

Dear Nock Community,

I hope you have had a good start to the new year. Below is a quick update with news from the Nock...we have a lot going on!

Dates to Remember

- **Monday January 28**--semester two begins but only Explore classes change. Please check Aspen X2 schedule tab for new schedules.
- **Thursday February 7-- Nock/Molin Wellness Space Plank-a-thon Fundraiser**. Please help us and the NEF raise funds to turn this underused space adjacent to the gym into a center for wellness (see below for details). For more information and to sign-up, go to <https://pledgeit.org/for/port-plank-a-thon>
- **MCAS testing dates**--although we are still working on a final schedule, please mark your calendars for April 8-12 for ELA and May 6-10 for Math
- **Yearbook orders** are due by February 28

News Around the Building

- **School Culture**
 - We continue to roll out the **Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)** program we are calling *The Nock Advantage*. **Thanks to the PTO** we are implementing a fun acknowledgement system -- students “caught” acting with kindness, respect, responsibility, and awareness receive a ticket. The tickets are turned in for prizes which come in the form of a Pop-up Store, a rolling cart that pops up in the hallways at random times.
 - We are implementing the **SWIS data tracking system** that allows us to see trends and patterns of behaviors (e.g. where and when do most misbehaviors happen in the school building?). This information will be used to monitor our PBIS implementation, help us see areas of need, and measure our progress.
 - Last Thursday Superintendent Gallagher facilitated three **student forums** for students from grades 6-8. His goal was to learn about student hopes and concerns for the Newburyport Schools. He will be using their feedback as part of his entry plan to the School Committee.
- **Curriculum Development**
 - On January 31-February 4, thirteen teachers will be working with consultant Billie Donegan to continue our work **reimagining teaching and learning**. Ms. Donegan is an experienced educator and consultant who will be helping teachers design and implement units using skills-based teaching, assessment, and grading.
 - During the week of February 4-8, the Center for Secondary School Reform will be working with the Nock and NHS to conduct a **student forum and student shadow day**. The goal of the week is to see school through the eyes of our students. Twelve Nock staff members will shadow students for a day. The CSSR team will then help us process what we have learned and develop a plan for next steps.
 - Our technology integrator, Jacquie Rousseau, continues to help us integrate the **1:1 Chromebook technology** into our teaching. We are making progress in using Google Classroom to support the many executive function needs of middle school students. As

our staff gains expertise in Google Classroom, they are also building technology into their lessons. Students are using the Chromebooks to create podcasts, use read-a-loud tools, research databases, engage with educational apps (e.g. Flipgrid, Nearpod) and take online tests.

- Dr. Nicole Sherf from Salem State University is working with our **6-12 World Language team**. In her work with the team, Dr. Sherf will be guiding the department in setting proficiency targets, developing performance assessments, and facilitating collaborative curriculum development.
- And finally, Dr. Kevin Hutchinson, retired superintendent and principal, is working with our whole staff on collaborative processes. Like many middle schools, our staff works in a team model. This allows us to see students across the disciplines, create interdisciplinary connections, and better support middle level learners. Dr. Hutchinson's work during our early release days is strengthening our ability to **effectively use collaboration to enhance teaching and learning**.
- **Program Development**
 - Our **Bridge Program** is up and running to provide a short-term intervention for students who have experienced extended absences from school or the classroom. We will continue to work with The Brookline Center for Community Mental Health as we build the program.
 - After several years of development work, we are pleased to share that the Newburyport Education Foundation will be funding a full renovation of three rooms off the gym to create the **Nock/Molin Wellness Space**. This space will be used for mindfulness, fitness, and wellness programming. **Please encourage your child to sign up for the February 7th Plank-a-thon Fundraiser to support the construction! Practice wellness, take a tour of the space, and support us in reimagining the Nock/Molin schools!** Visit <https://pledgeit.org/for/port-plank-a-thon> to get involved.
- **Congratulations**
 - This year's **National Geographic Geography Bee** winner is Desmond Conway! Congratulations also go to Liam Casco and Will Pflaum who were runners-up!
 - **Newburyport's Project 351** representative Henry Acton was inducted into the program this weekend with 8th graders from all 351 Massachusetts cities and towns. We look forward to supporting him with his Project 351 service project!
 - Last week our chorus, band and orchestra students held a wonderful **winter concert**. Thanks to all of them for bringing music to the Nock!
- **Communication**
 - Check out the newly redesigned Newburyport Public Schools websites...you can now see our daily announcements and follow our Twitter feed from the Nock site
 - And if you are a Twitter user, check us out @NBPTRupertNock

As you can see, we are busy here at the Nock. Thanks for all you do to support our work! Lisa