaccinated, maybe 90-95%, and soon a few students!” Students are now able to get their vaccines! The school has secured 100 available vaccines for students 16-18. Vaccines will be free to get on May 7, 2021 (by the time you read this they will most likely be taken).

I interviewed Dr. Salas, the Middle School Assistant Principal, and she said, “The vaccine has definitely made



the staff feel safer in school which has really helped with having school stay full-time.”

The J&J vaccine has also been taken off of its hold allowing people to only need to get one shot. With people getting vaccinated, the law for adults to wear masks outside in public has been lifted!

Thursday the 13th of May was the firstday that kids 12-15 could get the vaccine! Some CMS kids are taking advantage of this opportunity and are signing up. This week was the first time students could remove their masks outside and when participating in sports. Each step brings us closer to “normal.”

(Image credit: CDC)

## The Arts at CMHS

### Digital Talent Show Coming in June

By ~ Grace Kiernan

On June 18th, CMS Student Council will be holding a Digital Talent show! If you want to participate, in the next few weeks, there will be a Google form on Aspen to fill out. All you have to do is film yourself doing a talent or skill for 2 minutes or less and send it to Mrs. Ryan. Mrs. Ryan will put the videos together and on June 18th, the combined videos will be shown! Your talent can be anything you would like and does not have to be the traditional view of what a talent show is. Anything you are good at counts as a talent, from juggling to cooking, and much more! If you have any questions, ask Mrs. Ryan in Room 100.

# Editorials

## The Importance of Diversity Education at CMS

By ~ Nora Khan, Grade 7

Why is discussing diversity important in a school environment? Diversity is a variety of different people ranging from gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexuality, and socioeconomic background. Cohasset Middle School (CMS) is a place where diversity should be explored. It is important that students are educated about how a lack of diversity paired with a lack of education regarding diversity can project racism onto a community.

Due to a lack of people with different ethnic backgrounds and races, it is of utmost importance that we introduce the importance of diversity to CMS students. We must incorporate diversity education into our school's various curricula and student body; whether that takes the form of after school clubs, assemblies, or enrichment programs. Small steps like these can make a great impact and will help students become more aware of important social issues and diversity. We need to be more aware as a community to help prevent racism and discrimination in the future in order to create a stronger community that is accepting and open to new perspectives and experiences. This will shape a stronger, kinder, and more unified environment, and will help shape a better future world.

Ms. Pearce, the Guidance teacher in the middle school, is working to educate students about the impact you can make if you speak out against racism and engage in discussions that talk about diversity. Ms. Pearce's class allows students to express their opinions freely about topics that students and teachers have to pay attention to. During these class discussions, she incorporates the injustices and social issues that people

face on a daily basis, and how instances of discrimination and hate can most often derive from a lack of education about social issues, or a lack of diversity.

Much like Ms. Pearce's Guidance class, our school needs to open up a difficult, yet necessary, discussion about issues of ignorance and discrimination in order to strengthen our community's response to instances of discrimination that are projected onto students of color, LGBTQ+ students, and students with different ethnic or religious backgrounds. As a school, it's necessary to show our support towards minority students and embrace, celebrate, and learn from our differences. Opening up avenues to discuss diversity in school will also help diverse students feel more comfortable and represented in their school environment. It is incredibly important for students to be open to new perspectives. Additionally, it is important that the school expresses interest and cares about its minority community members.

My sister, Lilla Khan, and her friends founded the Student Equity Committee (SEC) in the high school. In this committee, students can freely discuss diversity related issues and bring their ideas to the administration to help implement positive change in the high school. The SEC's goal is to bring inclusivity, awareness, and positivity to Cohasset student culture. With this in mind, they are also collaborating with a local government official, Selectwoman Keri Thompson, as well as the town's Diversity Committee, to bring more awareness to diversity in Cohasset through planning Cohasset-wide community events.

The Student Equity Committee has also sent informational presentations to the Deer Hill and Osgood schools regarding religious and cultural celebrations such as Hanukkah and Chinese New Year. They have also organized a Mental Health Week with the CHS administration to reduce student stress and to bring awareness to mental health. Members of the SEC have also created detailed morning announcements during important commemorations such as Black History Month and Women's History Month to raise awareness and share the importance of these months, and to highlight key figures who contributed to social progress.

It is important to have something like the SEC in the middle school to show students of all ages that change starts with us students, and that it is up to us whether we want to step up to the plate and shape a better future for everyone- after all, it is us that dictate our decisions and our future, and we must work to achieve our goals.

As a student of color and a member of the Cohasset Middle School community, I am incredibly passionate about making change for the better. I want my community to be

educated, accepting, and aware, so we can be more united and positive. Many minorities, including me, have had to overcome many obstacles and challenges when it comes to facing discrimination. I believe, with the help of fellow students, we can build up a strong community and create a safe and welcoming environment for all.

*Note: The Program Ms. Pearce Uses : Owning Up*

## Bathroom Lines Take Away Time from Learning

By ~ Sari Reyes

Throughout the school year, bathrooms haven't been thought about much by our classmates, except when they need to go. However, we can assume that the school administration has put a lot of thought into how to keep students Covid-safe when they use the restroom. When only one cohort was in school at a time, the system worked well - one student in, one student out. I rarely had to wait in line. Ever since we have gone fully in-person, the bathroom lines have been getting longer and longer. Long lines can lead to less class time and more wait time.

Now that Covid restrictions are being reduced, it feels safe enough to have two people in the bathroom at once. We will most likely have to eliminate the privilege of taking your mask off in the bathroom, but I would rather wear my mask in the bathroom than lose valuable class time. I thought of having one person in a stall, skipping the following stall and having someone in the third stall. This system will maintain social distancing and allow our peers to stop wasting valuable class time in line. Although a different system will most likely occur next year, we can only hope that the change can happen sooner.

# Sixth Graders on Strike

By: Maddie Schultz and Aidan Donnelly

CMS sixth graders are no longer allowed to go on the front field during mask break. During lunch break, sixth graders can walk and talk around the field and play a few games, but they are very unhappy about not being able to play on the front field during mask break before lunch. They have decided to make a move. A group of boys (who wish to remain anonymous) have decided to make a Google form to end this and so they will be able to go back outside again during mask break and have fun.

They want to be able to have the freedom of being able to go outside and be able to toss a ball around after having to wear a mask for about three hours of the morning. The form is emailed to you if you wish to fill it out. Here's a link to the form:

<https://docs.google.com/form/d/127FkX6Y4voKUfpyW9-UhtdmN3-VEaii7U3MZVFjnLZ4/edit>

Studies have shown kids are more calm, attentive and creative once they have had some time to run and have fun outside.

(<https://childhoodbynature.com/why-schools-need-more-outdoor-time/> )

The sixth graders think it is unfair that the seventh graders get to play on the turf and the front field and they don't get to. They wanted to make their voices heard. However, the current 7th and 8th graders did not get to go out at all when they were sixth graders. The only reason we get to go out is because of masks.

# Sports

## Cross-Country Meet with Marshfield

By ~ James Lanza, & Aidan Donnelly

(Photo Credit: Ethan Fine)



During the spring, 60 middle school students participated in the first ever CMS training for cross country running. They met twice a week with Coach Belber and Coach Ford after school and learned how to build up stamina, pace themselves, and use running techniques.

To end the season, on April 14th, 25 runners participated in a cross country meet against Furnace Brook Middle School in Marshfield. It was the first ever meet that CMS participated in. The course consisted of 1.75 miles of mostly rough and sandy terrain. Despite the challenging course, all runners did an outstanding job.

The course consisted of a large sand pit which then led to a dirt and root-filled trail. That then led to a paved road that would then turn onto another dirt and root-filled road. Finally, the trail would lead back onto the sand pit and then racers would reach the finish line. This course was very interesting for the runners because it was a new course that the runners were not used to.

The CMS girls defeated Marshfield 26-29 (the lower score wins in cross country) and the boys lost to Marshfield with a close 27-30. James Giglio ran an impressive time that placed him amongst the 50 best boys' times ever posted on that course.





The cross country team will resume in the fall for anyone who is interested in signing up. Get out those running shoes!

(Photo: Cohasset and Marshfield runners line up at the starting line. Photo Credit: Ethan Fine)

## Middle School Students Compete on High School Teams

By ~ Oliver Buckley

Although it may surprise some, several Cohasset Middle School 8th graders are playing on the Cohasset High School sports teams. This year, 8th graders were on the rosters of high school wrestling, boys' hockey, and girls' lacrosse teams.

Most middle school athletes who make the jump to a high school team are looking for a head start to being a high school athlete, and there is no better way to get a head start than to play on the team. Most play for the JV team, however the wrestlers are able to wrestle on the varsity team because they are the only one in their weight classes. The wrestlers are Brennan Blind, Braxton Blind, and Ollie Buckley. For 8th graders to wrestle, it first had to get certified by the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA). It took the whole first week of the spring season for 8th graders to be cleared to wrestle. The 8th graders were a big help to the wrestling team this year because they helped fill the lower weight classes that none of the high schoolers could.

There were a significant number of 8th grade girls on the JV girls' lacrosse team; nine to be exact. Maggie Brinzey, Mia Donovan, Abigail Goff, Reese Hansen, Ella Otfinoski, Lucy Royston, Libby Schiffmann, Brooke Smith, Zoe Willock practiced and played with the team.

Lastly, three 8th grade boys played high school ice hockey. Shane Mulcahy, Jack Hartwell, and Cooper Lagsdin played high school hockey this past winter.

If you are able to, I highly encourage you to get involved in high school sports early on, as it will give you a great start to high school sports and greater recognition from the coaches.

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