

Good evening and welcome back! I hope everyone had some down time and was able to enjoy the beautiful weather here last week. I was grateful for the opportunity to visit family in Florida and feel the sand between my toes, soak in the sunshine and rejuvenate a bit. I'm convinced Spring will be here before we know it!

Thanks to so many staff and students who were able to participate in our LHS t-shirt Unity day on Friday before break. It was great to see so many showing their #LHSPRIDE!

The week before break is always busy, but this year it was especially difficult as it included the news of the horrible tragedy in Florida. Even though I didn't watch the news on vacation, I couldn't help but think about our friends in Florida throughout the week and what they were going through. I know many of us and our students are still grappling with what happened and are trying to figure out how to continue this important but difficult conversation at LHS. The feelings of pain, anger, confusion, anxiety, disbelief and much more continue to be on minds as we return to school tomorrow.

This week we will be discussing ways in which we can listen and acknowledge student voice amidst the aftermath of this horrific event. As Jeannine Ameduri wrote to me, we need to share and support the message of **Peace and Unity at LHS and beyond**. I believe our students and all of us want this more than ever. We'll keep you updated on next steps.

DID YOU KNOW?

As shared by Amy Ellentuck on Friday, February 16, a 2014 alumnus named Kenneth Hong came to visit a few classes at LHS. He has an inspiring story to tell having grown up in Lowell with ALL the challenges



and hardships that many of our students face. His mediocre grades meant he didn't get in to many of the colleges he applied to but he was accepted in to the 5-year Myra Kraft Transition Program at Brandeis University and is currently in his 4th year. Only 20 students a year across the country are awarded this full scholarship. As we might imagine, this is not the easiest road to go down but he has received a lot of support while there.

Kenneth also spoke of the International Studies Gilbert Scholarship he was awarded last summer to study in Beijing for 9 weeks. He encouraged our students to seek out scholarships to study abroad. Between the Gilbert and some other scholarships including from the Greater Lowell Community Foundation, he has gone abroad a few times, including a service trip to Cambodia. These experiences have continued to broaden his future possibilities.

Finally, when asked about what high school factors helped him to keep moving forward when he'd think about giving up, he talked about the program Upward Bound, joining the crew team, and his participation in Teen Block at the Lowell Community Health Center. He spoke of how important it was to feel connected to a couple of adults in the building and to some friends in order to stay tethered. These things are so significant! Here is a picture of Kenneth speaking in one of the classes

As shared by Suzanne Keefe ... on Thursday, February 15th the **Poetry and Pizza** event took place which was an off-shoot of the LHS Bread Loaf Expression Sessions that take place after school every Thursday. We are delighted that **78!!!** students spent the afternoon, talking, writing, sharing and listening to each other. The students wrote in response to Khalid's song: "American Teen." After listening to the song and talking about it in small groups, the students created their own poems, working in the words and ideas from their discussion. The line to share during the open mic portion of the event spanned the width of the Little Theater!

All students and staff are invited to join on any Thursday afternoon, in Room 128. Special thanks to the teachers who donated their time and talents: Trish Williams, Kendra Bauer, Amy Woo, Bryanna Laughlin and Kate Keefe. And thank you also to the Zarkin Grant for helping us to finance the pizza!



Thanks to all who contributed to our Catie's Closet Jeans Day the Friday before vacation! Our donation basket for the gala event will be chock full thanks to you and will be well received this coming weekend.

Welcome home safe and sound from Italy! What a fabulous trip some of our students had touring Rome, Venice, Pompeii, Assisi, Florence, Pisa and more.



Friday before break the Freshman Academy held a talent show at the end of the day which proved to be a really fun way to end the week - WOW do we have some talented Freshman!

In case you missed it, the Lowell Sun interviewed several students and staff for a nice article on the dialogue that is happening at LHS regarding race, the work of our black unity club, the history curriculum and the formation of the SCCC and more.

<http://lowellsun.ma.newsmemory.com/publink.php?shareid=1aa25a6d3>

CONGRATULATIONS:



Congratulations to our students who participated in the Fifth Annual District Science and Engineering Fair on the afternoon of February 13th! Our LHS students made us proud! It was especially fun to meet some of the up and coming middle school students, hear about their projects and feel their excitement about coming to our LHS soon! Emily Steinberg was in charge of the overall project, and Patti Adams and Alison Montemurro were running the FA program.

Congrats to C-House students who were promoted to 10th grade, at right, they are proudly receiving their certificates!



Congrats to our boys for their recent MIAA D1 Track win! Thanks to Coach Ouellette and his team of assistants for being there with our kids every step of the way! #LHSPRIDE

UPCOMING IMPORTANT DATES:

2/27 and 2/28	All day leadership - split between both days
2/28 Wednesday	MCAS ELA Retest begins
5/05 Monday	MCAS Math Retest begins
3/07 Wednesday	Parent Coffee and Conversation - 8:00am

Have a peaceful and joyful week back to school everyone - we have much to be grateful for at LHS!

Best,
Marianne



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