



Selected as a NASET (National Association of Special Education Teachers) School of Excellence annually from 2014-2022.

Maryville Jen School

February/March Issue

February/March, 2023

Principal's Address:

Greetings,

Our top priority at Jen School is the safety of our students, staff, and visitors. Unfortunately, there are far too many news reports of students being injured or worse while at school. Therefore, I thought it important to remind and reassure each of you of some of our safety procedures and protocols.

Jen School has several procedures in place to ensure a safe learning and working environment. Each year, our Jen School teachers and staff receive updated information and training on our school-wide safety procedures and protocols related to fires, tornados, lockdowns, etc. In addition, all students and staff members participate in various safety drills throughout the year to prepare and respond accordingly in the event of an actual emergency. There are four certified A.L.I.C.E. (Alert, Lockdown, Inform, Counter, Evacuate) instructors on the Jen School faculty to ensure our students and staff receive Active Shooter training geared towards our students' needs. In addition to the drills and classroom instruction, Jen School implements daily safety checks, locked exterior doors, cameras, and a two-way radio communications system. We maintain a positive relationship with the Des Plaines Police Department and Fire Department and work together to keep our school safe.

The ongoing training our faculty participates in is also key to maintaining a safe environment. All of our staff are trained in Trauma-Informed practices and de-escalation techniques. The structure of Jen, i.e., having a teacher, counselor/social worker, and paraprofessional in every classroom, is also vital to building relationships and maintaining a safe environment.

There has been a great deal of thought and planning put into ensuring our new building in Niles will also be a safe and welcoming environment. The design and installation of equipment and security measures have been at the forefront of the renovation project. The safety procedures we have in place in our current building will be implemented at our new location as well.

In closing, I want to remind everyone that the above information is not all-inclusive in the interest of security and that other procedures are in place for additional safety scenarios not listed. In the event of an emergency, we would do our best to communicate necessary information to our families promptly via our staff and our Jen School website.

As always, thank you for supporting our teachers and school as we work together to provide our students with a safe and nurturing learning environment.

Be Safe,

Ann M. Craig

Director of Educational Services/Principal

Social Media

Like Jen School on Facebook!



Follow @jenschool on Instagram!



Tweet @JenSchool2 on Twitter!



T-Shirt Press

By: Stavros Kouriabalis - Para/Job Coach

We hope everyone is having a wonderful month of February. This month in CTE our new t-shirt press arrived! The purpose of this t-shirt press is to give another end product avenue to our graphics programming by allowing the students to use graphics technology to design apparel. Up to this point, end products have been either decals/stickers or 3D objects. With this new technology, we hope to introduce it with a project that will involve the whole school. Ideally, each class can come up with some design that represents Jen. We feel this activity will spark some creativity within the students and hopefully they will have some fun talking about what symbols they think represents us as a school. It will be interesting to see what they can come up with and then how they will use the technology to make their ideas transferable to decals on clothing. We will then take the finished designs and create a Jen School t-shirt for all of our staff and students. There is no end to what we can do with this equipment going forward! Need new CAAEL shirts? Sure thing! New spirit gear? We got you! Family reunion shirts? We're your designers! We are certainly excited to see what our students do with this new tech!

Professional Development at Jen

By: Mark Trerotola - Teacher

Friday, February 10th was a professional development, or sometimes called inservice, day at Jen School, and while students see professional development days as simply a day off, Jen staff gather to think deeply about their craft and to share ideas with each other reflecting on topics presented. It's an opportunity not only to promote a positive school climate but also for inspiration and recharging of batteries. Professional development days provide time for staff to learn new skills to implement in their classrooms, collaborate with others, and further develop their expertise. Regular topics that are covered yearly on different professional development days are trauma informed practices, suicide awareness and prevention, substance abuse, A.L.I.C.E. or active shooter training, non-violent crisis intervention recertification, and LGBTQ+ sensitivity training, among others required by the Illinois State Board of Education. In this month's training, we will be examining how specific behavioral disorders, such as substance use disorders, eating disorders, depressive disorders, and anxiety disorders, are impacted by trauma. These days of professional development are like taking your car in for routine maintenance; we want to be sure we are able to perform with the latest practices and methodologies for our students.



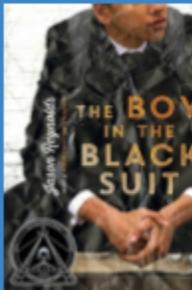
CLASSROOM C O R N E R

Teaching Black History

By: Moissette McNeerney

Black History Month is an annual celebration of achievements by Black Americans and a time for recognizing their central role in U.S. history.

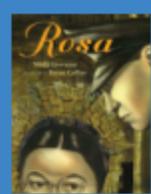
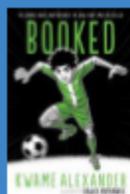
Opportunities to infuse Black history into daily lessons are numerous; Black history is American history. The Black perspective, along with accomplishments and experiences, isn't a promotion. Our lives and histories are intertwined.



A significant way to celebrate Black history is through literature. According to a report published in 2020, more than 8 of every 10 books that New York City students will probably see in class (PreK-8th grade) are written by White authors. Literacy is the gateway to learning. When reading materials lack diversity, the road to lifelong learning can become very narrow. Students ought to be introduced to texts by Black authors that speak to Black experiences, accomplishments, and perspectives. These writers help children and adults bear witness to the full circle of Black excellence.

Room 612 is reading *The Boy in the Black Suit* by Jason Reynolds. The main character, Matt Miller, is a 17-year-old navigating grief in an unusual, touching manner. Reynolds has authored 21 young adult novels and poetry collections. They tell of the Black experience in modern America. In 2020, Reynolds was named National Ambassador of Young People's Literature at the Library of Congress. He has used this position to spread contagion for reading and books among children and young people.

The prolific talents of Black authors can be evidenced in the writings of Nikki Giovanni, Walter Dean Myers, Angie Thomas, and Kwame Alexander, to name a few.



Black History Month

By: Tanya Horton - Paraprofessional/Job Coach

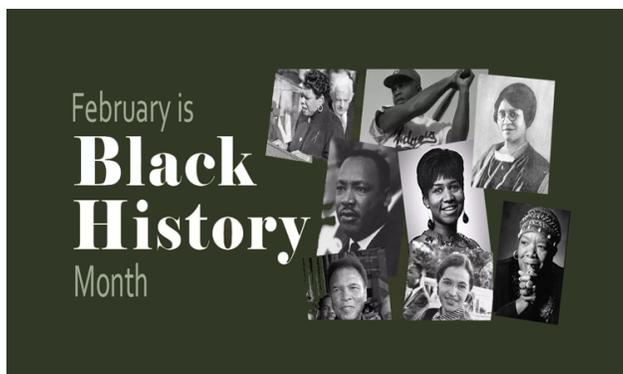
Black History Month is more than just "a month"

Black History month is observed every February. It is a time set aside to not only celebrate the past accomplishments of the greats like Martin Luther King Jr., Harriet Tubman, Rosa Parks and Fredrick Douglas, but to reflect on the past in order to work toward a better future for a population that as of 2022 account for 13.6% of the U.S. population or 45 million lives according to the US Census Bureau.

In 1926, Carter G. Woodson (Historian and founder of ASALH, 1915) decided there needed to be a time set aside to highlight Black Americans' history, lives, and contributions. This celebration became known as "Negro History Week". He chose the second week of February in honor of the birthdays of Fredrick Douglas and Abraham Lincoln; two Americans who he believed stood for freedom. However, he never limited his work to bring light to the life, the struggles, and the accomplishments of African Americans to just one week. His study of African American history was a life-long living testimony.

Fifty years later, in 1976, under the direction of President Gerald Ford, this celebration was expanded to the month-long celebration we observe today. However, it wasn't until 10 years after that, 1986, which was also the first year that Martin Luther King's birthday was celebrated as a national holiday, that February was designated by the Senate as "National Black History Month".

Woodson's work continues today through ASALH (Association for the Study of African American Life and History). Each year they select an overarching theme for Black History Month. The very first theme was *Civilization: A World Achievement*. The theme for this year is *Black Resistance*. Black Resistance shines a light on not just historic oppressions against African Americans, but modern-day oppressions as well. The need to resist acts of discrimination and injustices continues to play a critical role in African Americans' well-being today, four hundred plus years after the first Africans arrived in what would later become "the land of the free". [Continued on page 5]



Health Beat: National Heart Health Month

By: Donna Hoffman - School Psychologist

Along with celebrating Black History Month, February is also National Heart Health Month. According to the World Health Organization, cardiovascular (referring to the heart and blood vessels) disease is the world's number one cause of death, killing over seventeen million people every year making it the most common cause of death for both women and men in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Black adults in the United States die from heart disease at a rate two times higher than white adults. A frightening statistic from theheartfoundation.org cited that 48% of Black women and 44% of Black men have some form of heart disease and that heart disease develops at a younger age in African Americans. Black adults aged 35-64 are 50% more likely to have high blood pressure than whites. (CDC)

Knowing the common symptoms of a heart attack will help you know when to seek immediate treatment that can prevent heart damage and save lives if you are experiencing and/or witnessing these symptoms. Most heart attacks feel like pressure, squeezing, fullness or pain in the center of the chest that lasts more than a few minutes. However, especially in women, symptoms can also include pain or discomfort in one or both arms, the back, neck, jaw, or stomach. There may be chest discomfort, nausea, lightheadedness, shortness of breath, unusual fatigue, heartburn (indigestion), or a cold sweat. Compared to men, women tend to have symptoms more often when resting or even when asleep.

Half of all American adults have at least one major risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Risk factors include high blood pressure, obesity, smoking, and high cholesterol levels. There is a genetic component (predisposition) to heart issues but many of these factors are related to lifestyle choices. Therefore, while heart conditions can be costly and deadly, they can be preventable with access to affordable health care, advancements in technology, and lifestyle changes. This month we put focus on preparing heart-healthy meals and encouraging one another to quit smoking, eat healthier (less salt), work out, and manage daily stress.

Check out this website for resources on the "OurHearts" campaign:
<https://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/education/american-heart-month>

SPORTS PAGE

By: Dan Baffin - PE Teacher

As we enter the month of February, the CAAEL Basketball season is in full swing. The students have been fine tuning their skills and understanding of the game in PE class for the past few weeks. With each game that passes, their willingness to be unselfish players, pick each other and opposing teammates off the floor, and ability to deal with tough calls on the floor, grows. All of this culminates into their 3-0 record so far this year with 4 more games left to play. In other CAAEL news, the spring bowling season ramps up this month and the team is eager to get ready to defend and improve upon their second-place finish in the winter season. Keep up the hard work!



Spring Testing- 2023

By: Donna Hoffman - School Psychologist

Spring is upon us and while that conjures up thoughts of warmer weather and longer days, in schools we become busy with plans for state standardized testing. Illinois requires all juniors to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) as a graduation requirement. This year's grade 11 students will be taking the School Day free SAT on Wednesday April 12th with a makeup day of April 25th. Jen School is an approved testing site so that means our students do not need to attend testing day at their home school. All our students at Jen will receive some accommodations for the SAT such as testing in a small group, extra and/or frequent breaks, extended time, use of a 4-function calculator, etc.. Therefore, we can use the accommodated window which lets us test between April 12th- 25th. Students with extended time usually have two consecutive days in which to finish. The SAT includes reading, language, math, and a written essay.



Since the SAT does not have a science section, the state board of education also mandates that juniors take the Illinois Science Assessment (ISA). This test is a computerized assessment broken into three parts covering physical science, life science, and earth and space sciences which can be administered from March 1st through April 28th.

Freshman and sophomore students will also be participating in spring testing with the PSAT 8/9 and the PSAT 10. These tests are retired practice SAT tests that prepare students for taking the SAT. The accommodated test window for grades 9 and 10 is April 12th- April 28th. Students can finish the PSAT tests in one morning, even with extended time and extra breaks as approved accommodations. However, at Jen School we will utilize the test window to maintain a small group setting, meaning there is not one specific day for freshman and sophomores to test.

In addition to the state required testing, Jen School administers MAP (Measures of Academic Progress) testing each spring and classrooms will be completing these tests from now until the end of the school year. Teachers are able to compare fall scores to spring scores to track individual progress in reading, math, and language. MAP scores also reveal student's strengths and weaknesses to help monitor progress toward IEP goals. MAP is a standardized assessment that generates grade equivalencies and national percentiles for each subject that can be used to gauge current levels of performance and predict readiness for state assessments such as SAT and/or the American College Testing (ACT).



A Plate From Our Kitchen

By: Maysaloon Alkhafaji - Paraprofessional/Job Coach

This cooking activity was led by our amazing Chef, Zachary L Greer. The students cooked fish tacos.

The cooking experience allows them to learn new words as they determine which ingredients are the ones required in a dish. Cooking can help kids learn and practice some basic math concepts and build language skills. The purpose of having cooking activity is to promote cognitive development and career exploration. Cooking encourages kids' thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. It also allows the opportunity to use the knowledge they have and apply it by counting, measuring, following a sequence, following directions, and cause and effect.

After they finish cooking, they sit down to eat the meal together. This can help build their confidence and lay the foundation for healthy eating habits. It may take a little flexibility and some simple prep work.

One of the students (Jacob) who is participating in cooking, shared his opinion on that, saying, "I liked this activity. I love to eat a lot, being in the kitchen and tasting everything. What I love most is that I learned how to make fish tacos with chipotle salsa. The food was very tasty and delicious. I'm rating 10 out of ten".



Try it in YOUR Kitchen

Fish Tacos. Makes 8 Tacos

Ingredients:

8-2oz portions of firm white fish (mahi mahi)
8 Flour tortillas (street taco size)
4oz Chipotle salsa (see recipe below)
8oz Crema (see recipe below)
24oz Baja slaw (see recipe below)
8 Thin slices pickled jalapeno
8 Thin slices radish
8 Stems of Cilantro
8 Lime wedges
Fish taco rub to taste (see recipe below)
Extra virgin olive oil to taste

Chipotle Salsa. Makes about 20oz

7oz Chipotle in adobo
7oz Lime juice
2oz Cilantro
2oz Honey
2oz White vinegar
2 Cloves garlic
Salt to taste
-Process all ingredients in a blender until smooth

Crema. Makes about 18oz

8oz Sour Cream
8oz Mayonnaise
2 oz Chipotle Salsa (see recipe above)
-Process all ingredients in a blender until well combined

Fish Taco Rub. Makes about 1 ¼ cups

1cup Kosher Salt
1tbsp Ground cumin
1 tbsp Paprika
1tbsp Chili powder
1 tbsp Ground coriander
-Add all ingredients to a small bowl. Mix well.

Baja Slaw

1 Small head white cabbage shredded (about 1.5lbs)
1 Small head red cabbage shredded (about 1.5lbs)
½ white onion sliced thin
½ red onion sliced thin
1.5 tbsp Oregano leaves
2 tbsp Extra virgin olive oil
2 tbsp Crema (see recipe above)
Juice of a lime
Pinch of salt
-Add all ingredients to a large bowl. Mix gently.

Directions:

- Season fish to taste with the fish taco rub. Sear and cook the fish in a frying pan or griddle until it reaches an internal temperature of 135 degrees. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil and set aside.
- In a clean skillet or griddle, warm the tortillas until soft. Wrap them in foil to keep them warm and set aside.
- To assemble tacos, add 3oz baja slaw onto a tortilla. Place the fish on top of the slaw. Drizzle 1/2oz salsa and 1oz Crema. Repeat with all the tortillas.
- Garnish the tacos with pickled jalapeno, radish, cilantro and lime wedge.