

Stamford Public Schools Shout Outs

Turn of River Middle School

2024-25

March 28, 2025

TOR French Students Welcome Spring

Over the past few days, students in Ms. Rama's French classes have been busy decorating their classroom and bulletin board. The theme, "Le Printemps est là – Au revoir, hiver!" (Spring is here – Goodbye, winter!), is beautifully tied into the eighth-grade unit on holidays and clothing, as well as the seventh-grade unit on school life and related activities.

Additionally, sixth graders, who are getting a taste of world languages this year, were excited to express their creativity through arts and crafts. New vocabulary was introduced in a fun and engaging way, making the learning experience both enjoyable and memorable.



March 17, 2025

A Very Fun Family Fun Night

On March 6, many TOR families gathered in our cafeteria for an evening of literacy, math, and strategy games. Students enjoyed pizza, treats, and the thrill of competition. We thank teachers Nicole Carpenter and Danielle Waring for organizing this annual tradition. Thanks also to our student and parent volunteers, and staff attendees.



An Astounding Pi Day

On March 14, we held our annual Pi Day Championship. Earlier in the week, students competed in class to name as many digits of pi as possible. On Pi Day, the class champions competed in the auditorium, and we were so impressed with the results.

Congratulations to our top champions:

Harry McMullan: 478 digits

Salimata Diallo: 252 digits

John Thagoras: 227 digits

Sameer Balasubramaniam: 160 digits

Thanks to TOR Teacher Nicole Carpenter for organizing the competition, and congrats to all of our student participants.



March 10, 2025

Students Create Works of Art Inspired by Mexican Culture

Students in Ms. Stevens' art classes recently completed vibrant papier-mâché masks inspired by sugar skulls from the Day of the Dead. This project allowed students to explore both artistic expression and cultural significance, using bold colors, intricate patterns, and unique designs to bring their visions to life. Through the hands-on process of sculpting, painting, and decorating, they developed essential art skills in three-dimensional design and craftsmanship. Their creativity and dedication truly shine in these stunning works of art. Congrats on a job well done!



March 3, 2025

TOR Celebrates Black History

On February 26, Turn of River students and staff hosted a spectacular Black History Month celebration. Our Drill Team and Hip Hop Team performed with great enthusiasm and precision. Students presented biographies of Black cultural pioneers (Rube Foster, Shirley Chisholm, Madam C. J. Walker, Thurgood Marshall) and recited Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech.

We also welcomed a panel of five local leaders: SPS School Resource Officer Jamar Edwards, SFD Fire Chief David Davis, author and entrepreneur Wilner "Poppy" Joseph, mentor and TOR Basketball Coach Barry Woods, and New York Knicks superstar Allan Houston. Our panelists shared powerful reflections and

advice for all. Special thanks to TOR Paraeducator Nickaja Wright for initiating and coordinating this joyful event.



Week of February 24, 2025

TOR Chorus Thrills the Crowd!

Congratulations to the Turn of River Chorus for an inspirational and moving performance on February 26. We were treated to nine dynamic, positive songs, with student soloists, choreographers, dancers, and technical directors. We thank Ms. Gamberdella for teaching our singers and coordinating this outstanding concert.



Week of February 17, 2025

TOR Basketball Teams Excel!

We congratulate the TOR Boys Basketball Team for winning the Stamford Middle Schools Championship on February 12 and becoming the first middle school team in SPS history to win back-to-back championships. Our team played at Westhill High School before a huge crowd of students and families, capping off an undefeated season! Many thanks to Coach Barry Woods, Coach Parish Rowell, and TOR Athletic Director Brian West.

The TOR Girls Team also had a winning season and made the playoffs. Many thanks to Coach Zhenna Stewart and Coach Damion Banks. We are so proud of our student athletes!



Week of February 3, 2025

No shoutout submitted

Week of January 27, 2025

TOR Student Leadership Team Members Share Progress

TOR is focused on fostering student leadership and voice. At our mid-year parent meeting on January 30, held at Building One Community and online, three TOR Student Leadership Team members presented on the amazing work of our Student Leadership Council. Julia Claps, Lexi Dec, and Vedhamithra Prabhakar shared information, council projects, and events with about 50 parents. They are pictured with Grade 8 Teacher Amy Jones and Parent Facilitator Patty Morales, who support the work of the council, along with Grade 7 Teacher Olivia Hagopian.



Week of January 20, 2025

TOR's *Matilda* Cast Takes to the Road

TOR's drama club has put on wonderful performances throughout the years. This past weekend the cast and crew of Turn of River's drama club went to see *Matilda* at the PlayGroup Theater in White Plains, NY. After the show, students had the opportunity to have a Q and A session with the actors and directors. The Turn of River drama club will be performing *Matilda Jr.* this spring.



Week of January 13, 2025

TOR Students Dress to Impress

On January 16, many TOR students donned professional attire for a Dress-Up Day. The inspiration came during class discussions when students of TOR staff members Ryan Curto and Nickaja Wright noted that students seem to dress strictly for comfort. Classes came up with the idea to have a day where they replace their usual clothing with collared shirts, ties, and pants. Some students even showed up in full suits! As Mr. Curto notes, "Taking a little extra pride in how you look can make you feel better and help you walk with some confidence." Our entire boys basketball team, which is undefeated so far this season, also got into the spirit on game day. Students are already asking to have another Dress-Up Day.



Week of January 6, 2025

TOR Celebrates Student Growth and Character

On Wednesday, January 8, Turn of River celebrated 86 students in grades six through eight in front of their peers, staff, and families. Each month TOR students are nominated by teachers for Bringing Up Grades (BUG), Titan, and Reading Achievement Awards. BUG Awards are given to students who have exhibited great effort in bringing up their grades. Titan Awards are given to students who

showcase model citizenship by being helpful, kind, and respectful towards peers and staff throughout the school community each day. Reading Achievement Awards are for students who read the most minutes across their entire grade level.



Week of December 16, 2024

Students Spread Holiday Cheer Throughout TOR

Last week, the TOR Student Leadership Council continued Elba Sim's (former Roxbury Teacher and SPS Teacher of the Year) Holiday Bulletin Board Contest. Students shared their creativity and teamwork while spreading holiday cheer. Teams of students decorated bulletin boards throughout the hallways of TOR. Thanks to TOR Teachers Zhenna Stewart and Olivia Hagopian for working with students to organize this wonderful activity.



Week of December 9, 2024

After School Titans Celebrate!

The fall session of Turn of River's After School Titans program (AST), now in its fourteenth year, came to a close with a family night. More than 200 attendees enjoyed dinner, Bingo, and student performances in Drill and Hip Hop (pictured). More than 100 TOR students participated four afternoons per week in a variety of clubs and activities. AST is a grant-based program in partnership with Domus. Thanks to Patty Woods and her staff: Jay DeFilippo, Brian West, Kevin Carrington, Elyse Pastore, Domus staff, and our many high school volunteers (former AST students) for their dedicated service to TOR students. The program will resume in mid-January.



Week of December 2, 2024

TOR Student Programs Video Game

Sixth grade student Srithik Siliveru created "Lemonoid Invasion," an Asteroids-style video game. Srithik coded the game over the summer and

continues to improve it, with power-ups for the spaceship and other enhancements. About 700 people have played the game online!



Week of November 18, 2024

Titans Meet the Challenge

This year's Titan Challenge was a great success! On November 8, we held an exciting Color Run, with parent volunteers dousing students with powder as they circled the field. Thanks to the generosity of our families, we surpassed our fundraising goal of \$15,000! Thanks to our dedicated PTO leaders for organizing this event, and to TOR Teacher Brian West for planning the running course.



Week of November 11, 2024

TOR Student Reports for Time for Kids

This year, TOR eighth grade student Rudrh Nair serves as a reporter for “Time for Kids” magazine, one of ten student reporters in the entire country! Rudrh explained during an interview with Student Leadership Council members, “My third grade teacher Mr. Fox introduced me to ‘Time for Kids,’ and this spring I decided to enter into the competition.” So far, Rudrh has written articles about authors and current events. Rudrh has also won awards in the Ferguson Library Stamford Literary Competition four times!



Week of November 4, 2024

TOR’s Smashing “Monster Mash”

On October 25, over 250 students came to TOR in amazing costumes for our “Monster Mash” Dance. Our gymnasium was filled with spooky decorations. Students danced, took photos, and cheered for our costume contest winners. We acknowledge TOR staff members Nicole Carpenter, Jane Lambert, Lindsay Rosenberg, and Isabel Velez for attending and helping out. We thank the many parents who volunteered before and during the event, setting up and providing pizza and snacks. Thanks in particular to PTO leader Christine Nanos for coordinating this excellent event.



Week of October 28, 2024

TOR Community Helps Fight Food Insecurity

This year, the TOR Student Leadership Council has organized a monthly food drive for the Schoke Jewish Family Service of Fairfield County Food Bank. Families donated boxes of pasta throughout October, and on Thursday, students placed their donations in the JFS truck. TOR will collect a different food item each month.



Week of October 14, 2024

TOR Student Leadership Council Shines!

Student voice is a major component of our efforts to foster a positive climate at Turn of River Middle School. Our TOR Student Leadership Council is already making a difference in a variety of ways, including:

- Participation at campus beautification initiatives
- Serving as Ambassadors at events such as Grade Six Orientation and Open School Night, which was featured in the Stamford Advocate (see photo)
- Initiating and supporting community service projects
- Serving as student announcers

Students are forming committees to work on specific projects. Thanks to TOR staff members Olivia Hagopian, Amy Jones, and Patty Morales for supporting the council. We continue to be impressed by our student leaders!



Week of September 9, 2024

Turn of River Titans Prepare to Lead!

TOR is fostering student voices through the formation of a student council. On August 12, about 40 students met online with staff to brainstorm potential activities for this year. Students began volunteering during our beautification days and grade 6 orientation.

On September 6, TOR students interested in serving on our student council received an application; over 72 students submitted thoughtful and persuasive responses. On September 13, the council met by grade level to begin planning (grade 8 council members pictured). Thanks to TOR staff members Olivia Hagopian, Amy Jones, and Patty Morales for their support. We will send council updates throughout the school year!



Week of September 2, 2024

Students, Staff, and Families Beautify Turn of River

On August 20, Turn of River Middle School held a beautification day. Guided by teachers and supported by family members, 38 student volunteers engaged in fall planting, courtyard cleanup, making welcome posters, and decorating bulletin boards. This wonderful start to the school year was part of our focus on student voice and community building.

