



# The Amesbury Public Schools' Newsletter

Volume 2 – May 1, 2020

This is the Second Edition of the district's newsletter (perhaps we should call it the CORONAVIRUS Edition). We are entering our sixth week of remote learning. So much had to happen so quickly and students, teachers, paras and parents have stepped up to the plate so brilliantly! Families and staff are the glue holding our children together! I am so proud of everyone in these challenging times. This newsletter is a little snapshot of things to celebrate, and what a day in the Amesbury Schools – the "AT HOME" versions might look like. Please continue your hand washing, safe distancing and mask wearing and stay well.

Jared Fulgoni, Superintendent of Schools



## **Top Five Things I Have Learned While Teaching Remotely in Amesbury and Parenting Two Amesbury High School Kids and One College Kid Non-Remotely**

**By Julie O'Neill, Teacher at Cashman**

5. Everybody apparently needs to shower before their 10AM class/virtual meeting. We have one bathroom and an even smaller water tank for five people. You need to make reservations in advance. Did not expect to need a reservation anywhere during quarantine.
4. It's been a scramble to get enough working computers for 3 students, a teacher, and a college administrator, who generally have to be online at the same time. It's been an even bigger scramble trying to find "a quiet place" to have a Zoom Google Hangout Google Meet meeting without being interrupted by the dog or someone looking for lunch. Also, apparently we are a really loud family.
3. One of the best things these days is seeing one of your students while you are out walking, and you can see they are healthy and doing well. One of the worst things however, is having them right in front of you (social distancing, of course) and NOT being able to hug them. I miss hugging my students. This time has been hard for huggers all around. On the plus side, I have worn the same sweatshirt for the last five days and my self-care "beauty" routine has been, um, minimal, so at least I am still recognizable to eight-year-olds.
2. Who knew our Wi-Fi was from the dark ages? Corona has forced us to problem solve and get a new router to support all of this new online learning. But Netflix has stopped spinning so it's totally been worth it.
1. This quarantine has been really hard on a lot of people. So many families have been struggling with staying afloat and staying healthy. On days when I don't feel overwhelmed, I feel lucky. My kids are 15, 18, and 19, right on the edge of flying the coop and starting their young adult lives away from home. This quarantine might be the last time we are all in one house, and even in its worst moments (and there are *definitely* those) it is still a gift. I have also never been more grateful to work with the people I work with. I will never again take for granted seeing the faces I see in my building and beyond every day. I know that is true for educators everywhere in this district.

Lastly, I am grateful for hot coffee being available to me at any time of day. I did not know that was an actual.

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We have heard a lot about people who are "heroes" during this whole COVID-19 pandemic, and Amesbury Public Schools has some very special people we would like to highlight!

## LUNCH PROGRAM



**Jeanne Sheehan and Carol Babine** are on the frontlines making an average of 130 lunches per day. We are so grateful that they have worked out a system which is so efficient and streamlined. This task seems daunting but they pleasantly take it in stride knowing that it is helping so many people. **THANK YOU Ladies.**



**Larry Fedorchak and Ken Manson** have been delivering lunches to people who have no transportation. This service is a huge help getting food to people who need it, all the while they remain masked and socially distant. **THANK YOU Larry and Ken.**

If you think you would like lunches, you may come to the front of the High School on **Mondays and Wednesdays** between the hours of **11:30 AM and 1:00 PM.**



The people who have handed out lunches every day (quite often this Spring in the wind and the rain) have also figured out a system whereby they can keep socially distant. Thank you for being there for our people and being so friendly and caring. I know it means a lot to our children to see faces they know from schools (and truthfully, I know the volunteers really need that too). A special "THANKS" to **Dawn Pelletier** who organized a group of volunteers to make sure there is always someone available.

## CUSTODIANS



**Sean Foley**



**Jeremy Faucher**

Our custodians have been working every day to keep our buildings safe and clean. They have been spraying disinfectant, cleaning lockers, scouring the woodwork and floors, and painting. They also had a huge hand in organizing the distribution of the Chromebooks. Thank you **Rich Papa and Jeremy Faucher** at **AHS**, **Mike Feters** and **Dave Proulx** at **CES**, **Mike Tanzella** and **Sean Foley** at **AES** and **Kevin Ward** and **Mike DiNuzzio** at **AMS.**

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**Pia Froncki**

There are people behind the scenes trying to keep up the spirits and morale of staff and students. A huge **THANK YOU** to Pia Froncki, an AES Paraprofessional whose sunny attitude and creativity has been on overdrive during the “shelter in place.” She has rallied her work mates and students to create a feeling of “**We ARE** all in this together!” Pia has created a slideshow, assembled collages and organized a virtual parade of staff. We know everyone at Amesbury Elementary greatly appreciates it. Oh, she does all this while home-schooling her son Braeden and daughter Eliza. **THANK YOU PIA!** (She also has a couple other projects in the works, so be on the lookout!!)



**Mrs. Jarman**



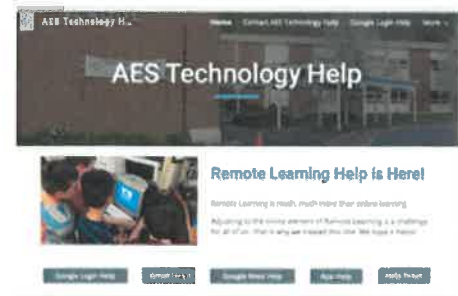
**Mrs. Hoyt**

Mrs. Mascia-Fayles from Cashman Elementary School wanted to do a big “**THANK YOU**” to Adjustment Counselors Mrs. Edna Jarman and Mrs. Megan Hoyt. These women have been tremendously helpful in reaching out to families and touching base with them as well as offering support to staff. Mrs. Hoyt would like to acknowledge the help of Jessica Moody - AES, Rebecca Luz – CES and Allison Stenson of the Central Office who have all been working as a team. **THANK YOU ALL!**



**Mr. Bruce McBrien**

When we asked if there was anyone who has been a huge help with this whole “distance learning” piece, staff and parents all enthusiastically mentioned **Mr. Bruce McBrien**, Technology Teacher at Amesbury Elementary. Mr. McBrien has been provided enormous assistance to staff by creating a *Help Desk* to answer their technology questions.



Bruce put together a video of the staff car parade which was viewed over and over by students and their families just so they could catch a glimpse of “their teachers!” McBrien is doing all of this while teaching his own students. Here is an example of an assignment. “**Make a Home for a Teddy Bear.**” Please look at **Patrick Cook’s** creation!!



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This edition's guest journalist is **Katelyn Cronin**. She is in Grade 4 in Mrs. Harney's Class (and is very fond of s'mores).



## Corona Virus Quarantine

Corona virus quarantine is the worst thing that has ever happened in my life. I am sad I cannot see my friends and that I did not even get to say goodbye to my teachers in person. I will have to go to the middle school in the Fall and will not know where to go. It is very frustrating right now, all the sports I play have been cancelled. I am a Girl Scout and go to camp during the Summer, a few of those camp sessions have already been cancelled. It is going to make my Summer sad too.

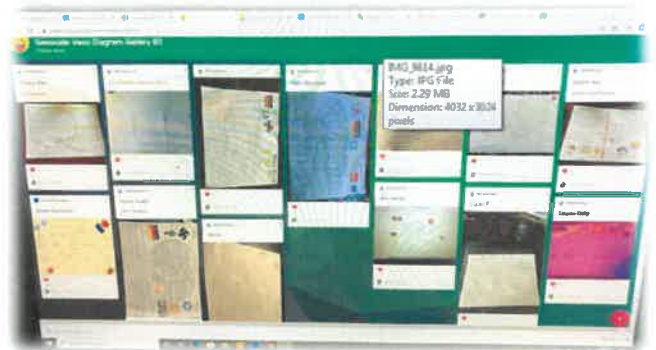
Even though quarantine has been hard, there are bright things happening. I get to spend more time with family! I have gotten to play more games with my big brother who is in college. I have been able to have more movie nights with my family. My family and I built a cool fire pit in our backyard, so we can make delicious s'mores and try to have some fun. My mom and I planted seeds for a vegetable and herb garden. At nighttime before bed, I video chat with all my friends. Our moms set this up so that we can stay in touch and not feel so alone. That honestly makes quarantine a little easier.

I am ready to go back to my normal life!



**Mrs. Daileanes**, AHS ELA Teacher wanted to mention that she is grateful for how the high school teachers, paraprofessionals, and administration have come together to share resources on Google Classroom and support one another. "For example" she pointed out "**Kaitlin Sconce** introduced me to Padlet, which is a program teachers and students can use to display work in an online gallery. This week, I have my students working on a literary Venn diagram, taking a photo of their projects, and posting them to Padlet--where other classmates can view and comment on the assignment. And my students have been terrific during the video classes--so nice to see their faces and hear their voices!"

Below is an example of the work of her Freshmen Class:



And speaking of "seeing their faces", **The Room 113 Class** at AHS had a remote dress-up day on Friday. Looks like a good time was had by all! They also got to have a very cool drive-by parade to their homes with **Mr. Fulgoni, Officers LeSage and Guilmette, Mrs. Catarius and Ms. Luz, et al.** We miss these faces in the halls of AHS.



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This is a "Shout Out" from Cashman's 4<sup>th</sup> Grade Teacher, **Mrs. Courtney Lovett:**



"I have so many wonderful fourth grade students that are being so productive through this time and so many supportive parents. One of my students is doing such an amazing job, he really stands out. **Patrick McCarthy** has done every virtual assignment, every google meet, consistently and well. He is so mature, if he has any questions about an assignment, he emails, he's extremely appropriate and polite with his communications, he is just a standout star right now. We are asking so much of these 9/10 year old kids and their families, but Pat in particular, is just knocking it out of the park. I'm really proud of him!"

Exciting Cashman News: Kindergarteners are Expecting Kindergarten teacher, **Mrs. Carol O'Neill** is hatching eggs. She has them in her basement in an incubator and it will be 21 one days until the chicks are hatched! Her class will be checking on them remotely! Mrs. O'Neill does this every year and she didn't want this class to miss out! Very exciting news for her peeps!!



From **Mrs. Elizabeth McAndrews, AHS Principal:**



"I would like to give a Shout Out to my graduation team, **Kathy Beaudoin and Lindsey Alley, Steve Bastien, Anne Nadeau, Kathy Morrill, Russ Munroe, Glen Gearin and Class President, John Nelson!** They have continued to brainstorm ways to celebrate and recognize the amazing **Class of 2020!**"



"Secondly, I would also like to give a Shout Out to **Dr. Danielle Ricci** for earning her PhD by successfully defending her thesis and shortly thereafter, giving birth to **Emmy Hope!** Two very impressive accomplishments!"

"Another Shout Out goes to **my entire staff** who works their tails off to continue the learning for our students while keeping in mind the challenges that each of those students is facing during this unique time. I am so proud of them!"

"My last Shout Out goes to **our AHS students.** They have consistently demonstrated determination, tenacity, and flexibility as they engage in our Remote Learning Plan. They continue to show their creativity and empathy for one another as they organize group viewings of Netflix, Facetime each other, and just check in on each other during this isolating and challenging time. I am so impressed with them and miss each of them dearly!"

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## Some Exciting News from Jennifer Donais AMS Math Coach



Amesbury Middle School received the ST Math Grant through Mass STEM Hub and the One 8 foundation last month. ST stands for Spatial Temporal math. ST Math is a game based approach to learning where students solve puzzles around the math standards. There are no words in the program and helps students to build conceptual understanding around the math objectives. If students get a puzzle wrong it gives students visual feedback. The program is based on neuroscience of how the brain works. 5th and 6th graders are already piloting the program this Spring and are excited to start the full program in the fall. With ST Math we are building conceptual understanding so that all students are mathematically equipped to solve the world's most challenging problems. This grant will amount to approximately \$60,000 over three years! Congratulations!



## Mayor Cassandra Gove

Hello everyone! This has truly been a difficult time for our community, but I have to say that I'm so impressed with our teachers, staff and parents for coming together to make remote learning work. With very little notice our teachers had to completely re-invent how they teach. Our staff had to figure out how to keep our students fed and work to ensure that students have remote access. And every parent had to change their day-to-day lives to accommodate keeping kids home and continuing to learn. Thank you for all doing your best, for being patient with one another and for being kind during a tough time. I look forward to seeing you all in person when it's safe to do so!



**AEFI (Amesbury Educational Foundation, Inc.)** wants parents and staff to join their Facebook group to celebrate a project that their students may be doing. Share a High Five to students and teachers who are busy every day doing something like watching for earthquakes around the world on the new AMS seismograph, or who are helping their parents learn math their way.

**AEFI** understands the frustration everyone feels since school activities have been cancelled: no prom, no Disney trip, no field trips. Our annual Hall of Honor celebration in May will now be on November 6. But meanwhile, we celebrate the positive efforts of our students and staff in Amesbury Public Schools every day, and we invite you to join us to shout out High Fives.

And finally...**Susan Olsen**, AMS Art Teacher has been asking her students to send it pictures of "A Day in the Life." Here were a couple of her favorites: "A Day in the Life of Slippers" and "The Life in Nature:"

After a long day, we go to bed

