

**ELLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS
DISTRICT AREAS OF FOCUS
MONTHLY REPORT
APRIL 2015**

1.0 Status of Initiatives

District Data – Mathematics

Grade 1: Bridges in Mathematics Unit 3–Adding, Subtracting, Counting and Comparing		
Post-Assessment Data Class Average = 88%		
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	48/193	25%
Meets	109/193	56%
Approaching	29/193	15%
Significantly Below	7/193	4%

Grade 2: Bridges in Mathematics Unit 3 –Addition and Subtraction within 100		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 54%	Class Average = 84%	+30 %
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	39/188	21%
Meets	110/188	59%
Approaching	25/188	13%
Significantly Below	14/188	7%

Grade 3: Bridges in Mathematics Unit 3 –Multi-Digit Addition and Subtraction		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 56%	Class Average = 81%	+25 %
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	9/195	5%
Meets	135/195	69%
Approaching	46/195	24%
Significantly Below	5/195	3%

Grade 4: Bridges in Mathematics Unit 3 –Fractions and Decimals		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 48%	Class Average = 82%	+34 %
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	10/210	5%
Meets	157/210	75%
Approaching	29/210	14%
Significantly Below	14/210	7%

Grade 5: Bridges in Mathematics Unit 3 –Place Value and Decimals		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 37%	Class Average = 83%	+46%
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	18/219	8%
Meets	143/219	65%
Approaching	55/219	25%
Significantly Below	3/219	1%

Grade 6: Math Innovations Notable Numbers –Fractions, Decimals & Percents		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 36%	Class Average = 85%	+49 %
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	58/205	28%
Meets	116/205	57%
Approaching	23/205	11%
Significantly Below	8/205	4%

Grade 7: Math Innovations Accent on Algebra –Equations, Tables & Graphs		
Pre-assessment:	Post-Assessment Data	Overall Growth
Class Average = 16%	Class Average = 83%	+67%
Level:	# of Students:	Percent:
Exceeds	16/196	8%
Meets	124/196	63%
Approaching	56/196	29%
Significantly Below	0/196	0%

The Center School PTO announced at the April meeting a change to our slate of officers for 2015-2016. **Allison Gray** was voted in as President; **Danielle Beaudry** as Vice-President; **Sara Owens** and **Erin Turney** were voted in as Treasurer and Secretary respectively. Center School is fortunate to have the continued support and services of these dedicated volunteers to lead our P.T.O.

The ZuZu African Acrobats were here to perform two amazing shows for Center School students. The acrobats encouraged children and adults to participate in an exciting Limbo contest and other gymnastic activities to the delight of all. Center School deeply appreciates **Kellie Buck** for organizing this performance.

A Kite Day was held for Center School students, sponsored by the PTO and we thank **Wendy Wright** and **Anita Overgaard** along with the windy weather for a fun family day at Brookside Park. Many families reported their pleasure in spending a day engaged in an old-fashioned kind of fun. **Carol Feindel** organized the final Reading for Fun opportunity for this school year. The PTO hosted a successful Plant Sale under the direction of **Tracy Elsass** and many volunteers.

Over 100 parents volunteer their time in Center School, helping out in classrooms, in the library, on the playground, or in our many events. We had the opportunity to thank all our parent volunteers in celebration and honor during National Volunteer Week. Our gratitude and respect was shown to all the individuals who have dedicated their time to share their talents with our school, whether they had given one hour or many hours in service to the school.

Student volunteers were also recognized. Fourth graders **Kelly Avery, Emma Critchley, Bridget Eckels, Mikayla Helin, Landon Luginbuhl, Julia Piasecki, Olivia Tebbetts, Ryan Wheeler,** and **Charles Williams** were acknowledged for volunteering their time each morning in support of younger learners. Third graders **Hannah Kozik, Jack Lomot, Ava Powell, Victoria Martinez** and **Norah Wright** were also acknowledged for volunteering each week to help dismiss kindergarten students. **Nailah Zahedi** and **Benson Reutter** served as student ambassadors for Superintendent-elect Dr. Scott Nicol's site visit. They escorted Dr. Nicol on a tour throughout the school and introducing him to staff and students.

April 24 was National Poem in Your Pocket Day. For our fourth annual celebration of this exciting day, students wrote their own poetry, crafted class poems together, or read poetry books to find their favorites. Students and staff carried these much-loved poems throughout the day and eagerly shared them with others. Pockets of poems were posted through the hallways for students to select and read.

Students read poems to their book buddies, heard authors read their poems aloud via the SMART Board, and/or engaged in poetry circles.

Center School was open to our families and friends for a Family Math Night evening. This first-ever evening was set aside for our families to learn more about the Bridges math program. On this evening, students served as their parents teachers as they experienced Work Stations and Number Corner activities in the classrooms. Those in attendance all came away with new calculation and/or problem solving strategies.

Earth Day was celebrated on April 22 at Center School. Activities throughout the school acknowledged the importance of caring for the earth, picking up trash in Arbor Park, the role of trees in shaping our environment, and projects and murals made of recycled materials.

Second grade students from Center went on a field trip to see Miss Nelson is Missing performed at the Symphony Hall in Springfield as a follow-up to sharing this whole-class read aloud in their character study unit. Fourth graders participated in an in-school science field experience provided by High Touch-High Tech.

Crystal Lake School Data Team Work:

The kindergarten data team is working on a data team cycle focused on Phonemic Awareness. The team's SMART goal is, *The percentage of students scoring at mastery or higher will be 75% as measured by Kindergarten Inventory administered in May/June, 2015.*

The grade one data team recently completed a data team cycle focused on fractions. The team's SMART goal was, *The percentage of students scoring at mastery or higher will be 80% as measured by Unit 5 Fraction Post Assessment.* The team exceeded their goal with 86% of students demonstrating mastery.

The grade two data team is working on a writing conventions data team cycle. The team's SMART goal is, *The percentage of students scoring at mastery or higher in capital letter usage and end punctuation will increase from 31% to 70% as measured by a teacher created assessment administered in May 2015.*

The grade three data team recently completed a data team cycle focused on written responses to open ended text based questions. The team's post assessment data indicated 77% of students mastering this skill.

The grade four data team is working on a math problem-solving data cycle. *The team's SMART goal is, The percentage of students demonstrating mastery will increase from 36% to 82% as measured by a teacher created problem solving assessment.*

At the April Crystal Lake School faculty meeting teachers continued their book club conversations. Teachers in grades K-2 are reading Reading Wellness, facilitated by Louise Kelly and teachers in grades 3-4 are reading Notice and Note, facilitated by Penny Hughes.

Ms. Amy Duff and **Ms. Robin Kline** presented an in-service for K-2 teachers new to the Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment. The Benchmark has been purchased for all K-2 teachers and will replace the DRA to assess student reading growth.

The Invention Convention was held at Ellington High School on April 7, 2015. Numerous students presented their ingenious inventions to our parent population and community judges. It was a

wonderful event and substantiated what wonderful academic and imaginative talent resides with our students in Ellington.

On April 27, teachers from around the Ellington School District attended a State-sponsored CCSC workshop at Ellington High School which highlighted the new social studies frameworks for schools. **Ms. Donovan, Mr. Murphy, Ms. Lowe, Ms. Horvath, Ms. Korona, Ms. Purcaro, and Ms. Menard** were present to seek out valuable information with regard to social studies at the intermediate level.

Ms. Marshall and Ms. Toback-Reveley recently completed the sixth grade student's academic goal-setting and goal reflection activities for their Student Success Plans. These plans will continue to guide our students as they enter middle school and beyond. We continue to host Town Meetings for all our grade levels at Windermere School. Fifth and sixth graders shared a "no bullying" PowerPoint and student members of various Rachel's Clubs discussed past and current happenings. Also, both Ms. Marshall and Ms. Toback-Reveley initiated a three-week Career Awareness guidance unit in the fifth grade classrooms. They continued to implement and coordinate a cross-age teaching program which currently involves scheduling and monitoring of 84 fifth and sixth grade students who volunteer their recess time on a weekly basis as tutors and teacher's helpers in our elementary school classrooms. The school counselors continue to teach approximately nine classes per week for most of the school year. The topics include a Conflict Resolution/Bullying Prevention workshop, Academic Goal-Setting workshops, Career Awareness/Career Day Preparation workshop for Grade 6 and a Career Awareness workshop for Grade 5 (3 weekly lessons).

Our 6th graders completed the Smarter Balanced Assessment during the testing window of March 23 through April 10. Our 5th grade students began their testing on April 22 and will continue through May 7. Our 3rd and 4th graders will follow their intermediate peers and test from May 11 through May 22. Students have successfully been able to use their Chromebooks to test in their classrooms.

In the month of April, much of the school efforts at Ellington Middle School were focused on administering Smarter Balanced testing. Starting immediately after the April break, students began taking the ELA portions of this new test. Both teacher and student early responses were very positive. With some natural breaks built-in, the Smarter Balanced testing will conclude in mid-May.

Beyond testing, language arts teachers worked closely with the Teachers College consultant for a full day on wrapping up the literary essay unit by looking at samples of student work with the task making curriculum revisions for the 2015–16 school year. Social studies teachers also worked with the TC consultant, learning about small group teaching strategies and trying them out live with an eighth grade social studies class.

Beyond implementing the new math series, math teachers are successfully integrating two different online math support programs as a means of supplementing instruction. Teachers (and students) use the data from these online programs to target instruction on specific skills in need of further practice. In science, seventh grade teachers spent time modifying their human digestion unit with particular attention to aligning assessments with the report card standards. Many of the different departments worked closely with technology intervention specialist Mike Nash on developing lessons that support student learning through the integration of Google Chromebooks.

Mr. Mike Nash, Ms. Jenna Dhandapani, and Mr. Neil Rinaldi have worked throughout the month of April to revise the portfolio process at Ellington High School. The reasons for the revisions are to provide students with opportunities to demonstrate mastery, personalize their learning experience, offer more student choice, and to provide a repository for student reflection showing growth over time. The portfolios will also now be digital, providing students the opportunity to view their personal and academic growth from grades three through 12, reflect upon both short and long-term goals, share their

interests and passions with peers, teachers, and family members, and to build a positive footprint. The benefits for teachers are the opportunity to foster a growth mindset with students, to build new learning opportunities, to differentiate instruction based on individual student needs, and to gain insight into the interest of their students. Parents will also benefit from the digital portfolios because they'll be able to view their student's personal and academic growth throughout their academic career, assess their student's and reflect upon both short and long-term goals, support their children's effort to build a positive footprint and be able to gain insight the daily teaching and learning experiences. This initiative fully supports the district's multi-year academic growth plan.

The EHS Student Advisory Council is playing a big role in the development of a digital student portfolio. Members recently met with Mr. Mike Nash to provide feedback into the development and components of a digital portfolio. Students were asked to try out some of the applications currently in place as future practical users of the system. Students could easily access and upload existing student work digitally, with little or no direction, into Google Sites the platform for the digital portfolios. Mr. Rinaldi and Mr. Nash were pleased with the results that indicated students should have little difficulty adapting and using Google Site platform.

Daniel Hayes and **Benjamin Kloter** were chosen as scholar athletes by the National Football Foundation. Dan and Ben are the second and third student athletes in Ellington High School history to earn this recognition. This is a major award and it's a credit to the type of student we have at EHS.

The National Football Foundation (NFF) Representatives Paul Cosgrove and Larry Olson were at EHS on Wednesday, April 1 to present the awards at a ceremony attended by the superintendent of schools, administrators, parents and coaches. The award winners will have a dinner in their honor later in the spring and their names will be enshrined at the National College Football Hall of Fame in Atlanta.

On April 6 Mr. Gary Partridge director of the Capitol Winds, an adult wind ensemble that rehearses at the Hartt School of Music in West Hartford, worked with the EHS Jazz Band and Concert Band. Mr. Partridge is well known throughout New England as a sought after guest conductor. His work with our students exposed them to extremely high standards and gave our students an extraordinary opportunity to learn from an outstanding conductor.

On April 6 Mr. Rinaldi and Mrs. Ciarci attended the CAS Fine Arts Awards Banquet at the Aqua Turf Club with students **Katherine Lee, Nicholas Topor** and their parents. The Connecticut High School Fine Arts Awards annually honors two outstanding seniors from each of the member schools in the state who excel in the performing or visual arts. They must possess the qualities of scholarship and leadership. Excelling in the performing or visual arts is of primary importance in the selection.

Students at EHS celebrated cultural day on April 8th and 9th. During this celebration students from Latin, French and Spanish classes came together to share about their cultures by bringing in food from their heritage. They also were able to participate in activities like Geoguesser, which digitally dropped students into all parts of the world. They used arts and crafts materials to make paper stained glass windows to mimic the many cathedrals throughout France, Spain and Italy. They watched cultural videos about learning a new language. Some students participated in salsa dancing lessons, and all students used their electronic devices to play Kahoot about French, Latin, German, Spanish, and Chinese culture for a chance to win an iTunes gift card.

Author and presenter Chris Lehman finished his professional development at the high school for this year with the English and Social studies departments. Mr. Lehman has been working on helping teacher and students develop their close reading skills. He has also provided strategies for developing and implementing formative assessments.

Mr. Helmin and the Student Council held “Advisory Cart Wars” to benefit Relay for Life. Teachers volunteered to participate in the, “cart wars” that was modeled after the TV Wipeout. The teachers had to navigate their cart through a maze of “hazards” as they were competing against the clock for the best time. The event was held in the gymnasium as the student body cheered on the competitors. The winner of the event was the Green Team comprised of **Mrs. Jenn Blalock, Dr. Tim Gorton, and Mr. Michael Melillo**. \$191 was raised in the cafeteria in advance of the event and the Student Council contributed \$109.00 for a total of \$300 that was donated to Relay for Life.

A committee was formed and met to discuss developing a formal SRBI Committee. The committee role will be to develop and refine the high school referral process, articulate the 8th grade transition of students receiving Tier II and Tier III services and to conduct regularly scheduled meeting to progress students in the SRBI process.

Dr. LaPorte and **Mrs. Haberern** continue to plan for Extended School Year Services. This year the district will continue to offer in-district programs including a six week program for 25 hours per week for students with significant disabilities in grades K-12, a five week program for 12 hours per week for students with IEPs in grades pre-K-12 and a vocational program. There will also be eight students attending out of district ESY.

Dr. LaPorte planned and presented the April Parent Conversation Night with **Carin Faraci** and **Diane Lasher-Penti**. The topic was Social Anxiety. The session was well attended with 33 parents/guardians in attendance, positive feedback was received and parents have requested more information on this topic.

2.0 Next Steps

Data teams at Center School will be finishing up their third data cycle. Our second data cycle period indicates positive student growth in all grades, with the third data cycles underway at this time. In kindergarten 88% of students mastered their sight words, up from 40% in November. 85% of first graders are reading independently at Level 12 or beyond. Second grade teachers are working toward a goal of increasing the percentage of students attaining mastery from 64% to 80% in “Other Vowels” (Primary spelling assessment). 79% of the third grade students attained mastery of the grade level expectation for “Other Vowels” (Elementary spelling assessment). 84% of the fourth graders reached the grade level expectancy on the Bridges Unit 4 post-assessment. Teachers in first grade are planning final units of study together in support of two long-term substitute teachers.

Center School will celebrate Turn of the TV Week, planning a culminating Talent Show at the end of the week, featuring student interest, skills and talents from all grades. **Ines Knospe** is providing extracurricular experiences for each grade afterschool for the week to promote physical activity over screen time.

The Crystal Lake School All Hazards Safety and Security Committee will meet in May to review the Functional Annexes of the school plan, including evacuation guidelines and drill protocols. The Crystal Lake School Climate Committee will meet in May to plan for the last meeting of the CARES groups for the year. The Crystal Lake CARES groups are multi age groups of students who meet to learn about and practice Cooperation, Advocacy, Respect, Empathy, and Self-Control. These attributes represent the social emotional tenets of the Responsive Classroom approach to elementary teaching.

Ms. Sara Varga, Mr. David Pechie, Ms. Loretta Donovan, and Ms. Cheryl Warriner will be attending a two-day PBIS workshop in Mystic, CT. Windermere School continues to implement three tiers of intervention through the Behavioral Intervention Team. The staff recently completed the

yearly school-wide online survey to gain a better understanding of the staff's perspective in terms of PBIS implementation and subsequent success.

In the month of May, the middle school will be finishing up SBAC testing. During the month, several major events are planned. In early May, the middle school will host an orientation for incoming sixth grade parents. The format of the night will include a presentation on what makes EMS school a typical and not so typical middle school in an effort to help parents anticipate this upcoming transition. Also in May, teacher and student representatives will attend the annual Governors Summer Reading Challenge Award ceremony hosted by Gov. Malloy. Once again, EMS has been identified as one of the top reading schools in the state of Connecticut.

Later in the month, EMS will be hosting a Digital Learning Week from May 18 - May 22. In an effort to build a BYOT (bring your own technology) culture at the middle school, during this week students will be encouraged to bring their own devices and try them in classrooms with learning activities incorporating a wide range of technologies. The week concludes with a daytime parent open house on May 22. During this open house, parents are welcome to visit all classrooms throughout the day to watch students learn using digital devices. During that day, there will also be several presentations in the media center on topics like home purchasing technology for use in school, establishing a positive digital footprint, and what parents should know about digital literacy and e-books.

The high school will continue to develop the digital portfolio process. Professional development will be provided for teachers and advisory lessons will be developed for students on using Google Sites. The current freshman class and current 8th grade class will use the new digital system. Other classes will do the current hard copy portfolio.

3.0 Recognitions

Center School has been recognized as a **PBIS Banner School** at the state level for the positive impact the initiative has had on school climate and safety. The PBIS team, **Valerie Baigert, Deb Hillemeir, Katie Gelsomino, Tomi Raver** and **Sandy Scully**, completed an extensive application process highlighting the successful measures implemented and the action plan for continued efforts. SERC will be sending a banner to the school for prominent display.

Three Center students went to Art at the Capitol with **Steve Bernard, Gillian Paseka, Hannah Gerber**, and **Meghan Drury**. They had an opportunity to meet Senators Larson while on the field trip and discussed their artwork with the senator. The students will have their pieces displayed at the capitol building in May, along with a reception on May 16. **Becky Wentworth** hosted a Nutmeg Book Club lunch-bunch with 7 fourth graders. After discussing the selected books, the students voted for The Unwants by Lisa McMann as their nomination for the award.

Jackie Ham, Maura Kleszczewski, Allison Morris, Carol Connolly, Chris Feeney, Sumitra Ratneshwar, Abby Hoffman and **Cristine DiVenere** are hosting student interns from the Ellington High School Early Childhood class led by **David Helmin**. This collaboration allows high school students to engage in direct interactions with our elementary students as they learn the skills and strategies of becoming teachers.

The Crystal Lake School Town Meeting assembly was held on April 21. Kindergarten students presented their work with an iPad application that they are using to help them retell stories. Mr. Larkin shared a book, Wolfie the Bunny by Ame Dyckman about not judging a book by its cover, and Crystal Lake students who participated in the Young Inventors Club shared their inventions with the school. A group of teachers from Willington Center School visited Crystal Lake on April 29 to view Readers Workshop structures and lessons. Willington Center has recently adopted the workshop approach to

literacy instruction. They had the opportunity to observe **Karen Penda** and meet with **Louise Kelly**, **Penny Hughes** and **Robin Kline** to ask questions about the model.

Crystal Lake School celebrated Administrative Assistant's Day on April 22 with a luncheon in honor of **Lori Caron**. Her cheerful and helpful disposition help to ensure all visitors to CLS feel welcomed! Dr. Nicol visited Crystal Lake on April 30. Fourth grade tour guides Isabel Skryniarz and Will Lally showed Dr. Nicol around the school. He was greeted at the door by our mascot, Stripes!

In our ongoing efforts to recognize and thank staff members for their relentless and consistent assistance to students, staff, and parents at Windermere, a new award has been created: the *Prize Para Award*. Each month, Principal Welch recognizes a paraprofessional in the building with a certificate and lapel pin as a way to say "Thank you, for all you do!" Our recipient this past month was **Ms. Diane Frasca** who assists our PAL students. Our aides, paraprofessionals, and tutors are vital to the success which epitomizes Windermere School!

The *Tireless Teacher Awards* for the month of April were awarded to **Ms. Jessica Hall**, Grade 4 teacher and **Ms. Susan Horvath**, Grade 5 teacher. Although both work tirelessly with our PBIS program at Windermere, Ms. Warriner also has contributed to the positive esprit in the building as well as provided academic ideas to her colleagues in the elementary wing.

Ms. Lori Purcaro redesigned the 4th grade regions project to include technology-enhanced projects. Students researched various topics within their region and created websites, narrated videos, interactive games, and presentations to publish their work. She shared her ideas/resources with colleagues, making this a project for all 4th graders at Windermere. Her dedication to student choice and personalized learning are to be commended.

State of Connecticut legislators, representing our town of Ellington, met with art students who won the opportunity to display their work at the State Capitol. Representative Chris Davis talked with students about voting and those procedures connected to his position serving as a State representative. Senators Larson and Guglielmo posed for pictures with our Ellington students. Winners from Windermere include **Dylan McKee**, **Ian Kos**, **Faith Luginbuhl** and **Thomas Garrow**.

The Peer Mediators, College Power and Positive Leaders sponsored Ally Week at EMS was from Monday, April 6 through Friday, April 10. We celebrated our PRIDE, (Persistent, Respectful, Independent, Disciplined, and Enthusiastic) and the fact that so many EMS students stand strong together and support each other by being allies. The students and teachers of EMS showed their solidarity and support for each other by having different "Spirit Days" and a week-long "No Gossip Challenge."

Representatives from New Fairfield Middle School visited Ellington Middle School on Tuesday, April 7 to learn about standards based report cards, PRIDE effort recognition and mastery learning. The following students did an excellent job meeting with our visitors to explain mastery learning and grading at EMS: **Preston Aldrich**, **Ainsley Armstrong**, **Aidan Caron**, **Joseph Champeau**, **Julia Dobosz**, **Lizzy Gresh**, **James Maznicki**, **Amanda McTighe**, **Jodi Norton**, **Alex Slotter**, **Emma Spartz**, **Kalagena Sullivan**, and **Sam Walch**. Congratulations on a job well done!

From April 8 through April 10, the EMS library hosted a Scholastic Book Fair. Students visited the book fair with their Language Arts classes. On Monday, April 6 our Book Fair Family Reading Night was held. During that evening our librarian, Mrs. Polack, gave a brief demonstration on how to access eBooks and digital audio books, and parents enjoyed coffee and dessert while browsing the fair. All profits from the book fair will be used to support the EMS Media Center and classroom libraries.

The spring session of the EMS Zone After School Program began on April 21. Students could choose between jam making, soccer, set design/pottery, fishing, jewelry making and other awesome activities! If students need extra help in math or language arts tutors are available as well. This program is a great way for students to learn new skills, have fun in a positive environment, and meet new friends that enjoy the same sports, academics, activities and interests.

The music department held its' 14th annual piano recital/competition last Friday afternoon. Eight very talented students participated, and we enjoyed everyone's performance immensely. Our program consisted of performances by **Clara Mattson, Reily Siegel, Lily Moreau, Elsa Hoffman, Kate Bonanno, Elizabeth Gerlach, Kyle Brown, and Tina Ma.** Kyle and Tina were the competition winners, receiving a gift certificate to Barnes & Noble and an invitation to perform at the EMS Spring Choral Concert on May 19.

Student Accomplishments

On April 27 **Kyle Wesley** was awarded the United Bank Academic Scholarship at a reception at the United Bank Administrative Office in Glastonbury. The Academic Award recognizes graduating high school students pursuing college careers and degrees. Mr. Neil Rinaldi and Mrs. Debbie White were the EHS representatives in attendance.

On April 28 **Michael Brunelle** was awarded the United Bank Vocational Scholarship at a reception at the United Bank Administrative Office in Glastonbury. The Vocational Award recognizes graduating high school students who have completed formal vocational programs. Mr. Mark Wursthorn and Mr. Doug Luginbuhl were the EHS representatives in attendance.

In late February, 33 EHS Latin students joined over 150,000 others from all 50 states and several other countries in taking the 2015 National Latin Exam. Awards are given according to the student's score on the exam, with *summa cum laude* being the highest level of honor, followed by *maxima cum laude*, *magna cum laude* and finally, *cum laude*. Congratulations to the following 11 students, as well as to all who participated in the National Latin Exam this year.

Latin IV:	Isabella Viega , <i>magna cum laude</i>
Latin III:	Rebecca Lindblom , <i>magna cum laude</i>
Latin II:	Jenny Boudreau , <i>maxima cum laude</i> , silver medal
	Kayla Bonanno , <i>maxima cum laude</i> , silver medal
	Grace Hinckley , <i>maxima cum laude</i> , silver medal
	Lukas Merkouriou , <i>maxima cum laude</i> , silver medal
	Tom Arbeiter , <i>cum laude</i>
	Maria Savona , <i>cum laude</i>
	Madison White , <i>cum laude</i>
Latin I:	Dan Meaney , <i>cum laude</i>
	Aaron Virkler , <i>cum laude</i>

Congratulations to **Nicholas Bennett, Kyle Fitzgerald, and Daniel Joy** who took the 2014 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT®) and met the requirements to enter the 2016 National Merit® Scholarship Program. They are three of the 50,000 highest scoring participants from a pool of over 1.5 million 2013 PSAT test takers. Out of the 50,000 high scorers about 16,000 will be named National Merit Program semi finalist, representing the top scorers in each state. Approximately 34,000 others will be commended for their performance on the PSAT.

Congratulations to **Jordan Harbaugh** who has won second place in this year's Brain Dance Awards in the art category. Jordan submitted a poem which helps to reduce the stigma attached to mental illness. The Brain Dance Awards is an annual competition sponsored by Hartford Hospital and The Institute of Living in which student projects submitted by high school students around the state address an important theme regarding mental illness. This year's theme is 'Stamp Out Stigma' and students can design projects in the categories of academic, art, and mixed media. Jordan was honored at the 12th Annual Brain Dance Conference which was held at The Institute of Living on April 24.