

May 2019

# John F. Kennedy Middle School

## PRINCIPAL'S NEWSLETTER

JFK School Community,

Greetings, I hope our May newsletter finds you and your family doing well. My apologies in advance for the breadth of this newsletter but we need to communicate a great deal of information.

JFK students and faculty have been heavily involved in many activities over the last month.

Our state assessments have run smoothly thus far; however, student absenteeism appears to be a logistical challenge. We ask that you make every effort to have your child in school for our testing days. We appreciate your support in setting our students up for success. The remaining testing dates can be found [HERE](#).

Our yearbook ordering deadline is this Friday, May 3. If you are interested in purchasing a yearbook please follow this URL: [ybpay.lifetouch.com](http://ybpay.lifetouch.com) and enter our school code: 11394219. Yearbooks are not sold from the school directly.

Our baseball and softball seasons are underway. All schedules are located on CIAC's website. The link is [HERE](#).



As the warmer weather approaches, we ask that you support our school with ensuring proper dress is adhered to. We understand that warmer weather promotes more comfortable attire; however, comfortable and appropriate are blurred by adolescents. We understand that *personal* belief systems about what is acceptable and appropriate may not always align with *public* school policy and rules. We ask that dress is decent and appropriate for the school setting. If attire is deemed inappropriate, we will ask your child to change or call home for a change of clothes. We have included some general guidelines below.

Teacher appreciation week starts on Monday, May 6 and concludes on Friday, May 10. In the short time I have been at JFK, it is evident that the professional educators at JFK are top-notch. They go above-and-beyond in more ways than many are privy to.

### UPCOMING EVENTS

- 5/3, Friday
  - Theater Production (7 pm)
- 5/4, Saturday
  - Theater Production (1 pm)
  - Theater Production (7 pm)
- 5/6, Monday
  - Grade 6 Junior Achievement Assembly
- 5/7, Tuesday
  - PTO Meeting (7 pm)
- 5/8, Wednesday
  - Variety Show Auditions
- 5/13, Monday
  - SBAC: Math Session I
  - [Full SBAC Schedule](#)
- 5/14, Tuesday
  - SBAC: Math Session I
  - The Woman's Club of Enfield Spelling Bee
    - [Flyer](#)
- 5/15, Wednesday
  - Field Trip: Broadway
- 5/16, Thursday
  - SBAC: Math Session I
- 5/17, Friday
  - SBAC: Math Session I
- 5/20, Monday
  - EHS Orientation Visit
    - Grade 8
    - More info. to follow
- 5/21, Tuesday
  - SBAC: Math Session II
- 5/22, Wednesday
  - SBAC: Math Session II
  - Grade 6 Band and Orchestra Concert (7 pm)
- 5/23, Thursday
  - SBAC: Math Session II

I want to personally thank all of our educators for your dedication and efforts to ensure we provide the highest quality of education possible to our students: THANK YOU!

Our theater production, Mary Poppins Jr., starts this weekend. All shows will be performed in JFK's auditorium. Tickets have been sold at school over the last few weeks. Tickets may also be purchased at the door until sold out (\$8 for adults, \$5 for students and senior citizens). The show dates and times are as follows:



- Friday, May 3 at 7 pm (**SOLD OUT**)
- Saturday, May 4 at 1 pm
- Saturday, May 4 at 7 pm

We have a design contest underway for our 2019-20 student planners. We are asking our student artists to submit their design by May 24. All cover designs need to be submitted to the white house office to be judged. The winner will have their design placed on our planner and will be formally recognized. More information can be found here: [PLANNER CONTEST](#).

JFK's PTO will have a *new member* meeting this Tuesday, May 7 at 7 pm in the JFK library. Please see more information here: [PTO](#). Our PTO plays a critical role in enhancing our students' experience at JFK. I ask that you join us for the evening and learn about how you can support our school community.

Grade 8 parents/guardians, we are looking to move our grade 8 dance to a venue off campus. We feel this is a special evening for students to celebrate their middle school years and enjoy the friendships they have formed. We are still in the planning process and will communicate directly with grade 8 students and parents/guardians when plans are solidified.

Our end of the year activities involves many fun events and field trips. We look forward to rewarding students who have displayed appropriate behavior and conduct throughout the school year. Unfortunately, not all students will have access to these extra-curricular privileges. It is important that students understand that their conduct matters and our expectations will be enforced. Letters will be sent home to those impacted in the next week.

We have made progress in the cafeteria. We as a faculty appreciate your support in striving toward a safe and clean cafeteria. Our hallway sweep has been effective in lowering disruptions to the learning process and curbing student tardiness. Moving forward, we will document those students who are late then reintroduce them to the classroom. Please understand that upon reentry to the learning environment students are expected transition with minimal disruption.

- 5/24, Friday
  - SBAC: Math Session II
- 5/26, Sunday
  - Memorial Day Parade
    - [More info.](#)
- 5/27, Monday
  - Memorial Day-No School
- 5/29, Wednesday
  - Grade 7 Band and Orchestra Concert (7 pm)
- 5/30, Thursday
  - Grade 8 Career Fair
- 6/4, Tuesday
  - Grade 8 Band and Orchestra Concert (7pm)
- 6/5, Wednesday
  - Choral Concert (7 pm)
  - Unified Sports (EHS)
- 6/6, Thursday
  - Variety Show Rehearsal
- 6/7, Friday
  - Grade 6 Field trip: Sonny's Place
  - Grade 7 Field Trip: Lake Compounce
  - Grade 8 Awards Ceremony and Breakfast (yearbook distribution)
  - Grade 8 Semi-formal dance (Location: TBD)
- 6/10, Monday
  - Grade 8 Field Trip: High Meadow
- 6/12, Wednesday
  - Variety Show
- 6/14, Friday
  - Early Release (Lunch Served)
- 6/17, Monday
  - Last Day School
  - Early Release (Lunch Served)

Maintaining student engagement in the learning process is an art and science – we need our educators and students supported to ensure this remains sacred time.



This month is Lyme Disease Awareness Month. Unfortunately, this crippling disease impacts many people across our nation; moreover, it is especially prevalent in the northeastern portion of the United States. Our nurse team has confirmed tick bites on several of our students (parents/guardians are always notified). Please remain proactive and vigilant in checking your children when returning from outdoor activities. The [Center for Disease Control](#) has really helpful resources and information regarding LD. To raise awareness and support those impacted by this disease, JFK will engage in various activities over the next few weeks. We will communicate directly with students and provide updates via our Twitter account ([@JFK\\_MS](#))

Thank you for your continually supporting our school community!

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Berrios".

Andrew Berrios, Ed.D.  
Principal



# CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

## Department Updates and News

### English

**Sixth grade** English Department news:

- Book clubs on *Social Issues* are wrapping up- Successful new unit!
- Spelling Bee competitions- finalists names have been forwarded for the May 14th event. Come in support! (JFK auditorium at 7:10 for 5th/6th grade student bee).
- Next up...*The Literary Essay: From Character to Compare/Contrast*.

**Seventh grade** English Department news:

- Dystopian novel reading comes to a close.
- Students have analyzed characters responding to power dynamics and rules within worlds gone awry and have thought deeply about how the authors of these stories seek to make commentary on our modern-day world.
- Next up...*Writing About Reading: From Reader's Notebook to Companion Books*.

**Eighth grade** English Department news:

- Group projects consisting of in-depth character analysis within the unit theme of *Changes in Self-Perception* are wrapping up.
- Students have been working collaboratively and independently on various characterization tasks that involve close-readings and even some artwork!
- Next up...*The Literary Essay: Analyzing Craft and Theme*.

In conjunction with other JFK Library poetry activities, students in all grades and numerous content areas have been rockin' lines of poetry throughout the month of April!

Displays of poetry lines include English, French, and Spanish languages!

### Science

Grade 6 Science students will begin their Earth Science unit by investigating the Water Cycle and the role topography plays in runoff and forming a watershed.

### Talented and Gifted Program

The Connecticut History Day State Contest will be held at Central Connecticut State University on May 4th. This year's theme is Triumph and Tragedy. Jacqueline Perry, Olivia Eugenio, Madison Gilbert, Eve Furey, Samantha Plummer, Madelyn Bouchard, and Brenton Coates have all advanced to the state contest. Jacqueline wrote her research paper on The Treaty of Versailles and the Tragedy of Totalitarianism. Brenton's paper deals with the Triumph of Japanese-American society and the Tragedy of the Internment Camps during World War Two. Olivia, Madison, and Eve created an exhibit on the Hindenburg. Samantha and Madelyn's exhibit focuses on Christa McAuliffe and the Challenger Tragedy. Monroe Cogtella, Bella Bellomo, Kayla Surprenant, Delaney Hutchings, Samantha Fuller, Anthony Galvez, Anna Bemiss, and Olivia Iv all completed exhibits for the district contest but did not advance to states. All students worked extremely hard, even coming to JFK on Saturdays, to complete complex annotated bibliographies to complement their exhibits or their historic papers.

### Physical Education/Health

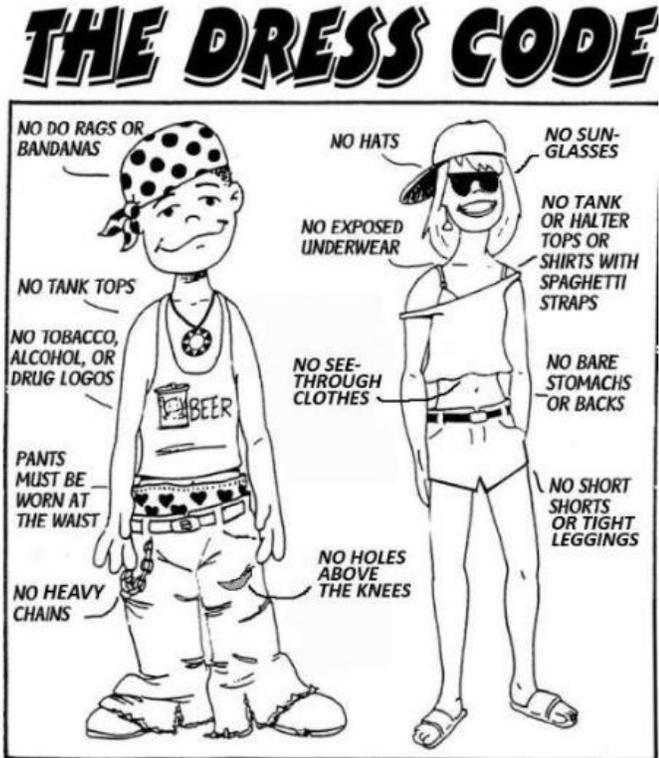
**Grade Six** - Over the past few weeks grade six students have been completing the mandated CT Physical Fitness Assessment. They are assessed in four components of fitness; muscle endurance, flexibility, muscle strength, and cardiovascular endurance through curl ups, 90° angle push-ups, sit and reach, and the PACER (Progressive Aerobic Cardiovascular Endurance Run). Their next unit is Tchoukball, a game that originated in Switzerland and combines elements of handball, volleyball, and squash. Health Education students recently completed the Comprehensive Health Assessment (pre-test) and are beginning the units of Bullying Prevention and Self-Esteem.

**Grade Seven** - Students are finishing up their unit on Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drugs with presentations (poster, brochure, infomercial) on the dangers of various substances. Next up in Health is Human Growth and Development where students will discuss issues related to

Students in 7th grade will be tasked with engineering a building that is earthquake-resistant. We will use our shake tables to simulate an earthquake and watch with great anticipation to see if each building survives.

Lastly, in 8th grade, groups will create a scaled timeline of the fossil record to analyze natural laws that have been in play in Earth's past and present.

### Dress Code Guidelines



human sexuality, review the reproductive system, and examine the physical and emotional/behavioral changes that occur during adolescence.

**Grade Eight** – Students have recently conquered the high elements of our Project Adventure course and are currently highly engaged in a unit on volleyball. They will be participating in the CT Physical Fitness Assessment during the month of May. Grade eight students who are in this rotation of Health Education are learning about Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs where they will determine what factors influence drug-related decisions and behaviors as well as distinguish between drug use, misuse and abuse. Students will develop skills for analyzing and counteracting negative influences while reinforcing important life skills such as decision-making, goal-setting, resistance and prevention.

### Social Studies

The Social Studies Department has begun their final units and will continue to build students inquiry, writing, and historic thinking skills within these grade level topics:

- 6th Grade students will be studying Western Europe, including Ancient Greece and Rome, The Middle Ages, The Renaissance, and Modern Europe. Students will be engaging in performance-based inquiry skills assessments on "Alexander the Great: Hero or Villain?" and "The Black Death".
- 7th Grade students are completing a unit on Central Asia and will be entering a unit on The Middle East and North Africa. As an extension to their previous inquiry skills performance task "Is it ethical to climb Mt. Everest", students will be participating in a school-wide recycling drive. Please be on the lookout for further information on how you can participate.
- 8th grade students are finishing up a unit on Western Expansion and many have begun an exciting inquiry skills project titled "Heroes from Our Neighborhood". This project is being used as an introduction to the Civil War unit. Students are researching and writing biographies of each of Enfield's soldiers who died during the Civil War. We will be presenting these biographies to the town upon completion.