

## **Pats Update January - March 2010**

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### **Business Department**

Our Personal Finance classes were visited by Mrs. Kristin Rojas, the Community Development Officer of the Pawtucket Credit Union, on November 17 and December 9, 2009.

During these visits Mrs. Rojas discussed the importance of making wise credit decisions. She informed our students that it was necessary to establish credit and use it wisely. The classes were made aware that when they make purchases on credit, it is important for them to make timely payments in excess of the minimum payment. They were then given an interest survey to determine their potential credit worthiness.

In late October, Mrs. Anne Baynes addressed and discussed Financial Literacy with Boy Scout Troop 49 from Lakewood. This discussion gave the troop Personal Management Merit Badge support. Real world examples were provided about the importance of budgeting, and the use of credit cards and interest rates. Also, emphasis was placed on the importance of personal financial awareness.

Also, on February 1, Kyle Adams, Jackie Steinkamp, and Joshua Mason attended the Rhode Island State FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) Officer Recognition event at the Radisson Hotel in Warwick, RI with their advisor, Mrs. Laurie Mockler. The objective of this meeting was to teach students leadership skills, review community service projects, and learn about upcoming competitions. Also, our students prepared a Chapter newsletter that was distributed to all the chapters in the state at the event.

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### **English Department**

**Honoring Kim Pisaturo, Published Writer.** The Pilgrim English department has helped create display cases for Kim Pisaturo's posthumously published novel, **Crimson Shards**. With her sister, Jamie, the department constructed two displays honoring Kim and her dedication to the writing process when composing her novel. Kim's family graciously supplied copies of her notebooks which were overflowing with notes, revisions, and rough drafts of the chapters.

Copies of **Crimson Shards** were sold in the school cafeteria in February, and they are still available in the English office. Hardcover copies are \$25 while paperbacks are \$18. Checks may be made payable to *The Kim Pisaturo Scholarship Fund*, as the family wishes to award scholarships to aspiring writers. Students may come to the English office to purchase the books, while outside members of the Pilgrim community may request a copy by contacting Mrs. Place in the English office.

**Poetry Slam Champion Visits Class.** On Friday, January 29, Richard Edouard-Denor, URI student and Grand Poetry Slam Champion of Providence, spoke to Mr. Callahan's Sophomore English classes. Mr. Denor presented two slam poems and discussed the

opportunities for young poets to present their work in Rhode Island. He also conducted a poetry writing workshop where students wrote individual and group poems during their class.

**Showcase Cinemas Field Trip and Related Studies.** The Pilgrim English Department is planning a field trip to the Showcase Cinemas to see the PBS film documentary “Escape from Auschwitz” on March 22. Students who have read **Night** or **The Book Thief** in class were given the opportunity to attend this educational event, sponsored by the Holocaust Education and Resource Center of RI. Approximately one hundred students will be in attendance.

In preparation, Ms. Christine Beltrami’s students will be visited by a Holocaust Education speaker this month. In conjunction with these studies, many of our grade 12 students also read **The Kite Runner**, which also connects to the themes of prejudice and ostracism, in this case in Afghanistan. A soldier who has served in Afghanistan will visit Mrs. Place’s class, and her students are planning a Kite Running event in late March to honor a key event from the book.

Finally, still focusing on the themes of prejudice and ostracism, the English Department is conducting a creative essay contest on “Social Ostracism” to determine top winners to send to a state contest sponsored by the Katie DeCubellis foundation. The purpose of this contest is to address the resulting impact and consequences of social exclusion.

**Essays for World Peace.** The Grade 11 Humanities class wrote essays in response to the National Peace Essay prompt. Every year, the **United States Institute of Peace** conducts this contest to help students focus on worldwide efforts to achieve peace. From the class essays, three students were chosen to represent our school in the national competition: Joia Brancato, Jessica Montecalvo, and Meaghan Spillane.

**Student Teachers.** The Pilgrim English department welcomes two student teachers from Rhode Island College this semester. Sophia Elanani is working with Mr. Callahan and Kelly Bergeron with Mr. Denningham.

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## Foreign Language Department

Our department would like to welcome Miss Lauren Chabot. Miss Chabot, from Providence College, is a student teacher in Spanish with Ms. Radcliffe. We wish Miss Chabot a positive learning experience here at Pilgrim.

Italian students were busy when they took the National Italian Contest Examination on Saturday, March 6. Also, all Italian classes celebrated *Carnevale* by making masks in the Venetian tradition. Level three classes will extend their study of these customs by learning about the *Commedia dell’ arte* during this quarter.

Spanish 2 Honors classes are beginning their study of fairy tales. After reading several in Spanish, they will write their own fairy tale—in Spanish, of course. Level 2 classes have finished studying the marketplace, and are busy writing and performing skits on this topic. Spanish 4 Honors and 5 Honors classes are preparing for the National

Spanish Examination, which will be administered during the beginning of April. Spanish 5 has begun a unit on art appreciation, and ultimately will present a report in which they compare and contrast two works of art from the Hispanic world. In Spanish 3 Honors, students recently completed an extensive study of the short story *Carta a Dios*, which included learning about Mexico and its cultures.

French 2 classes celebrated *Mardi Gras* also by making masks, and preparing the traditional *crêpes*. Le Cercle Français—the French Club—recently held a fundraiser to support the victims of the Haitian earthquake. The “Hats for Haiti” effort raised \$200.00, which will be sent to the Red Cross Relief fund.

March 5 was an important day for the Pilgrim AFS Club. The only American Field Service Club in RI, Pilgrim’s club members welcomed exchange students from Norway, Turkey, Egypt, Malaysia, the Czech Republic, Moldova, Italy, Germany, and Thailand to our doors. These students stayed with host families from around New England for the year, but spent the weekend with Pilgrim community families, and attended classes at our school all day on March 5.

On March 19, forty-two students from our foreign language classes traveled to New York City on a field trip. There they had the opportunity to visit the United Nations and the New York City Tenement Museum, among other sites. The trip was exciting and educational.

Parents and guardians are reminded that they may contact Mrs. Griffith in the Foreign Language Office at extension 125 if a student is need of extra support in foreign language classes. There is peer tutoring available.

Finally, please note that Foreign Language Honor Societies Induction Ceremonies will take place on Wednesday, April 14, at 7:00 PM in the high school auditorium

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## **GBP Update**

To the parents/guardians of seniors...Is your senior on track for graduation? To be considered "on-track", seniors should be passing their classes, have a completed/approved graduation portfolio and are up-to-date with senior project. Not sure...then contact the guidance department or Mrs. Bernardi for a status report. (See remaining senior project deadlines listed below)

Seniors are expected to finish all of the graduation portfolio requirements by April 7th which is the end of third quarter. Parents and guardians should contact Mrs. Bernardi immediately if there is a problem. In addition, we recommend that juniors finish their graduation portfolio requirements by the end of this school year. Lastly, sophomores and freshmen are expected to complete all of their required working portfolio entries for this school year by the last day of school.

To the parents/guardians of juniors, sophomores and freshmen... Are you interested in learning more about senior project? Then be a senior project judge on May 20th. There is no better way to understand the process and expectations of the project. For

more information visit the "Judging Senior Project" link under the "Graduation by Proficiency High School Requirements" at the Warwick Public Schools website or contact Mrs. Bernardi directly.

**Remaining Senior Project Deadlines:**

March 17th - fieldwork forms collected (15 hours, minimum of three forms)

March 17th - mentor evaluation form due

April 14th - senior project binders collected

May 20th - senior project presentation day

May 27th - "not yet" make up presentations

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## **Guidance Department**

This year, many of our seniors have applied to college hoping for early acceptance, and many have already heard from schools that have granted acceptance. The next step is funding that education. We all know that college is important, but did you know that today's students can expect to have 13 different careers in their lifetime? And did you know that 80% of all new jobs that will be created will require some form of higher education. I point this out because each year we become more aware of students who have been accepted to college, but then don't go because of finances. We inform seniors of scholarship opportunities through their first class account. We also tell them about websites that they should search, like Collegeboard.com; Fastweb.com; waytogori.org; Scholarships.com; RIfoundation.org; and sites that belong to organizations in the field or career of interest. There will also be scholarships that are offered only to Pilgrim students, so they need to check first class often. If families have not filed a FAFSA form, they should do so. Even if you are not eligible for federal financial aid, many schools use this information to determine school based aid. The form must be filed before March 1 to be eligible for RI grants, but can be filed later. Worksheets are available online at [www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov](http://www.federalstudentaid.ed.gov). The school code needed for this form is 400239.

The next SAT will be on May 8 at Pilgrim. This is the test date that all juniors are encouraged to sign up to take.

Course requests have been entered into next year and letters will go home around the end of April. If you have any concerns, please call your student's school counselor.

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## **Library**

The end of second quarter was a busy time as we continued to support student projects and research. As the second semester continues we are actively engaged in helping seniors successfully complete their documented research papers.

We are pleased that all 12<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and currently 9<sup>th</sup> grade students have had an opportunity to do library research in our Library Tech Center for their health classes. We have been very impressed with the Power Point presentations the students have produced.

You are invited to view our new library web page at <http://www.pilgrimhs.org>. Many important relevant curriculum resources are now readily available to the high school community. We thank Ms. Andrea Place of the PHS Technology Education Department for her help with this project.

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## Mathematics Department

Students have been busy adding to their digital portfolios in all math classes. During the first quarter students worked on problems from their individual teachers. Common tasks were completed in all math classes during the second quarter. These tasks were graded with a rubric and assessed in each student's digital portfolio in Richer Picture. As part of their graduation by proficiency requirement, the students have also written reflections for their portfolio pieces. They will also be required to complete two more portfolio tasks by the end of this year. Kudos to the math department for doing such a great job guiding in their students with this important work.

Pilgrim High School has three student teachers this semester. We have two from Rhode Island College: Mr. Daluz who is working with Mr. Fisher and Mr. Dansereau who is with Mrs. Szymkowicz. Mrs. Duckworth, from Providence College, is working with Mr. Gravel. Pilgrim High School offers student teachers the setting for practicing skills under the guidance of our excellent teaching staff. We welcome all of the student teachers who are with us this semester and wish them the best of luck.

With more than half of the year completed, it is necessary for all students who are in danger of failing to do all of their homework, attend math department night every Monday and to put forth the effort needed to pass. June will be here before you know it. Encourage your son/daughter to keep up with his/her work. Sometimes fifteen minutes at department night can make all the difference toward understanding the skills necessary to do an assignment. Please call the guidance office to set up an appointment to meet with your child's teacher if you have any questions or concerns.

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## Science Department

Pilgrim held its annual Science Fair on December 15, 2009. Congratulations go out to all students who participated. Special commendations go out to the six students who will represent Pilgrim at the Rhode Island State Science and Engineering Fair, which will be held at CCRI in March:

- Haley Abbott, for her research, "*How Does Spilling Biodiesel and Diesel Affect the Underwater Environment?*"
- Melissa Conti, for her inquiry into "*How Does Artificial Lighting Affect Grass Growth?*"
- Austin DiSantis, for delving into "*The Effect of Salinity and pH on Adult Mysidopsis bahia?*"
- Alicia Kazen, for seeking answers to the question, "*Salt Water or Fresh Water; Which is More Affected by an Oil Spill?*"

- Amibeth Marks, for her project, “Pearly Browns;” and Emily Pride, for studying, “Produce Preservation”

Congratulations again to all participants. You have brought great pride to Pilgrim, your teachers, and your families.

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## **Social Studies Department**

A. Bennett  
J. Brennan  
K. Buckley  
N. DiFilippo  
B. Friel  
J. McDonnell  
A. Palazzo  
N. SanGiovanni  
P. SanGiovanni  
C. Tvenstrup  
A. Wallace  
M. Xiarhos

The social studies department at Pilgrim continues to be involved in many high school reform initiatives. Work continues in the social studies curriculum office on proficiency and sufficiency. Three social studies teachers from Pilgrim are participating. Four of our teachers are participating in a text pilot for 9<sup>th</sup> grade World History. Most of our teachers have volunteered to review digital portfolios for our junior class. A department meeting was devoted to supporting Graduation by Proficiency and Senior Projects. The department head is facilitating the Steps Program in order to improve academic vocabulary and reading in the content area.

History Day will take place on Wednesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> in the school library. There were five categories that were showcased. They were Historical Paper, Exhibit, Documentary, Performance, and Website. The topic was *Innovation in History*. Teachers determined which projects would be entered into the state contest. The state contest will take place on Saturday, May 1<sup>st</sup> at Providence College.

The George Washington Institute for Religious Freedom has provided copies of the George Washington letter to the Hebrew Congregation in Newport, Rhode Island, 1790. This letter was studied in the social studies classes on Monday, February 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mayor Scott Avedisian visited one of our Western Civilization classes to support this effort.

Community service forms were due to the social studies office on 3/15.