



Mark T. Sheehan High School—Wallingford, Connecticut

Principal's Newsletter

Rosemary Duthie
Principal

Gregory J. Dirkson, Justin Marciano
Assistant Principals

Volume 16, Issue 1

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School Opens Monday, August 31

WELCOME: The faculty and administration welcome you to the 2015-2016 school year. School opens August 31. Students are to arrive on time and prepared to work. Students are to report to their first class promptly at 7:30 a.m. Students who arrive later than 7:40 a.m. are to report to the Main Office.

ACADEMIC CALENDAR: The school calendars for the 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 academic years are enclosed with this mailing. Parents/Guardians are asked to schedule family vacations for times when school is closed. Parents/Guardians are also reminded that this school year may be extended by up to seven days if we need to make-up snow days (any days beyond that will be made up at the end of the April vacation). Should the school year be extended, graduation and other end-of-the-year activities would be impacted.



Meet & Greet, August 28

This year, parents and students have the opportunity to meet their teachers and counselor prior to the start of school on Friday, August 28, from 8:15 to 10:15 a.m. No appointment is necessary as this is an informal time for parents and students to get acquainted with teachers and visit the classrooms. We hope you will be able to stop by and introduce yourself. We are looking forward to meeting you.



Parent Teacher Advisory Council

An open invitation is extended to all parents/guardians to become part of school life by joining the Sheehan Parent Teacher Advisory Council (PTAC).

The council meets on a monthly basis to work collaboratively with the school administration on matters related to the operation of the school and school improvement efforts. Past discussions have focused on the school budget, school counseling, the career center, the NEASC accreditation process, PBIS, the work of the Innovation Team, orientation programs, the Capstone experience, and scheduling. (The minutes of these meetings are available on the school website if you would like to learn more about our discussions.)

Meetings are typically held on the first Thursday of each month in the school's library media center beginning at 6:30 p.m. and concluding at approximately 8:00 p.m. The first meeting for the 2015-2016 school year is September 3.

We hope you will be able to join us at one of our next meetings. By working together, we can achieve what is best for our students.

Upcoming Events:

- *Freshman & New Student Orientation, Aug. 25, 10:00 a.m.*
- *Parent/Student Meet & Greet, Aug. 28, 8:15–10:15 a.m.*
- *School Opens, Aug. 31*
- *PTAC Meeting, Sept. 3, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m., LMC*
- *Labor Day, School Closed, Sept. 7*
- *Yearbook Photos, Sept. 9 & 10*
- *Advisory Schedule, Sept. 11*
- *Late Bus Service Begins, Sept. 14, 3:45 p.m.*
- *Half Day Schedule, Students Dismissed at 11:55 a.m., Sept. 16*
- *Ninth Grade Parents Meeting, Sept. 17, 7:00 p.m., Aud.*
- *Advisory Schedule, Sept. 18*
- *Open House, Sept. 24; MLB Presentation, 6:15 p.m., Aud. & Classroom Visits, 7:00 p.m.*
- *Advisory Schedule, Sept. 25*
- *Marching Band Competition, Oct. 3, 4:00 p.m., Riccitelli Field*

*Mark T. Sheehan
High School
provides a challenging
and supportive
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Items of Interest

BUS ROUTES: Parents/Guardians can access bus route information through the PowerSchool Parent Portal by clicking on the “bus info” icon. It is important to check the parent portal on a regular basis for current bus route information as some routes may change after the school year starts. (The afternoon bus route schedule is the same as the morning schedule.)

CELL PHONES: Students may possess cell phones while they are in school but the phones must be turned off and out of sight during the school day. Students are permitted to use cell phones during their assigned lunch wave. If students fail to comply with this policy, their phones will be confiscated and their parents will be notified.

DEMOGRAPHIC/EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION: Parents/Guardians are asked to review the demographic and emergency contact information that is on file with the school by using the PowerSchool Parent Portal. This information can be accessed by clicking on the “demographic change” icon. If the listed information is incorrect, changes can be submitted online beginning August 20 through September 30, 2015.

DISMISSAL POLICY: Students who are dismissed from school before the end of the school day at the request of their parent/guardian will not be permitted to return to school on that same day unless the dismissal is for a medical or dental appointment

or a court appearance and such appointment is validated in writing by the doctor/dentist or a court official.

DRESS CODE: While casual clothing is acceptable, clothing that is overly revealing (bare midriffs, off the shoulder, halter, or strapless tops; extremely short shorts) or displays slogans or images that promote substance use or send offensive sexual messages may not be worn. Students’ dress must be appropriate, tasteful, and at no time dangerous to the welfare of the individual or others. Students found to be dressed inappropriately will be asked to change clothes and may be sent home.

EARLY DISMISSAL: Seniors may take advantage of this privilege provided that their *last period* is a study and they have parent permission on file in the office. Early dismissal from study hall begins September 14.

LATE ARRIVAL: Juniors and seniors may take advantage of this privilege if their *first period* is a study and they have parent permission on file in the office. Students eligible for late arrival privilege are required to report to school on time for their second class of the day. Students will lose this privilege if they fail to maintain a marking period GPA of 2.6 or higher during the school year or if they are consistently late for their second period class. This privilege begins September 14.

LATE BUS: The Wallingford late bus is available to students on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday beginning September 14. Pick up is at the front entrance of the building near the flagpole. The bus leaves promptly at 3:45 p.m.

LOCKERS: Students are assigned lockers with individual combinations at the beginning of each school year. The locker number and combination for students in grades 10 through 12 are enclosed in this mailing. (Locker assignments will be given to ninth graders at the orientation program.) It is important that students not share combinations and/or lockers. The school district is not responsible for valuables lost or stolen from student lockers anywhere in the building.

MILITARY RECRUITERS: The “No Child Left Behind” federal legislation allows military recruiters access to student directories. If a parent/guardian chooses not to have this information released, they must inform the school in writing. Letters are to be sent to the School Counseling Office and must include the student’s name and grade.

PESTICIDE NOTIFICATION: Any individuals who wish to be notified when pesticides are applied must inform the school in writing. Letters are to be sent to Mr. Dirkson by September 14 and are to include an email address.

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Reporting Absences

When students are absent from school, parents are asked to phone the main office (203-294-5900) before 10:00 a.m. to notify the school and to verify the cause of the absence. In addition, parents are asked to have their son/daughter bring a note to the main office on his/her return to school verifying the absence. If the student was hospitalized or under a physician’s care at home during the absence from school, a doctor’s note should be submitted on the day of the student’s return to school as well.

Please note that per Wallingford BOE policy 5113a, for the tenth absence and all others thereafter due to illness, documentation by a medical professional is *required*, regardless of the length of the absence. Such documentation is to be submitted within ten school days of the date of the absence.



School Counseling Services

The School Counseling Department includes school counselors, a psychologist, and a social worker, all of whom are here to help students make a good adjustment to high school, academically, socially, and personally. Students have been assigned a school counselor whose job it is to work individually with them

to plan a high school program, resolve problems as they may arise, and provide guidance in making decisions. (Some grade 10 & 11 students have a new counselor this year.) Students are encouraged to take full advantage of these services. Our psychologists and social worker are here to assist students with personal and/or family

problems that may need special attention. The entire department is also available to parents/guardians. Parents/Guardians are asked to call ahead to make an appointment so that the needed time can be made available. The phone number is 203-294-5915.



Items of Interest, con't

POWERSCHOOL PARENT PORTAL: The portal is an online application that provides access to teachers' electronic grade books. It also provides information concerning bus routes, attendance, and school events. Access to the portal, <http://powerschool.wallingford.k12.ct.us/public/>, is password protected. Specific information concerning passwords and features of the portal can be found on the school website.

SCHOOL SAFETY: Sheehan will continue to provide a safe and secure environment for all students and staff. All doors will be locked, with entrance to the building restricted. Entrance to the high school can be obtained through the front door near the flagpole or the doors at senior court beginning at 7:00 a.m. Parents/guardians and visitors will need to present photo identification and sign-in with the person stationed at the entrance both during and after the school day. All visitors, including parents/guardians, will be asked to sign-in again on their arrival to the main office, school counseling office, and nurse's office.

SCHOOL SAFETY TIP LINE: The district has established a safety tip line, 203-949-6571, that can be used to report any concerns, including mean behavior. By working together, we can continue to provide a safe and supportive environment for all.

STUDENT ACCESS TO BUILDING: The building officially opens to students at 7:00 a.m. on school days. Stu-

dents may arrive earlier for a scheduled appointment with a teacher or coach. Other students arriving early will be allowed to enter the building, but they must remain in the school's cafeteria where they are supervised until 7:00 a.m.

STUDENT AUTOS: Parking on school grounds is a privilege extended to those seniors who fully adhere to all vehicular traffic laws and regulations. Any student found in violation of safety rules or parking regulations will be denied vehicular access to school grounds and will be subject to other disciplinary actions. All student automobiles must be parked in the designated area. Students bringing automobiles to school must obtain registration decals for their vehicles. Registration decals can be obtained from Ms. Grant in the Main Office on August 25 and 26 during normal office hours or once school starts. *Reminder: On-campus parking is limited so it may not be possible to accommodate all requests.*

STUDENT SCHEDULES: Schedules for students can be accessed through the PowerSchool portal. (Ninth grade schedules will be distributed at the orientation program.) Parents are asked to contact the School Counseling Office if there is an error or if you wish to make a course change. It is important to note that schedules will not be changed because someone wants a different teacher.

TRAFFIC ALERT: At dismissal, buses will be given right of way to exit

campus before other traffic. All vehicles leaving the south side and rear parking lots will need to wait for the buses to depart before continuing down the front driveway to Hope Hill Road. Also please note, Connecticut General Statute 14-279, which governs the passing of a standing school bus with the red lights flashing, applies to public roadways and school property.

USE OF TOBACCO/SUBSTITUTE DEVICES: Smoking or other use of tobacco products including smokeless tobacco or substitute devices (e.g. electronic cigarettes) or possessing these products/devices is prohibited as follows: in school buildings and on school grounds at all times, on transportation provided by the Board of Education, and during the course of any field trip. Students violating this policy will be subject to disciplinary action.

GRADE 10 PHYSICALS: Connecticut State law, Section 10-206, requires a physical examination for all students in grade 10. Completed medical reports must be submitted to the Nurse's Office by June 1, 2016. Failure to do so will result in the student's exclusion from school. It is our hope that this legal requirement can be satisfied without loss of instructional time to the student. Please feel free to contact the school nurse, Ms. Gibson, at 203-294-5920 with any questions regarding this requirement.



Phone Directory

ADMINISTRATION

Main Office: 203-294-5900

Principal, 203-294-5905
Rosemary Duthie

Assistant Principals, 203-294-5904
Gregory J. Dirkson
Justin Marciano

SCHOOL COUNSELING OFFICE 203-294-5915

Chairperson
Michelle Catucci, 203-294-5918

School Counselors
Maura Distante, 203-294-5919
Wendy Eaton-Soto, 203-294-5914
Erica Forselius, 203-294-5917

Psychologists
Terry Dietlmeier, 203-294-5916
Donna Laich, 203-294-5967

Social Worker
Betty Butkus, 203-294-5915

ATHLETICS, 203-294-5924

Christopher Dailey, Director

DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSONS

Art & Music, 203-294-5956
Paige Sperry

English, 203-294-5931
Peter Wiesen

Health & Phys Ed, 203-294-5925
John Ferrazzi

Mathematics, 203-294-5965
Patrick Hubeny

Science, 203-294-5973
Kelly Watrous

Social Studies, 203-294-5943
Heather Brinton

HEALTH OFFICE, 203-294-5920

Diane Gibson, R.N.

WHO TO SEE FOR QUESTIONS/CONCERNS

Our goal is to direct you to the person closest to a need or concern.

Student Performance—Teacher first, then school counselor

Instruction/Grading—Teacher first, then department chairperson (or assistant principal if department without a chairperson)

Requests for Homework during Long Term Absences—School counselor

Attendance—Assistant principals

Athletics—Coach first, then athletic director

Medical Issues—School nurse



Medication Administration

The administration of medication in a school setting is governed by special rules. These rules apply to both prescription medications as well as over the counter medications. All medications are to be delivered in their original containers to the school nurse by the parent or other responsible adult along with a Medication Authorization Form. This form must be signed by the authorized prescriber who ordered the medication and the student's parent or guardian.

Students are permitted to carry on their person asthma

inhalers and epi-pens and self-medicate provided the appropriate medication authorization form is on file with the school nurse and the student has demonstrated the ability to self-medicate correctly. Students may also self-administer insulin through injection or insulin pump provided the same criteria as previously described are met.

Additional information concerning the administration of medication in a school setting can be found on the district website. The school nurse, Ms. Gibson, is also available to answer any questions on this topic.

How to Stay Informed

The following resources help parents/guardians stay connected to the school and keep up-to-date on school activities:

Website – Visit Sheehan at <http://www.wallingford.k12.ct.us/page.cfm?p=11355>. Be sure to check out the *About Us*, *Calendar*, and *PTAC* pages.

Twitter – Follow us @MTSheehanHS for general school news, @MTS_Counselors for scholarship information and counseling news, @MTSAthletics for sports scores and information concerning our athletic program, and @Sheehanlive for the school's morning announcements.

Email Blasts – In addition to the monthly Principal's Newsletter, information is shared via email. Please be sure that your correct email address is on file with the school.

Evening Events – Attend PTAC meetings, Open House, Conference Nights, and other special parent programs offered throughout the year.