



# North Shore



## Middle School Monthly

September, 2009

“All the Middle School News That’s Fit to Print”

Vol.7, Issue 02

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### Principal’s Letter:

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**Dear Middle School Students and Parents,**

School is under way and we are off to a great start! As I wander the hallways, classrooms, cafeteria I love seeing so many happy children interacting with their teachers, friends and classmates. As we move toward week two, are becoming be getting comfortable with our daily routines and getting into the full swing.

Our first *Yankee Met Challenge Day* will be **Friday, September 25**. More details about that day will be given out to the students. The *Club Fair* will be held on Tuesday, **September 15**. If your child is not able to attend, they can still participate in any of our after school clubs. The more they become a part of our school community, the more comfortable and confident they will become throughout the school year. Club meeting times and schedules will be posted in your Back-To-School-Night information and on the MS website.

*The week of October 13th* will play host to our *Middle School Spirit Week*. Activities during the week will include a school wide Scavenger Hunt, Crazy Hat Day, Pajama Day, Team Theme Day, and a Friday Pep Rally in the Middle School Gymnasium. After school each day, all students are invited to join the 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade class advisors as they go to the high school to build our annual Middle School Homecoming float. Class advisors will be announcing lunch time meetings so students can come up with a theme for this year’s homecoming parade on **Saturday, October 17<sup>th</sup>**.

Parents, this is an exciting time to be an active member of our PTA. As a member of our PTA, you will have the ability to directly impact the educational experience of your child as we join together to complete plans to build an outdoor classroom/patio area for our students. To learn

more about this interesting challenge, attend our first *PTA meeting on Tuesday, September 22 at 7:30 PM*.

As much as the first few weeks of school can be an exciting time for students, it can also be one of stress and anxiety. If you are worried about how your child is adjusting or if you have any concerns at all, please contact your child's teacher, guidance counselor, Mr. Torossian, Mr. Hert, or myself. Refer to the communication guide that was in your summer mailing if you are unsure of whom to call for your concern. Communicating with the adults in our building is the most effective way to help your children succeed.

During the school day I spend my time in classrooms; I meet with teachers and look after student needs. As a result, I will be returning most phone calls after 3:30 p.m. Of course, if a matter needs immediate attention, I will contact you promptly.

All in all, we are off to a great start and I look forward to seeing all of you on **September 30<sup>th</sup>** for *Back To School Night!*

Sincerely,  
Marc Ferris  
Principal

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### NYS School Health Services Center

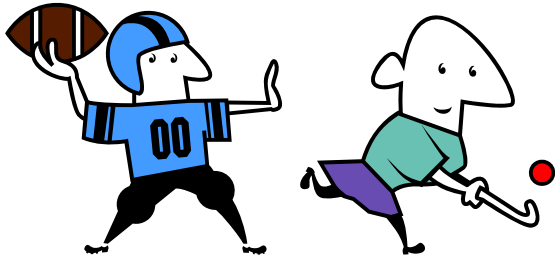
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The last page of this newsletter is a flyer that was distributed by the New York State School Health Services Center with recommendations to reduce the chances of spreading or “catching” H1N1 Influenza.

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### Middle School Fall Sports Update:

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Welcome back athletes!! Hope everyone had a restful and fun filled summer. Our fall sports program is underway with a wonderful turnout of athletes who are eager and anxious to begin a new year of practice, competition, friendships and fun. **This fall features football, boys and girls soccer, field hockey and cross country.**

. If you have any questions regarding athletics you can contact the Middle School Athletic Director, Michele Cochrane, via e-mail or call the Middle School athletic office at 277-7323.

We look forward to a "*FAN*"-*tastic* year!

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## MIDDLE SCHOOL PTA

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Dear Parents,

The NSMS PTA is excited to welcome you back to a new school year! The start of the school year is a time for many new beginnings – new friends, new teachers, and new routines.

The beginning of the school year is a time to keep in mind how important it is for parents to remember that they are a model for their child's self-esteem. Suzy Yehl Marta, founder of Rainbows ([www.rainbows.org](http://www.rainbows.org)) provides some tips to help build your child's self-esteem. They are as follows:

Positive talk: Don't put yourself down or say negative things about your spouse/partner. Disappointment is okay: It is okay for children to experience disappointment as it helps children develop realistic expectations. Sincere Praise: Tell them when they do well and when they do poorly tell them in a loving way. False praise leads to more unrealistic expectations.

Monitor the Media: Negative messages on T.V. and the Internet can erode a child's self-esteem. Communication: Communicating with your children is also important in helping them build self-esteem. If you have any concerns about your children please contact your child's guidance counselor, the school social worker, or the school psychologist. They are here to help.

It's hard not to be concerned about H1N1 and the seasonal flu this year. The National PTA is committed to sharing with you up-to-date resources and information so that we are all informed of the latest. Here are several websites that the National PTA has provided for you to find out more information: <http://www.flu.gov> and [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org). Additionally, as PTA members the PTA website contains a lot of useful information, discounts for PTA members, as well as many other valuable resources.

Our first PTA meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:30 p.m. in the Café! Please come and meet Mr. Ferris and hear about the Middle School.** Back-To-School Night is **Wednesday, September 30, 2009.** Dues will be collected in each Advisory. PTA dues are \$11 per family and can be paid by either cash or check made out to NSMS PTA.

Best Regards,

Robyn Cartagine & Tobi Kupferman  
NSMS PTA Co-Presidents

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## Guidance Corner

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Welcome Back to School! With all of the excitement that a new school year brings, sometimes it also brings a bit of anxiety and pressure. As your North Shore Middle School counselors we are always here to help! Please feel free to reach out to us during this time of transition.

We also hope that you find the article below helpful as your family adjusts to its new routines... **Mrs. Finning (grade 6 counselor) -Mrs. Canzoniero (grade 7 counselor), and Mr. Jackson (grade 8 counselor)**

### Helping Kids Manage Back-to-School Stress

By Linda Bearinger, B.S.N., M.S., Ph.D.

Parents sometimes minimize how stressful the return to school can be for kids. Imagine yourself in this scenario: You've been away from your job for three months, and now you have to go back to work full-time after twelve weeks of relaxing, playing, and doing whatever you want to do. That's stressful. And it's even more difficult for young people if they're switching schools within the same district or moving to a new place altogether. If returning to school coincides with a divorce, a death, a relocation, or the

dramatic changes that come with puberty, going back to school can be particularly stressful.

Kids are remarkably resilient when it comes to coping with such situations. But what can parents do to ease the transition? Most importantly, you should be available when your children want to talk. It might be late at night, or while you're cooking dinner, but you have to be available on their terms and schedule. Even if they're sending off a lot of signals that say, "Mom and Dad, you're not important" or "I don't want to talk with you," it's important for them to know that you're available if they need to talk. Their connection with you is essential to their well-being.

Creating a connection requires what professionals call "an arena of comfort" a place where you can relax and download. Kids need to know that there's a stable place for them to talk about all the stresses that they've had. Research shows that there are certain times of day the drive to school, dinner time, or just before going to bed when children tend to open up. Kids whose parents are consistently around at one or more of those times tend to function better. Kids who can't count on those consistent connections don't do as well.

Of course, kids won't always want or need to talk. But having a meal together creates that opportunity. And busy parents don't have to be available every moment of day: Even establishing just one consistent, scheduled time for potential conversation can have remarkable benefits.

Stress can also be offset with other activities. Parents should plan to have a family activity at the end of the week to which young people can look forward. They might be starting a new class at school or easing into a new peer group this week, but they'll know that at the end of the week, they'll be going on a bike ride or visiting the zoo.

Finally, parents should play a role in reinforcing their children's friendships at school. When kids have a circle of buddies who doesn't overlap with those at school, they don't like school as well. Kids who have friends and a teacher that they can talk to at school are more connected and emotionally well-adjusted. Encourage kids to invite school friends to your home: Make a space, make a place, make a plan. If you're going to the movies, ask Janey which friend would like to come along. Ask Tim who talked with him at school today. Who's on the team or in the club? It's important to get to know your kids' social network. Make your house the place to where kids are comfortable hanging out or even talking to an adult.

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Linda Bearinger is a professor in the School of Nursing at the University of Minnesota and director of the U's Center for Adolescent Nursing. She also holds joint appointments in the School of Public Health and the Medical School's Department of Pediatrics. This column is an educational service of the University of Minnesota. Advice presented should not take the place of an examination by a

health-care professional. For more health-related information, go to [www.healthtalk.umn.edu](http://www.healthtalk.umn.edu)

## **News from the L.I.F.E. COURSES: Life Skills Instruction For Everyone**

The L.I.F.E. Courses at North Shore Middle School are in full swing again! These courses, which include physical education, health, technology, family and consumer science, music and computers, are a hybrid of academics and practical skills. They are designed to help students develop spatial intelligence, practice independent living and technology skills, build confidence in their participation in recreational activities, and provide an outlet for self-expression. While some courses are taught in an eight-week cycle format, others are every other day for the entire year. The L.I.F.E. Courses are excited to welcome Health teacher Neal Levy and Technology teacher Keith Slack to their team!

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### **TEAM CORNER**

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#### **Team A**

Team A is off to a great start this year! You can see the nerves disappearing as locker combinations are getting easier to remember and classrooms are getting easier to find! In Science class, the students are learning about the Scientific Method, making observations and inferences with Mr. Wass and Mrs. Soare. In English, Mrs. Kepke, Mrs. Corrao, and Mrs. Parag are starting the social and cultural awareness unit and the students will soon be reading *Seedfolks*, which they are sure to enjoy. Math students are trying to make sense out of numbers with Ms. Kusz in their unit on integers, prime factorization, greatest common factors and least common multiples. While in Social Studies class with Mrs. Etter and Mr. Christ, the students are learning about the theories of how the first groups of people came to the Americas. Art students are beginning a unit on drawing expressive portraits with Mrs. Black, so keep an eye out for those in the hallway soon!

#### **Team B**

Welcome back, Team B! Get ready because this year will be filled with fun and excitement, both

inside and outside of the classroom. September is not just a month for getting back into the school routine, memorizing locker combinations, and buying school supplies. September also means meeting new friends, joining extra curricular clubs, and thinking of the perfect name for your team.

Your teachers this year include Ms. Filone and Ms. Nichols (English), Ms. Shea (Art), Mr. Gordon (Social Studies), Ms. Frayler (Math), and Ms. March (Science). Please remember that if you have any questions or worries at any point throughout the year, any of these teachers will be more than happy to help you out. All of your teachers send best wishes for academic success and hope that at the end of this school year each of you will take with you many fond memories and great friendships that will last a lifetime.

### TEAM C

Team C teachers are quickly getting back into school mode after a fun and relaxing summer.



I'm Ms. Napoli, and I'm very excited to join North Shore Schools this year. Something that you will get to know about me is that I love to travel to places near and far (especially if there's science involved) -- the picture of me standing on a beach made of volcanic rock in Hawaii this summer explains it all. I look forward to meeting all of you, and I can't wait to explore science with you this year!

Ms. Weber is excited to be teaching math on the French team this year. Having spent the entire summer in Canada, she's hoping to learn a little French from her students. The students can expect to be studying integers, number theory, Pythagorean Theorem, and 2-step equations during the 1st quarter. She wishes them a successful academic year.



Social Studies teacher Mr. Schachter went to Greenland and Iceland in July and then spent two weeks in Australia in August. This photo shows Mr. Schachter in Greenland where the temperatures dropped to the high '30s. Mr. Schachter hopes all his students get the opportunity to travel!



Mme Rubin's youngest student (grandson Hugo) waits patiently. One day he will go to Strasbourg in Alsace, her native place. She loves to share stories about this part of the world with her students. This year she is even more excited to be on a real French team.

I am so happy to be back with all of you, you just are "Fantastique French students par excellence".



Mrs. Brennan spent the summer in this spot relaxing and thinking about all the wonderful opportunities that Team C will be able to experience as the 'All French' Team, especially the French artists. In art we've started drawing self portraits and exploring identity.



## Team I

“Welcome back, Welcome back, and Welcome back...”

The Team I teachers want to make this a great year for their students. We're off to a quick start. Ms. Frank will open her science class with lessons on safety and measurements. She will then be focusing on the scientific method. Mr. Willgoos' English class will be reviewing the student's summer reading selections and those lessons will lead into their short story unit.

Mrs. Wilson's Algebra classes will review Venn Diagrams and simplifying algebraic expressions before jumping into solving algebraic equations. Mrs. Wilson is new to North Shore this year. She comes to us from MS104 in Manhattan. In history class, the best and most important of all the subjects, Mr. Curtin will start with a few lessons on study skills emphasizing SQ3R. After that, he'll launch a review of the Civil War.

Team I is looking forward to a great year!

## Team II

Team II is excited to kick off the 2009-2010 school year! Right now Team II is busy creating a fun team name and preparing for the upcoming Spirit Week! There are many activities to look forward to, including *Crazy Hat Day*, *Pajama Day*, and *Team Theme Day*.

The students had a fantastic summer vacation with fun stories to share! Kira Martin began guitar lessons and is truly inspired! Anthony Magliocco joined a great soccer team! Jessica Miller went to the Usdan Center for the Creative and Performing Arts. She studied musical theater and painting. One of her pieces was shown in their gallery! Tara Palumbo was in a horse show and Caroline Higgins went to horseback riding camp! She's not the only one who went away to camp! Heather Lewin, Phillip Buchan, Chanelle Rackwitz, Samantha Riccardo, Gabriella Gartner, Juliet Sabbatini, Andie Bulbin, and Douglas Manogue also enjoyed a stay at a summer camp. Anton Cefalu, Danielle Sacco, Joseph DeCurtis, Emily Beiser, Megan Hart, Victoria D'Ambrosio, Jessica Lipsey, Olivia Statile, Caroline Statile, Katherine Boehm, Brieger Murphy, Nick Grogan, Julianna Capobianco, Keara McNamara, Breanna Cruz, Sharon Seudat, and Kayla Brady each left town to enjoy a vacation away from home! Their exciting destinations include Pennsylvania, Washington D.C., the Adirondacks, Lake George, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Paris, London, Jamaica, Miami, South Carolina, Saranac Lake, Block Island, and Ocean City. Kevin Ojeda played paint ball in the woods. Mac Ayres confronted a fierce deer in Fire Island. Kit Lepanto

enjoyed a concert that included many of her favorite bands. She was ten feet away from the stage! Melissa Hart enjoyed the roller coaster rides in Hershey Park while Tyler Melson went off to Six Flags! Connor Costello got his boating license and a new wakeboard! Esther Bley was excited to have new renovations made on her home. Tim Wenger was happy to have a long summer of no work! Matthew Pavlica was glad to hang out with his friends and sleep in! It's safe to say that Team II students had a wonderful summer!

Summer is over and we are ready to be back! Inside the classrooms the Team II teachers are engaging the students in a variety of thoughtful activities. Mr. Lang's Living Environment class is about to embark on an educational journey through the natural world in which we all inhabit. Starting with the basics of science inquiry, they are laying the groundwork for an exciting year in biological discovery. Mrs. Larkin recently returned to the Middle School staff after a short stint in Arlington, Virginia. We are excited to have her back! Mrs. Larkin's Social Studies class will begin to study a number of thought provoking questions: Should President Andrew Johnson have been impeached? Was the Reconstruction a success or failure? Mr. Pace will be teaching concepts of set theory and number systems in Integrated Algebra. His primary goal at the start of the year is to get to know the students as individual learners. Ms. Reddy's English class will be diving into short stories by various authors, including Langston Hughes, Chris Crutcher, Guy de Maupassant, and Richard Wright. It has been a fabulous start to a great year!

## Team III

Welcome back to school Team III. Being back to school means something different to each of us. Mr. O'Hara, our English teacher, is back at North Shore, but new to the Middle School. He taught in NS High school for several years. You may remember him at the Middle School as the director of the Middle School Play. Mr. Freund, Social studies teacher, is back after his summer, excited for a new year and thinking of a name and theme song for our team. Ms. Hoffman, our Living Environment teacher taught at the HS last year and is here for the first half of the year replacing Mrs. DeNatale. Mrs. DeNatale is home with her brand new bouncing baby boy. We could say welcome back to Ms. Hoffman from many years ago, as she was a student at NSMS. Mr. Keenan, our math teacher, also a

former student of NSJHS, has oh so many years on Ms. Hoffman.

Here is a quick overview of our year. In SS students will continue their exploration of US history that they began in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. Students left off when the North won the Civil War, but were stunned and saddened by the assassination of Abraham Lincoln. Students will now learn how the two sides rejoined during Reconstruction.

In the Living Environment, students will be examining different concepts in the living world. The scientific method is the first topic. Students will learn how to identify a problem and be able to come up with a problem in order to solve it.

## 6<sup>th</sup> Grade News

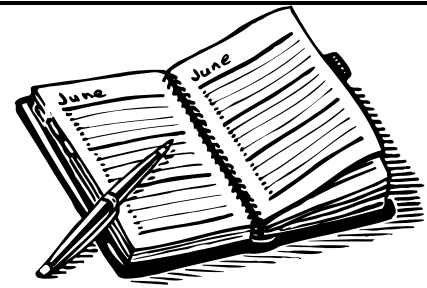
The sixth grade teams have spent the week getting acclimated to our new school environment and building a sense of community in our classrooms. We have begun to set the tone for respectful learning and to establish a climate of trust. Getting to know one another has been fun so far and is so important when you are part of a "community of learners"! We have been playing name games, conducting surveys, organizing supplies, taking learning inventories, going on NSMS tours, meeting lots of people, practicing opening lockers, new routines and procedures, and way more! This year is already off to an amazing start and it will just get more incredible from here!

Team Leaders can be reached by e-mail ([lastnamefirstinitial@northshoreschools.org](mailto:lastnamefirstinitial@northshoreschools.org)) or by phone at 277-7300

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## Mark Your Calendar!

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### **Tuesday, September 15:**

Club Fair – Cafeteria 3:00 -4:00 PM

### **Monday, September 21:**

Red Day Diversity Kick-off

### **Tuesday, September 22**

MS PTA Meeting – Cafeteria, 7:30

### **Thursday, September 24:**

Board Of Ed Meeting  
HS Alumni Rm 8:00 PM

### **Friday, September 25:**

Mets Yankee Day

### **Wednesday, September 30:**

Back To School Night, 7:00 PM

### **Tuesday, October 6:**

MS Picture Day

If you have thoughts or ideas regarding this newsletter or life at the middle school, please share them with the principal by e-mailing:

[Ferrism@northshoreschools.org](mailto:Ferrism@northshoreschools.org)

## North Shore Middle School



**Making a difference!**

# WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD STAY HOME WITH THE FLU?



## H1N1 Influenza A Recommendations from the Centers for Disease Control

### When should my child stay home with the flu?

Students with "Influenza-Like Illness" stay home when they are sick. Your child may have the flu and should stay home if they have the following signs and symptoms:

**Fever of 100°F  
(37.8° C) or greater**  
**Cough**  
**Runny Nose**  
**Sore Throat**

### When should my child return to school?

It is recommended that students stay home until at least 24 hours after they are free of fever [100°F (37.8° C) or greater] or signs of a fever, without the use of fever-reducing medications.



### What can we do to reduce the chances of spreading or "catching" H1N1 Influenza?

- Wash hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing
- Use alcohol based hand sanitizers to clean hands if soap and water are not available
- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when coughing or sneezing and throw the tissue in the trash after use (if no tissue is available, cough or sneeze into your arm or sleeve—not your hand)

New York Statewide School Health Services Center