

January, 2007

Dear High School Parents and Guardians,

This month's newsletter will review some of the key activities that took place at the high school during November and December.

Parent Conferences in November

First of all, the numbers from our parent conferences held in November were consistent from a year ago. There were a total of 124 individual parent and teacher requests for meeting times. Over the course of the two days of conferencing, 567 conferences were held between teachers and parents. Parents noted to teachers that having the availability of student grades and progress through the parent portal made a significant difference in their approach to the conferences. Teachers followed suggested topics in their meetings to give parents a consistent view of their student's overall progress at the high school. We hope that these meeting times proved to be beneficial in keeping parents informed of students' academic progress in their classes.

Acts of Giving

During the time of year when we think about helping others who may be in need, our high school students stepped up and helped out families through two local community agencies. With the strong support and leadership led by members of the Student Council, the high school provided a number of families with food and gifts to make their holidays joyous ones to remember. Just prior to Thanksgiving, each of the four classes, through the advisor program, collected food and supplies for needy families. All of what had been collected was then donated to the United Methodist Church in Saco. At a brief assembly held during the last block of the day on the Wednesday before Thanksgiving, church representatives addressed the student body and thanked them for their kind and considerate donations. The gifts were to be distributed throughout the community on that afternoon.

The students' second act of giving happened just before the December vacation when clothing and monetary donations were again collected, this time to the YMCA in Biddeford as part of an "Adopt a Family" project. The school raised over \$500.00 plus a large supply of gifts to be distributed to needy families in the York county area. My personal thanks goes to the efforts of Ashley Hibbard and Carly Wittman and members the student council who helped make this generous act of giving happen with such success. And thank you to all of the students and staff who took the time to contribute to these worthwhile causes. (Please see enclosed article)

Professional Development and School Partnerships

Department coordinators and I met with two lead professors from the *Teacher Training Program* at the University of New England. Together we plan to link their program with our teachers and students. Student teachers will be completing their internships at the high school, with one student teacher beginning her spring semester of student teaching in the history department. Pre-service teachers (first-year education students) will also be observing classes beginning this spring. UNE has also invited members of our staff to begin meeting with undergraduate and graduate students in their classes at UNE. Likewise, we have had interested seniors ask if it would be possible to visit education classes on the UNE campus to get a taste of what it would be like. Currently two seniors have made the initial contact with UNE staff to visit classes this month. This should be an exciting and beneficial partnership for Old Orchard Beach High School and the teacher education department at UNE. (Please see enclosed letter)

Seniors

It's hard to believe that the first term comes to an end on January 23rd. For seniors, post-graduate plans for next year are beginning to happen. From our senior class, thirty-six out of the seventy-four students have already applied to schools of their choice. Over one hundred transcripts were mailed out before the holiday break. That number will continue to climb by the end of the month.

On behalf of the high school, I hope that you have a Happy New Year.

Respectfully submitted,

Rick DiFusco, Principal