



# OLD COLONY

REGIONAL VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT  
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## Principal's Newsletter October 2018

It is hard to believe we are in the heart of October already. I hope your family has settled in to the new school year and your students are finding success here at Old Colony.

I want to thank all the parents, staff, community members and students who have offered support and well wishes that have made my transition as Principal as smooth as can be expected.

Our school year is off to a fantastic start. Our students are involved in a variety of activities, both curricular and extracurricular. Interest in Old Colony is at an all-time high. We are currently accepting applications for the Class of 2023 at <https://oldcolony.go2cte.com/>. Please share this information with friends and family who may be interested. We have also posted a Tuesday morning tour schedule online for anyone interested in visiting Old Colony during school hours. Our Open House will be taking place on November 4, 2018.

In recent weeks we have celebrated school spirit via an incredible student led pep rally and were notified that we ranked #1 in two of three MCAS categories for high schools across the Southcoast. In my almost thirty years in education I have rarely witnessed the school spirit exhibited here at Old Colony. The work and dedication of the staff and students who helped pull off all the events was impressive.

We are expanding our Advanced Placement offering and are constantly looking for ways to raise the bar and provide our students with the best opportunities possible. We will be offering college level classes this spring in Marketing (Marketing 101) and Spanish (Spanish 101) as part of our Early College programming. These courses will be offered at a fraction of the regular course rates and will be offered right on our Old Colony campus. We look forward to sharing additional information in the weeks to come.

### ALICE

Later this month we will be holding our first "Lockdown Drill" of the year. We will be holding a training for Freshmen and new staff this Thursday, **October 18th, @ 9:04am**. We use the ALICE protocol for our lockdown system. Certified ALICE trainers from the Rochester Police Department will be conducting the training and running the drill.

### Attendance

I am happy to announce our student attendance so far this year is exceptional. All grades are averaging between 97% and 98% present. Our goal is to have students want to come to school. Our efforts to support all students to make them feel welcome, safe and inspired are hopefully working.

## **Drama Club**

The Drama Club is alive and well. We have a new advisor for the year. Megan Peirce is a 2012 graduate of Old Rochester Regional High School where she was an active member in the ORR drama production for four years. We have twenty students signed up for the club, and would welcome any new students who are still interested in joining. They can sign up in the main office. The club will be performing The Jungle Book in the Spring and are already working diligently.

## **Guidance**

Old Colony will be offering Elementary Spanish 101 beginning this January of 2019. This Bristol Community College course offers beginning training in the four skills: reading, writing, speaking and aural comprehension. An introduction to Hispanic culture is included. This 3 credit college course will be held at our Old Colony campus one evening per week from January to May. The cost to take the course will be \$250 + the cost of the book. This is a significant savings from the \$750+ cost you would pay if you were to take the course at the BCC campus.

If your student is interested in registering for the course, please either email Mrs. Abaray at [sabaray@oldcolony.info](mailto:sabaray@oldcolony.info) or have your student sign up in the Guidance Office. Space is limited to 25 students and will be awarded on a first-come-first-served basis. We look forward to continuously expanding upon the educational opportunities we provide our students as we strive to remain progressive and innovative in our approach to education.

## **Parents Night/Open House**

We will be holding our first annual Parent Open House on **October 25th** from **4:00pm-6:30pm**. Parents will follow their students schedule in both academic and vocational areas. This event replaces the former Parent-Teacher conference night. Immediately following the Open House the PTO will be holding their fundraiser in the cafeteria. Tickets for the "Medium" are available through the PTO.

## **Recognition**

We are proud to announce that 32 of our students who have qualified for the Abigail Adams Scholarship. In order to be eligible for the scholarship, students must score at the Advanced performance level on one of the three high school state assessment tests in ELA, Mathematics, or STE (Biology, Chemistry, Introductory Physics, or Technology/Engineering); They also need to score at the Proficient level or higher on the remaining two high school state assessment tests; and have combined scores from the three tests that place them in the top 25 percent of students in the graduating class in their district. Congratulations to all who qualified. We will be having a ceremony on **November 19, 2018** at **8:00am** to present the students with a letter from the state. Families will be receiving invitations.

Finally, I want to give special recognition to junior, Katherine Ashley, who earned a perfect score on the Mathematics MCAS.

## **School Council**

The first School Council meeting was held on September 19th, 2018. During the meeting the Council reviewed agenda items including the role of School Council and a review of the District/School Improvement Plan. The next meeting will be held on **November 14<sup>th</sup> @ 3:15pm**. The Council will begin the review of the Student Handbook for the purposes of making changes for the 2019-2020 school year.

## **Skills USA**

Our local Skills USA chapter is busy getting ready for another year. The Skills Advisors this year are Chef Arsenaault in Culinary Arts, Chef Maiden in Culinary Arts, Mrs. Parnell in Cosmetology, and Norman L'Heureux.

Officer sign-ups were held the last week of September. Over 20 students applied to become Skills USA chapter officers. This is an impressive amount of student leaders for our chapter. Advisors will be meeting with students that signed up over the next week to talk about the responsibilities that come with this very important job.

Our advisors, Mrs. Parnell and Mrs. Maiden went to a Skills USA training camp on Thursday, October 11, in Marlboro, MA. During this training they got all the contest updates, trainings, conference dates, and student membership information.

We are currently registering all 551 of OC students to become Skills USA members. At OC we are a 100% Skills USA chapter, which means that all our students will have the opportunity to be active members and use the Career Essentials trainings offered.

The next conference coming up is the Fall Leadership Conference in November. During this conference student leaders will learn what it takes to be a great leader and how to become efficient officers.

## **SMEC**

We will be hosting a very special group of students from SMEC on **October 23rd**. The Electronics shop will be doing a demonstration for the students with lunch in the Cougar's Den to follow. I had the pleasure of working with these students and staff for years at Old Rochester. They bring so much joy with their endearing personalities to all who have the pleasure of working with them.

## **Sports**

We received some exciting news in September from the MIAA, informing us we were the recipients of the 2017-2018 Walter Markham Award, given to the Division II Vocational School with the winningest percentage for all sports programs in the state. We are in the process of getting approval to display signs in recognition of the honor in all our sending districts, as well as, erecting banners on school grounds commemorating the award.

The Old Colony Athletic Department is off to a great start this 2018 fall season. The Cougars are having an impressive fall season as the boys' soccer team is currently undefeated at 10-0-0 and has secured a spot in the Massachusetts Vocational Tournament as well as the MIAA State Tournament. Our volleyball team is having another great year boasting an impressive 10-3 record qualifying for a spot in the MIAA State Tournament and hopefully a Massachusetts Vocational Tournament as well. Kat Kirby was recently selected by the Athletic Department as player of the week for her quality play, determination and effort. Our Cougar football team is having a quality season with a record of 4-2 and having qualified for the MIAA 4A South Tournament. Our Homecoming football game under the lights was very well attended and brought a high level of excitement to our campus. The OC golf Team is having a competitive year at 6-6-2. They will compete in the Mayflower Athletic Conference Championship this Thursday. They will also compete in the Massachusetts Vocational Tournament as well as the MIAA State Tournament. Our Cross Country team continues to improve each day and many members have achieved their "personal best." The team is slated to compete in the Mayflower Athletic Conference Championship and the Massachusetts Vocational Tournament later this month. Our girls' soccer team has continued to grow this season as each game has been extremely competitive.

## Wellness Committee

The Wellness Committee met for the first time last week. The major initiatives for the group will be to do staff professional development on the dangers of vaping, continual training of OC students on Mentor and Violence Prevention, a review of the district Wellness Policy, and to pursue grants to bring additional social/emotional programs to Old Colony. The next meeting will be held at **12:45pm** on **November 15th** in the main office conference room.

## Upcoming Events

**Wednesday, October 17th 6PM** *Ford Middle School High School Night:* Old Colony, Bristol Aggie, Fairhaven High School, New Bedford High School and Bishop Stang will speak to 8th graders and their parents about their options for high school.

Matt Trahan, Catie Turchinardi, and I will be attending, as well as a couple of our students.

Parents' Night **4-6:30pm**

**Thursday, October 25, 2018**

Trunk or Treat Fundraiser **5:00pm**

**Friday, October 26, 2018**

**Friday, October 26th 11AM-1:30PM** *STEM Day with Ford Middle School (Acushnet) 6th graders:* In response to Governor Baker and Lt. Governor Polito's first-ever Statewide STEM week, Old Colony Regional Vocational Technical High School will be hosting the 6th-grade class from Ford Middle School in Acushnet on Friday, October 26th. This event will take a hands-on approach to STEM education, as it is applied beyond the science and math classrooms, and showcase the talent and skills of the Old Colony students. The Ford Middle School students will participate in activities offered throughout the vocational-technical departments at Old Colony. Such activities will include building a web page about themselves using basic HTML and CSS languages in our Computer Science Department, using images from a green screen taken in our Business Tech Department to create a personalized sketchbook in our Graphic Arts Department, working with our Culinary Arts department to see baking science in action, and working with our Cosmetology and Culinary Arts departments to learn how nutrition affects the skin and how to use natural products to preserve and cleanse the skin. Ford Middle School students will gain insight as to the importance of STEM in their education and how it's seamlessly incorporated into the daily curriculum at Old Colony. This event is sponsored by MassHire Greater New Bedford Workforce Board.

**Wednesday, October 31st, Thursday, November 1st, and Friday, November 2nd:** *Vocational Exploration Days: Your Tour To Learn More* (formally named Career days --same format, different name) hosting 8th-grade students from each of our sending districts.

**Sunday, November 4th 10AM until Noon:** *Vocational Exploration Open House:* hosting 7th- and 8th-grade students and parents.