

HILLER HIGHLIGHTS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF TRINITY AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT SINCE 2015
HOME OF THE HILLERS!



February 2020



TRINITY MIDDLE SCHOOL NAMED COMMON SENSE SCHOOL

Digital media and technology are evolving at a dizzying pace, both unlocking extraordinary opportunities and posing real risks for young people. Students are using the immense power of the internet and mobile technology to explore, connect, create, and learn in ways never before imagined, both in and out of the classroom. At the same time, tech use can bring up ethical challenges such as cyberbullying and misinformation and health issues related to media balance and social and emotional well-being.

Trinity Middle School sees these as teachable moments. We believe that digital citizenship skills have become essential for students in the 21st century, especially in schools like ours that are using technology to transform learning. That's why we are committed to teaching our students how to be digital learners, leaders, and citizens.

Trinity Middle School has just been approved as a Common Sense School, an honor that recognizes our efforts in teaching digital citizenship to young people and engaging the entire school community in this important discussion. The recognition acknowledges our school's commitment to helping students build skills that are essential for their well-being today—and for the opportunities they'll have tomorrow.

This honor is provided by Common Sense Education, part of a national nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of kids and families by providing the trustworthy information, education, and independent voice they need to thrive in a world of media and technology.

We are one of the more than 65,000 schools across the country that use Common Sense Education's groundbreaking education resources. As a result, our students are better equipped to navigate the digital world and use devices for learning. We hope you will encourage other schools in our district to take advantage of them. If 75% of schools in the district become Common Sense Schools, we can earn recognition as a Common Sense District.

To learn more about Common Sense Education, visit www.commonsense.org/education.



Congratulations!

MR. JOE SMITH

**NATIONAL MATH + SCIENCE INITIATIVE'S
FEBRUARY TEACHER OF THE MONTH**

Relentlessly Positive Lifelong Learner

NMSI BLOG

Angela Chambers | February 10, 2020

When students "catch the scientist bug," **Joe Smith** knows he's done his job well.

"A scientist doesn't follow a preset procedure – they ask questions and take ownership," says Smith, an AP Biology teacher at Trinity High School in Washington, Penn., and **NMSI's February Teacher of the Month**.

Smith recently watched his students learn a skill in a photosynthesis lab and then choose a variable that wasn't part of the original lesson. These budding scientists borrowed lights from a physics class to figure out what would happen to plant leaves under different light intensities – a step they weren't instructed to do.

Growing up, Smith spent a lot of time outdoors and learned from his mother, who worked in the medical field. By his freshman year in high school, he developed a passion for biology and knew he wanted to become a teacher. In college, he tutored around 20 fellow students in his room the night before a biology final exam.

Students are Students

While technology has changed in his 38 years of teaching, Smith says one thing hasn't: the students.

Kids live in a world where they have much less of an opportunity to disconnect, but the kids themselves haven't changed," Smith says. "What they're looking for is to be accepted as part of a group and as individuals. From teachers, they are looking for someone who can hold them accountable for things without being heavy-handed about it."



Students often question how Smith can be relentlessly positive – something he takes pride in. Between classes, he stands at his door and greets every student by name, knowing that may be the only or one of a few times students have this connection each day.

"They aren't just another student in my class," Smith says. "I know who they are and try to make them feel they are important in my room."

Trinity Principal Craig Uram sees Smith's dedication to students in action.

"When community members think or talk about Joe Smith, they always mention his commitment to educating all students within his classroom," Uram says. "Mr. Smith routinely begins his workday at 6 a.m. If students need extra assistance, he is willing to meet with students before or after school to offer students academic support.

Smith continually reinvents how he delivers content and considers himself a lifelong learner. He refines his lessons so that he isn't teaching in the same way every year. In recent years, he's incorporated more biotechnology and new discoveries in genetics. "Our understanding of genetics has changed so completely since I was in college," he says.

Another way he keeps lessons relevant is using data to meet individual students' needs. Smith discovered that if students don't perform well on standardized reading tests, they are less likely to pass the AP Biology exam, which relies heavily on reading comprehension. "A lot of times, kids aren't struggling on the biology vocabulary," Smith says. "Their overall vocabulary isn't as large as other students."

At the beginning of the school year, Smith identifies students that need help with reading and gives them more advanced feedback on what they missed, including strategies for finding answers to questions within a text. He also sometimes asks these students to use a highlighter to identify terms they aren't familiar with in the reading.

NMSI Partnership

After participating in NMSI's three-year College Readiness Program, Trinity High is currently using continued services from NMSI this school year. Smith says NMSI teacher trainings have been high quality, even for someone who has taught for decades.

"I've never been to a NMSI training where I couldn't take something positive from it, like an activity I could use or an insight from other teachers that is a tweak to an original lab that works better," he says.

The NMSI program also helped increase the recognition and celebration of AP scholars at Trinity. Before NMSI, Smith remembers a student who took 16 AP exams and scored 5s on 15 and a 4 on one (on a 5-point scale), but "no one made a big deal out of it." Now, AP students have a banner in the lobby that highlights their accomplishments and are featured in an academic pep rally in the fall.



Looking back, Smith wouldn't change a thing about his choice to pursue education as a career. "I make a point to tell people thinking about education that it's a wonderful field. Kids still need good role models."

Parents:

The coronavirus has been in the news. Public schools have received recommendations from the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Intermediate Units. Trinity Area will be implementing additional routine sterilization practices in each school building as a precautionary measure. We will continue to follow the CDC's recommendations and review their updates. Please review the attached information from the Pennsylvania Department of Health with your family.



CORONAVIRUS

BACKGROUND

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses that are common throughout the world. These viruses can live in animals, such as camels, cats and bats, and at times, evolve and infect people, before spreading through human to human contact. Human coronaviruses spread just like the flu or a cold—through the air by coughing or sneezing; through close personal contact, like touching or shaking hands; by touching an object or surface with the viruses on it; and occasionally, through fecal contamination. This has occurred previously with the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreaks.

WHO DOES THE ISSUE IMPACT?

People most at-risk of contracting a coronavirus are those who have traveled to places where the virus is occurring. In the case of the novel coronavirus, that location is China, and particularly the Wuhan area and the Hubei province.



WHAT ARE WE DOING?

The department frequently exercises and prepares for a potential infectious disease outbreak. We have been monitoring the novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak in China using information from our federal and local partners and are preparing our response teams in case of an outbreak here. We have talked with health care partners about the potential spread of the coronavirus into the United States and how they will work with public health to evaluate potential cases.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Symptoms of the COVID-19 can include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath

The symptoms may appear in as few as two days or as long as 14 days after exposure. Reported illnesses have ranged from people with little to no symptoms to people being severely ill and dying.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- **Cover** any coughs or sneezes with your elbow, do not use your hands!
- **Clean** surfaces frequently, such as countertops, light switches, cell phones and other frequently touched areas. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- **Contain-** if you are sick, stay home until you are feeling better.

RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information, visit <https://www.health.pa.gov/topics/disease/Pages/Coronavirus.aspx>

The latest information on the coronavirus in the U.S. and worldwide can be found on the [CDC website](#)

Additional information from the CDC on what to do if you are sick can be found [here](#)

Date Updated: 2/11/2020

Date Created: 1/27/2020

We will partner with A-Z Janitorial Services to equip each school and health office with electrostatic sprayers to regularly sanitize. Staff will be trained and armed next week!



Trinity Pride!



Fifty three Trinity students participated in the Region 8 PJAS Competition at California University of Pennsylvania. Trinity is pleased to announce that forty students were first place winners and forty qualified for state. Five students received perfect scores and four received exemplary awards. Thirteen students earned second place awards as well. Mr. Smith, Mrs. Walk, and Mrs. Welsh are proud to be their sponsors! Special thanks to Mrs. Hartley who also attended and served as a judge.



Congratulations to Trinity's Governor's STEM team. The team competed at Range Resources and earned third place out all the IU 1, IU 2, and IU3 teams that participated. The students worked on developing retaining walls to help prevent landslides.

Pictured above are: Isabelle Carney, Marin Williamson, Ann Kozak, Ben Kozak, and Elliott Salvatori.

Congratulations to Sienna Heasley and Caroline Miller for earning awards from the Scholastic Art & Writing competition! The girls will be recognized at a ceremony at California University of PA in late February. The pieces that won gold awards will advance on to the national level and be evaluated in New York City. Way to go girls!



Caroline Miller - writing

Gold Award for her novel "Loyalty's Wings"

Silver Award for her short story "Story of the Stars"



Sienna Heasley - art

Gold Award for her painting "The Art of Nature"

Silver Award for her drawing "Howl to the Universe"

On January 17, 2020, the Trinity Boys Basketball team and parent Boosters sponsored the Hiller Family Fundraiser. Each year, the team selects a home game night to raise funds for a Trinity family who may be in need of financial support. This year was a huge success, thanks to all who attended! The team raised over \$3,700 by selling "It's a Great Day to be a Hiller" bracelets, 50/50 tickets and auction basket tickets. All proceeds from that evening's concession sales also went toward the fundraiser. The Varsity/JV team wore special shirts for the occasion, and the evening also recognizing the youth league basketball players in elementary through middle school grades. On behalf of the Boys Basketball Team and parent Boosters, we would like to thank everyone for their generosity and support! There was not an empty seat in the Hiller house that night. The proceeds will be given to a student's family who recently lost his mother to cancer.



Ms. Mohr's 4th and 5th grade students attended the Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3 sponsored Science Bowl hosted by the Carnegie Museum of Natural History. Students explored the museum and participated in different challenges. In "Fur, Feathers, and Scales" students observed, described and identified animal samples. The "Do You See What I See" challenge gave students the opportunity to explore the 50 Greatest Nature Photographs exhibit. Finally, students headed to Dinosaur Hall to answer trivia questions based on the exhibits for the "Who Am I" challenge.

Congratulations to Evan, Maddox, and Vittoria for coming in 1st place at the competition!

Sixth grade student, Bayleigh Lowe visited Trinity West and Trinity South during the 2nd-5th grade recess blocks. Bayleigh won the 2018 WQED Writers' Contest. Serious writers talked with Bayleigh about the writing process and creative writing. She also shared her winning story.

The WQED Writing Contest is open through the end of March for students in grades K-5. Special thanks to Ms. Paluda & Ms. Mohr for coordinating this visit!

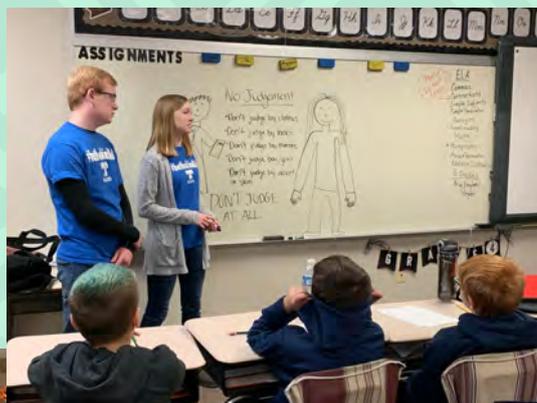


Rachel's Challenge



In collaboration with Beth Center Elementary, members of the Trinity High School Friends of Rachel (FOR) Club taught lessons on kindness, acceptance, and influence to the elementary school students. They also read to the younger grade levels and spend quality time with them during lunch.

Thanks to Mr. Zach Just, Principal of Beth Center Elementary, for giving our students and their advisors, Kristen Sagerer, Steve Polansky, and Tim Tessmer, such a memorable experience.



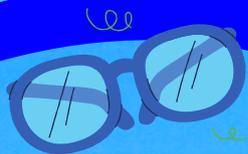


We would like to thank our partners at the Washington Chrome Federal Credit Union, for a “Random Act of Kindness” donation to cover Trinity Area students in need that have a negative lunch account.

The Spring 2019 Trinity Literary Journal, "Oh, The Places We'll Go," was selected as MOST OUTSTANDING Literary Magazine by the American Scholastic Press Association. In addition, the publication received a rating of First Place with Special Merit. Editor-in-Chief of the Literary Journal, Maria Cimino, is now a freshman at Kent State University. The journal is an annual publication sponsored by the NHS and is advised by Katie O'Lare and Mary Ann Berty.



Pictured are Trinity graduate Maria Cimino and Seniors Morgan Kafana, Gina Gossett and Jonathan Brodak.



Trinity North students received eyeglasses from Vision to Learn. The non-profit organization works with communities across the U.S. to provide free vision services and eyeglasses to students.



Thanks to students from Western Area Career and Technology Center who visited Trinity North Elementary to educate students from Kindergarten through 5th grade about dental hygiene.



CONGRATULATIONS

February

Students of the Month



Elliott Salvatori
High School



Emily Tonsetic
and
Gibson Havanis
Middle School



Follow Dr. Lucas on twitter @ #TRINITY_MLUCAS

Keep up with news and events at the high school!
Follow the link to the student newspaper, **The Hiller** here



The Super Bowl Champions Parade in Disney World was led by the Trinity Marching Band!

Trinity's Choir also performed at Disney Springs.

WPIAL

Junior High Tournament

Two junior high wrestlers took home District 7 Southwest Regional titles on February 15th. Congratulations to Blake Reihner who won the 108 lb title and Bodie Morgan who won the 145 lb class. Also placing for the Hillers were Mason Kraer, 2nd at 210 and Braedon Welsh, 5th at 130. Fifty three schools attended from both the AA and AAA classifications.



Sweet!



Thanks to the Food Service Department and Officer Hiller for providing all elementary students with a free safety booklet and sundae!



Random Acts of Kindness Week was celebrated February 10 – 18. North Elementary students performed various acts of kindness throughout the school to bring caring, compassion and respect to one another. Each day, students acts of kindness were announced and their names were placed on the *Kindness Counts Board*.

“ Pittsburgh Arts & Lectures

Trinity East fourth grade classes were invited by Pittsburgh Arts & Lectures to attend an author lecture Q&A with Dan Gemeinhart at the Carnegie Library in Pittsburgh on Monday, February 3, 2020. Each school was given a class set of the book The Remarkable Journey of Coyote Sunrise to read before the event. This beautifully written middle grade novel follows the journey of a girl named Coyote and her Dad, Rodeo, as they travel across the country on a school bus after a family tragedy. Four schools and over 500 students participated in the event that was also offered as a webcast with students all over the Pittsburgh area. Mr. Gemeinhart answered questions about his books, his writing process, how he gets ideas, and how he became a writer after his career as a school librarian. After the author event, students were given a tour of the Carnegie Library which included historical and architectural information. The tour was followed by a variety of STEAM activities in the Children’s Department and Teen Space. Fourth grade had such a great time! A special thank you to the Grable Foundation, EQT, PIC5K, and The Succop Family Charitable Trust for providing the grant to fund the ticket and transportation costs.



Trinity North celebrated the 100th day of school with various activities. Students and staff dressed up like they were 100 years old, made 100 Day hats and displayed groups of 100 items.



100



The students from Trinity North Elementary also participated in the Valentines for Soldiers and Veterans Writing Campaign. The students expressed their appreciation to the soldiers overseas and to the veterans at the VA Hospital in Pittsburgh by making Valentine's Day cards. Way to go Trinity North students and teachers for making the veterans and military feel special!



Trinity Area School District
announces
Kindergarten & First Grade Registration



HOURS:
11:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
4:00 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.

MONDAY, MARCH 9, 2020
TUESDAY, MARCH 10, 2020
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 11, 2020
THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 2020

TRINITY SOUTH
TRINITY NORTH
TRINITY WEST
TRINITY EAST

Note: Children DO NOT need to attend registration.

YOU WILL NEED TO BRING

- Child's original birth certificate
- Immunization records
- Proof of residence (listed on registration packet)
- If you would like to obtain the forms before registration, please access them through the school's website (www.trinitypride.org) or stop in.
- Child must be 5 years of age before September 1, 2020 to enter kindergarten
- Child must be 6 years of age before September 1, 2020 to enter first grade

PLEASE NOTE:

Students presently enrolled in a Trinity kindergarten do not have to register for first grade.

If for some reason there would be a school cancellation the day of registration, it will be held the same day of the following week.

**Need information?
FLYERS
available HERE!**

**To request that a flyer be posted
on the website,
email:
jwalz@trinityhillers.net**

To submit an article for publication in *Hiller Highlights* email:

hillerhighlights@trinityhillers.net or
jwalz@trinityhillers.net

Articles may be submitted in the body of the email
or attached as a Word document.

Documents in .pdf format will not be accepted.
Corresponding pictures must be attached
to the same email in .jpg format.

The newsletter is released at the end of each month -
September through June.

Articles are published pending review by the Superintendent.



Trinity Area School District Academic Calendar 2020-2021

AUGUST '20						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

20-21 New Teacher Orientation
 24-25 KinderCamp
 26-27 Staff Development Days
 28 Clerical
 31 **First Student Day**

Teachers Days: 4
 Student Days: 1

8 Staff Development/No School
 15 President's Day/No School

FEBRUARY '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28						

Teacher Days: 19
 Student Days: 18

SEPTEMBER '20						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

7 Labor Day/No School
 15 Elementary Open House
 16 Elementary Open House
 22 Middle School Open House
 23 High School Open House

Teacher Days: 21
 Student Days: 21

29 End of 3rd 9 weeks/Day #135
 31 Two Hour Early Release/Staff Development

MARCH '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

Teacher Days: 23
 Student Days: 23

OCTOBER '20						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Teacher Days: 22
 Student Days: 22

1-5 Spring Break/No School
 30 Two Hour Early Release/Staff Development

APRIL '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

Teacher Days: 19
 Student Days: 19

NOVEMBER '20						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

2 End 1st 9 weeks /Day #45
 9 Parent Conference Day/No School
 25 Two Hour Early Release/Staff Development
 26-30 Fall Break

Teacher Days: 18
 Student Days: 17

28 Two Hour Early Release/Staff Development
 31 Memorial Day/No School

MAY '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

Teacher Days: 20
 Student Days: 20

DECEMBER '20						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

23 Staff Development/No School
 24-31 Winter Break/No School

Teacher Days: 17
 Student Days: 16

4 **Last Student Day/ Early Release/Graduation**
 7-8 Staff Development
 9 Teacher Clerical Day

JUNE '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

Teacher Days: 7
 Student Days: 4

JANUARY '21						
S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

1 Winter Break cont'd /No School
 18 M.L. King Day/No School
 21 End 1st Semester/Day #90

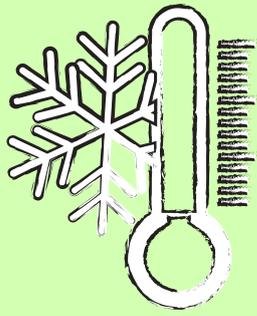
Teacher Days: 19
 Student Days: 19

Board Approved: FEBRUARY 20, 2020

Total teacher days: 189
 Total student days: 180

NOTE: Any non-student day may be used as a make-up day.

SNOW MAKE UP DAY:



**Due to the cancellation on February 7,
SCHOOL WILL BE IN SESSION ON
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2020**

Spring Break will be April 9 - 13

The revised 2019-20 calendar is available [here](#)

TRINITY MIDDLE SCHOOL'S



FAMILY NIGHT

SCIENCE TECHNOLOGY ENGINEERING ARTS MATH

2nd - 5th
GRADE

Thursday, March 26th
Trinity Middle School
5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

**FUN
INTERACTIVE
EVENING!**

SCRATCH
FAB Lab
Photoshop
Robotics
Small Lab

Limited
Capacity

Registration
required

Question,
Explore,
Innovate
&
Create

REGISTER AT:

<https://forms.gle/VXcZhDPhBPbK94v86>



TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL
PROUDLY PRESENTS



April 2, 3, 4 at 7:00 PM

April 5 at 2:00 PM

Trinity High School Auditorium

TICKETS ARE ON SALE NOW AT
our.show/thsannie2020

Tickets will also be on sale at the door before
each performance.



Parents/ Community Members

Would you like to give back to your school and
earn some extra money at the same time? The

HR Department is looking for "Emergency
Status" substitute teachers. No teaching degree
necessary. If you have a four-year degree and
are interested in working with our students,
please click on the following link for more
information:

TASD HR Department



MARCH DATES

TO REMEMBER!

5 School Board Meeting/
6 p.m. Trinity Hall

9 Kindergarten Registration/
Trinity South

10 Kindergarten Registration/
Trinity North

11 Kindergarten Registration/
Trinity West

12 Kindergarten Registration/
Trinity East

17 Finance Committee Meeting/
5 p.m. Trinity Hall

18 9th Grade Move Up Night/
6 p.m. Trinity High School

19 School Board Meeting/
6 p.m. Trinity Hall

26 Family Night/
5:30-7:30 p.m. Trinity Middle School

27 Two Hour Student Early Release/
Staff Development

30 In Service Day/NO SCHOOL

Introducing the TRINITY HILLER SPORTS NETWORK!

We now livestream athletic events at our
stadium & gymnasium. To activate your
account, click here.

The season for inclement weather is right around the corner! Here are a few ways to be sure you receive notifications on school delays and cancellations:

Be sure your contact information is current for phone numbers and email addresses in Skyward to receive rapid alert notifications.

-Check the website: Alerts will be posted at the top of the website whenever there is a delay or cancellation.

-Check social media: Delays or cancellations will be announced on Twitter.

-Check news outlets: Inclement weather announcements will be posted on the following news outlets:

Local TV - KDKA, WTAE, WPXI

Local radio - WJPA

Please note that the District does not control how quickly radio and TV stations update their information on-air.