

THE

# FALL RIVER EDUCATOR



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SUMMER 2013

## A Plus for Fall River

Teacher Lee Moniz works with her first-grade students at Viveiros, which is partnering with Teach Plus on teacher turnaround teams. Page 3.

Photo: Sean Browne



Durfee High student Manny Fernandes was a Presidential Scholars Award nominee.

## Hail to Fernandes

Durfee student nominated for Presidential Scholars Program

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Selected among the best and the brightest, Durfee High School graduate Manny Fernandes was one of approximately 3,000 candidates invited to apply for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program – one of the nation's highest honors for its nearly 3.4 million graduating high school students.

Created in 1964, the program has honored more than 6,000 U.S. Presidential Scholars who have demonstrated leadership, scholarship and contribution to school and community. Up to 141 students are selected and presented

See **FERNANDES** Page 9



Doran School grows

Pages **6-7**



# Educating ‘whole’ child starts early



**WILLIAM  
A. FLANAGAN**

When most of us think of schooling, we envision a classroom focused on academics—math, reading and writing, science, and social studies. These areas get the most public attention in the form of state testing and graduation results. While these core academics are indeed important, our school system and community have taken important steps to ensure that we educate the “whole” child. This means that more and more of our students enter school healthy and ready to learn, are engaged and connected to our broader community, are supported by qualified and caring adults, and are prepared for college and career success.

Educating the whole child begins at an early age. Both Gov. Patrick and President Obama have highlighted the need to provide our youngest citizens with the opportunity to attend school by the age of four. While it may look like preschool children are just playing, it turns out they are doing important academic and social-skills work that prepares them for formal schooling. Multiple studies all point to the same result—children who attend a quality preschool perform better in grade school than children who do not. Students who attend preschool are less likely to repeat grades, need special education services, or to be involved with the law. Children who experience a quality preschool program are also more likely to graduate from high school, own homes, have

longer marriages and even earn up to \$2000 per month more than those who do not enroll in quality preschool programming.

The City of Fall River is proud to support preschool education as part of our school system. We offer preschool classes in four locations at Greene, Silvia, Doran and Spencer Borden schools, serving more than 180 students. To expand the benefits of preschool beyond the our classrooms, our city also offers “play and learn” groups for 3- and 4-year-olds to enhance their early literacy skills. These groups are of no-cost, and are open to any 3- or 4-year-old and their caretakers. They meet weekly and are located in nine sites throughout the city, including eight elementary schools and the Fall River Public Library on North Main Street.

As children continue their development from preschool through middle school, their needs change. Play and exploration is replaced with understanding the world, forming social identities, and solving complex problems—all of which is supported through Fall River’s Expanded Learning Time (ELT) initiatives, as you will read on pages 4-5 of this edition of *The Fall River Educator*. Fall River is proving to be a national leader in effective use of additional learning time. The district currently has three state-funded ELT schools—Viveiros, Silvia, and Kuss. All three schools have shown dramatic improvements in student performance, and Kuss Middle School has received national recognition and was recently highlighted on the CBS Evening News.

Spurred by the success of these schools, our

teachers and principals are in the midst of redesign efforts to expand ELT programming to Doran, Morton and Talbot.

ELT provides extra time for core academics and time to expand students’ academic world through enrichment programming. Students in ELT can choose from a variety of electives that tap into their unique interests and talents, such as theater, video production, robotics, guitar, public speaking, and forensics. While students simply enjoy participating in these electives, they are also building 21st-century skills that are needed for today’s workforce through collaboration, technology, and real-world problem solving. As an added benefit, these electives expose students to our community partners whom bring their expertise into the classroom, whether that is around history, technology, the arts, or athletics.

Preschool and ELT programming engage youth in ways that seem “fun” to students, and yet we know these experiences prepare our students for their future challenges—whether that is the demands of readiness for kindergarten or 21st-century skills demanded by an ever-changing and increasingly technological world. Educating the whole child, whether a 4-year-old entering school for the first time, or the seasoned high school student, is a win-win for educators, students, and families, and positions Fall River Public Schools in a unique way to provide enriched learning experiences for the children of Fall River.

*William A. Flanagan is mayor of Fall River.*

## FALL RIVER EDUCATOR

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## Summer is a time for reading



**MEG MAYO-BROWN**

Summer is here, and if you think lazy, hazy months should be all play and no work, take a look at what Fall River Public Schools has to offer. Our goal is to provide students with a variety of programming to counter what is known as “summer learning loss.” All students experience learning losses when they do not engage in educational activities during the summer, so through the efforts of our community and educators we want to ensure the hard work of our students is not lost over the summer. Below we highlight some of the unique opportunities for FRPS students.

Read, read, read. Students who read at least 30 minutes per day will be “smarter.” We often say to our students that their brains are muscles, and just like any muscle, brains need to be “worked out” every day. There is no doubt – reading every day exercises their brains. This “exercise” increases vocabulary, strengthens their ability to comprehend, and expands their understanding of the world. As parents we can encourage our children, even our teenagers, to read a variety of material. The key is to find what interests your child – fiction or nonfiction, paperback, hardcover, Kindle, NOOK. The what and the how of reading can be flexible; reading daily is the key point.

To help our students read, read, read, we are launching a summer reading campaign with the help of our educators and community partners. Each of our 10,000 students is

required to read an assigned book as determined by their grade level. Along with their required reading and project, we encourage parents to check out our grade level recommendations for summer reading. Additionally, K-8 students have an opportunity to participate in a Literacy Scavenger Hunt that connects them with points of interest in our city while receiving a free book at each site. All summer reading information is available on our website at [www.fallriverschools.org](http://www.fallriverschools.org).

Each year our mayor and school committee support our efforts to increase our summer programming. This year we have more summer programs than ever before. In addition to our typical summer school program, students will have the opportunity to participate in enrichment programming at Durfee High School, Doran, Greene, Letourneau, Watson, Morton and Talbot. Our students will focus on academic skills while having fun through such activities as robotics, oceanography, exploring the history of Fall River, sports camps, cooking, and television production. As in past years, the mayor will ensure that all children have access to a healthy lunch through Lunch in the Park.

We hope our students and families have many opportunities to relax and enjoy one another throughout these summer months. Our students have worked hard this year, and parents have played an important role in sustaining their child’s effort in school. We look forward to seeing our students return in September, and wish everyone a healthy, happy and safe summer!

*Meg Mayo-Brown is superintendent of schools.*

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# Partnership with TeachPlus a positive for Fall River schools

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

As part of the T3 Initiative and in partnership with TeachPlus, Fall River Public Schools is among the first in the nation to place effective, experienced teachers at the center of school turnaround efforts.

An innovative program that recruits, develops, and supports effective, experienced teachers to serve in under-performing schools, the T3 Initiative launched in the 2010-11 school year in three schools in Boston Public Schools and added two more Boston schools in 2011. During the 2012-13 school year, T3 expanded its partnership to three additional Boston schools and two Fall River schools — Carlton Viveiros Elementary School and Henry Lord Middle School. It also expanded to three schools in the Achievement School District of Memphis, Tenn.

Next year, T3 will add teacher leaders in Boston and Fall River and launch a partnership with the District of Columbia Public Schools.

Schools that are part of the T3 Initiative are given intensive support and innovative strategies to enable them to significantly

raise student outcomes. The schools receive resources for improving instruction such as regular data on student progress and expert coaching, as well as wrap-around services that help teachers address their students' social, emotional, and health needs and provide support for parent and community outreach. T3 teacher leaders play a central role in helping to transform these schools, having been chosen for their effectiveness with urban students and trained in a cohort for the challenge of a turnaround

The T3 teacher leaders work together with their grade-level colleagues to build high impact teams

environment. They receive ongoing training and professional development that begins with an intensive, team-based summer institute. They continue to be supported in becoming turnaround specialists with the help of an embedded T3 coach.

Comprising at least 25 percent of the school faculty, each T3 cohort receives training together and time for collaboration throughout the year. T3 teacher leaders



Viverios teachers participating in the T3 program include: from left, Kim Hicks, Adrienne Wright, Lee Moniz and Kate McGraw.

serve in a variety of leadership roles that facilitate and support the work of all teachers in the school to significantly increase student achievement. They are also compensated to work an extended school

instructional decisions, facilitating professional learning communities, supporting teachers to improve student achievement, and providing professional development both inside and outside of the classroom.

"Stephanie works collaboratively with the T3 teachers to build their capacity as instructional leaders through intense professional development sessions," said Principal Meg Christ. "The T3 teacher leaders work together with their grade-level colleagues to build high impact teams for improving student outcomes and the quality of all teaching in the school. Grade-level teams collect, review and analyze school data to support instructional practices in the classrooms and align professional development."

Viveiros is recruiting four new T3 teacher leaders for next year.



Viverios teacher Lee Moniz works with one of her students, Tamia Kellam.



Lee Moniz listens as students Aaron Sousa, left, and Laila Hollins read to the class.

PHOTOS: SEAN BROWNE





Silvia Elementary School students work on their country line dancing as part of ELT enrichment activities.

## ELT thrives in Fall River

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

With approval from the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (MA DESE), Fall River Public Schools is poised to expand learning time at the James Madison Morton Middle School, the Edmond P. Talbot Middle School and the John J. Doran K-8 School as

part of a national pilot program.

The three-year pilot program will affect almost 20,000 students in 40 schools, with long-term hopes of expanding the program to include additional schools. Fall River was chosen as one of two districts in the state – the other being Lawrence Public Schools. Working in concert with districts, parents and teachers, schools will decide whether to make the school day longer, add more days to the school year or both.

“Whether educators have more time to enrich instruction or students have more time to learn how to play an instrument and write computer code, adding meaningful in-school hours is a critical investment that better prepares children to be successful in the 21st century,” said

Education Secretary Arne Duncan.

A mix of federal, state and district funds will cover the costs, with the Ford Foundation and the National Center on Time & Learning also chipping in resources. In Fall River, the program is building on the state’s existing Expanded Learning Time (ELT) program.

Launched in 2005, the Massachusetts ELT Initiative is a partnership between the National Center on Time & Learning and Massachusetts 2020, together with the state legislature, Gov. Deval L. Patrick, and the MA DESE. The partners have called on schools and districts across the state to rethink the traditional six-hour, 180-day school schedule and collaborate with teachers, union leaders, community

See ELT Page 5



Silvia Elementary School second-grade student Miuna Bouramia does an aerobic workout.



Fifth-grade student Juliana Simas, right, enjoys candy decorating.



# ELT program provides improved instruction and enrichment

ELT: from Page 4

partners, administrators, and parents to develop redesign plans. Schools that develop the highest quality proposals are awarded \$1,300 per pupil per year to support an expanded school day and year. More than 10,500 students in nine districts across Massachusetts attend ELT schools.

The model has worked well at the district's Matthew J. Kuss Middle School and Frank Silvia and Carlton Viveiros elementary schools. In 2004, Kuss Middle became the first school declared "chronically underperforming" by the state. In fall 2006, Kuss opened its doors with a brand new school schedule that included 300 more hours of learning time per year (90 minutes per day) for all students, providing them with a balance of personalized academic instruction and engaging enrichment, as well as additional time for teacher collaboration to strengthen instruction. The school was able to improve instruction, broaden enrichment opportunities and advance academic outcomes, transforming itself into a model for schools around the

country seeking a comprehensive turnaround strategy.

Likewise, Silvia became an ELT school in 2007, transforming from an underperforming school to a Level I school.

"You could see the difference it made with our MCAS scores right away," said Silvia Principal Denise Ward. "We were one of the most consistent schools in the green."

As part of the additional learning time, Silvia offers weekly enrichment programs such as country line dancing, knitting and cooking, as well as hands-on science activities. Each week, teachers also have two common planning periods.

"Our teachers still say they don't have enough time in the day," said Ward.

In recent years, the district allocated its own funds to extend the day at Doran Elementary and Henry Lord Middle School. The Doran School is currently in the fourth year of funding for its ELT program, and will be supported for the next three years through the pilot program.



Silvia teacher Traci Bustin leads an aerobic workout.



Silvia Elementary School students in Heather Codeiro's cooking class decorate candy.



Students practice country line dancing.



# A MODEL FOR SUCCESS

## Doran combines elementary and middle schools

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Elementary- and middle-school students are uniting under one roof at the Doran School, which is in the process of converting to a pre-K-8 school.

As part of the school's redesign plan, approved by the Fall River School Committee and the Commissioner of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education in 2010, pre-K and sixth-grade classes were added over the past two years. Two classes of grades seven have been phased in this year and grade eight will follow next year.

Some of the advantages of a pre-K-8 model include reduced absenteeism, fewer discipline problems and increased parental involvement. National research also shows that pre-K-8 students score higher on standardized tests than their middle or junior high school counterparts and benefit socially from skipping the disruptive transition that comes with the jump from elementary school.

"It's all about relationship-building," said Principal Maria Pontes. "We wanted to create a stable environment for our children, and give them the opportunity to build strong connections with us so that we can support them as they prepare for high school and beyond."

Doran received more than \$700,000 to implement its redesign. The plan has three key elements: ensuring that students receive quality, effective instruction; addressing student readiness to learn social, emotional and physical needs; and guaranteeing curriculum that is both rigorous and aligned. There is also increased focus on building every teacher's capacity to deliver quality, rigorous instruction.

With the addition of grade 7 this year, students have been eligible to compete in middle-school sports for the first time, forming soccer, basketball and cheerleading teams.

"It was an exciting part of the process," said Pontes. "The kids love being on organized teams."

Next year, Doran will restructure its Extended Learning Time model, after being named one of three Fall River schools to participate in a national pilot

program to implement longer school days. As part of its redesign plan, Doran had already extended the school day by one hour to afford both extra student learning time and professional development focus. Schools in the pilot program will be expected to offer 300 extra hours of instruction and enrichment during the year. Key stakeholders at Doran will be discussing what the new schedule should look like.

"We're looking forward to providing more academic support, but also the enrichment activities," said Pontes. "It's important to have a balance of both. We want our children to have a middle-school experience in a small school, so we have to work hard at providing them as many opportunities as possible."

Currently, Doran has after-school programming through the U.S. Department of Education's 21st Century Community Learning Center grant, which is intended to provide enrichment opportunities during non-school hours.

"The big change is that activities will be integrated as a seamless part of the school day, so that all of our students have access," said Pontes.



1. Seventh-grader Axel Olivo left, gets some help with a math problem from his teacher, Mike Fernandes. 2. Tayla Figuerido works on writing out her name at the Doran School. 3. Seventh-grade music teacher Keith White plays the piano as his class listens. 4. Doran student Daniel Nguyen. 5. Coach Ryan Andrade puts his team through drills during basketball practice.



# Technical assistance



## Technology enhances 21st-century learning

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

In its 2013-2017 Technology Plan, Fall River Public Schools established clear goals and realistic strategies for using technology to improve education services.

Included in those goals is that by 2014-2015, the district has an average ratio of one high-capacity, Internet-connected computer for each student. Teachers are urged to use technology appropriately with students every day to improve student learning of the curriculum. Activities include: research, multimedia, simulations, data interpretation, communications and collaboration.

At Durfee High School, for instance, iPads have been a tremendous resource for English Language Learners, and SMART Boards, classroom clicker technology and portable classroom laptop computers at every school in the district have been game changers in terms of the way students and teachers approach education.

“As advances in technology move forward, schools must sustain flexible, vigorous plans to meet the challenge these developments present,” said Superintendent Meg Mayo-Brown. “This Technology Plan not only confirms our commitment to the district’s mission, but also expands upon it to insure that technology also enhances learning, instruction, communication, professional development and information management.”

Spencer Borden Elementary School just introduced a computer lab with 30 desktop computers and a 30-station mobile lab this past year, as well as an instructional technology teacher.

“By having our students do research on their own or

deliver a PowerPoint presentation, we’re giving them the 21st Century skills that are so critical for college or career-readiness,” said Spencer Borden Principal Michael Ward.

Many of the district’s other elementary schools, such as Tansey and Viveiros have also hired instructional technology teachers to incorporate a variety of math and literacy software into lessons. Lexia Reading, individualized and automatically paced, helps students in grades K-5 with their reading skills and addresses the five components of reading. DreamBox Learning is individualized, adaptive and tailored to the individual math needs of students in K-5.

At Viveiros Elementary, technology specialist Mendy Chrupcala has coordinated with classroom teachers to conduct Web-based research on topics being addressed within the Reading Street curriculum in conjunction with the district’s nonfiction initiative. She has also coordinated with other elementary technology specialists to create a nonfiction unit of study integrating nonfiction and technology.

“The addition of an instructional technology teacher has provided both direct instruction to students as well as support to teachers in utilizing the new technological resources available to them,” said Kristen Farias, principal of Tansey Elementary, which invested in a computer lab in 2011 and introduced two 30-station mobile labs in 2012. “Maintaining this position is essential as we continue to work to meet our goal of increasing the technological competency of both teachers and students.”

## We believe...

- ◆ technology enhances the quality and scope of teaching and learning
- ◆ all stakeholders will receive equitable access to technology
- ◆ technology should be integrated across the curricula to maximize effective and meaningful instruction
- ◆ through the expanded use of digital media, assistive technologies, and universally designed instruction, diverse learners have access to the curriculum, including those with learning and communication disabilities, cognitive impairments, visual and auditory impairments, and physical challenges
- ◆ administrators, staff, and students must be provided with the appropriate tools, instruction and methodology to fully integrate technology in the education process
- ◆ technology resources must continually be evaluated, assessed, and upgraded to ensure maximum opportunity for all learners to be competitive in a technological world
- ◆ all learners will have the opportunity, through technology, to reach their full potential and lead lives as participants in the political and social life of the Commonwealth and as contributors to its economy



# Talbot: school of innovators

Preparing students in science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics



Talbot Innovation School students Dararath Khon, left, and Shaun Vierra work on a circuit that will light a frisbee with LED lights.

By MEAGHAN CASEY

Named one of 47 Innovation Schools in the Commonwealth – and the first in the district – the Edmond Talbot Innovation School is dedicated to preparing students in the areas of science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics (STEAM) and building community partnerships for students to gain practical knowledge in these fields.

Created by state legislation in 2010, the Innovation School initiative provides the opportunity to create in-district, charter-like schools that can implement creative and inventive strategies with an aim toward increasing student achievement and reducing achievement gaps, while keeping school funding within districts. The schools operate with greater autonomy and flexibility with regard to curriculum, staffing, budget, calendars, professional development and district policies.

The state awarded more than \$1 million in planning and

implementation grants in 2011 and \$850,000 in 2012, available as part of a total of \$2 million in support from the state's successful Race to the Top proposal and additional support from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. Talbot was among the schools to receive funding in the second round of grants.

"I am extremely proud of the progress we've made on the Innovation School initiative and am happy to see more schools stepping up to provide improved educational opportunities for Massachusetts students," said Governor Deval L. Patrick. "This robust and diverse group of schools demonstrates what can be achieved when local school communities are given the flexibility to be creative in their approach to helping all students achieve at high levels."

Since being designated an Innovation School, Talbot has established pathways with a STEAM focus and a curriculum

that has a focus on interdisciplinary units that will allow collaboration, communication, critical thinking and problem solving.

"Our mission is to produce confident and capable learners who have the 21st century skills needed to be successful in high school, college and the workplace," said Principal Elizabeth Coogan. "Enrichment courses allow student to identify interests and build strengths through inquiry-based learning, and by fostering a mentor relationship between staff and students, we arm students with the necessary intellectual, physical, emotional and moral wellness to reach their potential and become responsible and contributing members of the community."

In February, Fall River received an additional \$10,000 to aid in the planning of the proposed Fall River Innovation Academy. Pending the School Committee's approval, the Innovation Academy will open in September and enroll 200 students in grades 7 and 8, who will remain at the school through grade 13. The school is being designed as an early college high school that will give students an opportunity to earn up to 60 college credits while earning a high school diploma. Students will have the opportunity to begin taking college courses in grade 10. Grade 13 students would be fully enrolled on a college campus but would still receive the supports of Innovation Academy staff and the school community. The concept has received preliminary approval and is proposed to be located at the current Henry Lord Middle School.



Shaun Vierra attempts to use a battery to light an LED bulb.

## Durfee student nominated for Presidential Scholars

**FERNANDES:** from Page 1

with the award during a ceremony each spring in Washington D.C.

As a state candidate – and the only Fall River representative – Fernandes was selected on the basis of outstanding scholarship and promise of future success. Candidates also have to have demonstrated leadership and school and community involvement, and may have received points for extraordinary achievement, heavy work load, family responsibilities or obstacles overcome. Each school was able to nominate two students – one male and one female – and from that pool, the district nominated

Fernandes.

"I was completely shocked and honored just to be nominated by my school, never mind to make it through to the state nomination," said Fernandes, one of 586 students in his graduating class at Durfee.

"When looking to select the students, Manny jumped out because he's such a well-rounded student," said Ross Thibault, vice principal at Durfee. "He captures the best of both worlds, excelling in the vocational program and the academic program as well. He's also so involved in extracurricular activities and is a natural leader. He's very humble and deserving and allows his work ethic to speak for itself."

Fernandes started out in the school's culinary arts pathway, but found his place in the computer science and technology program. He elected to take several Advanced Placement (AP) classes, including AP biology as a sophomore, AP physics and AP language composition as a junior and AP computer science and AP calculus as a senior.

Outside of the classroom, Fernandes serves as treasurer of the National Honor Society and a member of the Interact Club, which aims to provide service to others. The club has

raised money for the eradication of polio and sent out care packages to soldiers in Iraq. A three-sport athlete, Fernandes was also named captain of this year's varsity football, basketball and volleyball teams.

While still in the culinary arts program, Fernandes participated in SkillsUSA, a program in which students compete in occupational and leadership skill areas. He served as vice president of the team as a sophomore and president as a junior.

"Durfee has so much to offer," said Fernandes. "My mom always told me to do everything to the best of my ability, and I've tried to do that. I learned a lot from my dad too. He does so much for his community, but he's always been humble about it."

His father, Emmanuel Fernandes, is the assistant chief probation officer at Plymouth Superior Court and serves as senior vice commander of the Cape Verdean-American Veterans' Association in New Bedford, where he regularly volunteers.

As the eldest of three children in his family, Fernandes will be the first of his siblings to go to college. He plans to earn his bachelor's and master's degrees in computer science.



# Literacy and math go Greene

By Kevin Doyle

To merely label the Greene Elementary School’s Academy for Literacy and Math as successful would be underselling the initiative’s impact. For there can be little doubt that the student body has bought into Principal Joel Jocelyn’s simple message: “Success in school is cool.”

When Jocelyn, a former Boston school administrator, and assistant principal Jillian Allain arrived at Greene in 2011, the school carried a Level 3 designation, signifying it as chronically underperforming. Today it maintains Level 1 status in nearly every category, having outperformed its peers across the state.

Jocelyn and Allain — who was the school’s math coach for the 2011-12 academic year and became assistant principal at the start of this school year — both point to the Academy for Literacy and Math as the agent of transformation.

“This is a strategy that the school has used to provide students with intervention. When we came in we identified children with gaps in their education who were far enough behind so that the regular regimen would not be enough for them to catch up and to score proficient,” said Jocelyn.

One hundred students in grades 3-5 who would benefit from additional instruction were identified early in the 2011-12 school year for 4.5 hours of additional after-school

instruction each week, with two sessions devoted to literacy and a third to math. Groups were swapped out approximately every six weeks. The program was extended to grades 1-5 for the past year, encompassing approximately 200 students.

“For literacy, we looked at scores, benchmark assessment in their reading program, and previous MCAS scores. For math, MCAS scores were looked at and, for incoming third-graders we looked at Advantage Testing,” Jocelyn said.

The program has yielded a precisely targeted data base and provides teachers with individual reports that identifies individual students’ learning gaps.

And, when students and faculty returned to school last September, they learned that Greene had made that two-level jump in a single academic year, an extraordinary accomplishment. A celebratory awards ceremony held last September acknowledged the academic success of returning fourth- and fifth-graders and was shared with their parents.

“There is a new focus on learning here and the students are all on board with all of it. And the parents have been very supportive with having their children signed up. There is a new energy in instruction and learning in this school,” Allain said.

“The superintendent (Meg Mayo-Brown) and assistant superintendent (Fran Roy) have been extremely supportive

and the teachers have been very supportive and giving of their time. We even have one teacher who couldn’t take part in the Academy come in early every morning. There were 20 kids there every day at 7:30 a.m. So, we are narrowing the gaps,” said Jocelyn.

For the past two years, the school has had 100 percent participation in MCAS testing. The student body has grown to 830 as parents from outside the immediate neighborhood seek to take advantage of Greene’s programs via school choice. And, though not a system-wide initiative, the Academy for Literacy and Math has admirers throughout Fall River Public Schools.

“We started it to help keep our head above water. Seemingly it’s been so successful that other schools in the district are looking at starting something similar,” said Allain.

Moving forward, the goals are clear. “The number one goal is to have both our teachers and students believe that our students can achieve at a higher level. The second goal is change the culture at the school to think of college as a natural step in the educational journey. We want our students to know they can be successful in college and in whatever profession they choose,” Jocelyn said.

# LEARNING TAKES NO VACATION IN FALL RIVER

Summer enrichment and academic programming scheduled at five school sites

Doran	Durfee	Greene	Morton	Talbot
Doran staff will provide targeted interventions with selected students, who will then go to 21st CCLC enrichment activities.	Students will receive academic support and participate in enrichment activities. This program is blended with High School Now. This allows overage and under credited 8th-grade students to receive remediation in the mornings and attend 21st CCLC activities in the afternoon. If they complete the program, they can attend high school.	Students from Greene, Letourneau and Watson will be provided academic support and enrichment activities; ELL students will receive instruction by ELL teachers supported by Title III funds.	Students will be provided academic support and enrichment activities funded by 21st CCLC. They will also participate in a service-learning project.	Participating schools include Doran (grades 6-7 ELL) and Talbot. 21st CCLC will merge with the Gateway programs. Students will attend programs in three strands: Oceanography, History/Culture of Fall River and Robotics. The program will provide project-based learning in the afternoon and field trips every Thursday.
<b>Dates:</b> July 8 - August 15 Monday through Thursday 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.	<b>Dates:</b> July 1 - August 8 Monday through Thursday 12 - 4 p.m.	<b>Dates:</b> July 8 - August 15 Monday through Thursday 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.	<b>Dates:</b> July 8 - August 8 Monday through Thursday	<b>Dates:</b> July 8 - August 8 Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m.
<b>Note:</b> Grades 4 & 5 students along with students from the Greene site will attend Sustainability camp July 29-August 5		<b>Note:</b> Grades 4 & 5 students will attend Sustainability camp July 29 - August 1 at UMass Dartmouth.	<b>Note:</b> Students will start the program by attending a Leadership camp at UMass Dartmouth July 8-11.	<b>Note:</b> Students will attend a Sustainability and Robotics camp at UMass Dartmouth August 5-8.



### Durfee Summer Enrichment for grades Pre-K-8

Offerings include: kids theater, summer sports, science, TV and production, hip hop, karate, LEGO engineering, story telling, gaming, photography, cartooning and more. The program will be held at Durfee High School.

**Dates:** July 8 - August 9  
Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

**Note:** Additional one-week sports camps, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.





The Letourneau Student Council takes an oath to maintain a certain level of excellence.

# Students gain voice at Letourneau

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Across the nation, all eyes were on the presidential election earlier this year, but at Letourneau Elementary School, there was another November election that took priority.

The Letourneau Student Council is in its second year. It started last year after two students asked to be the voice for their classmates.

"It's a very positive thing, to have that student representation," said Lesley Froment, advisor for the council. "When the results came in, some of them cried they were so happy. They took the process quite seriously."

To earn one of the coveted spots on the council, students had to be endorsed by a staff member and elected by their peers, learning the skills of a successful campaign.

"It's a wonderful experience for these kids to get up in front of their own classmates and give a speech," said Froment. "They're learning invaluable public-speaking and social skills. One day, they're going to be the leaders of their generation and the earlier you start exposing them to these opportunities, the better."

Once they were elected, the students had to take an oath that they would maintain a certain level of behavioral excellence to remain on the council.

The council meets every Wednesday morning. One of their commitments has been to increase community service at the school. They held two canned goods drives this year and sent care packages and cards to the students at Sandy Hook Elementary School. They also saved spare change for victims of Hurricane Sandy and sold candy cane grams as a fundraiser. Last year, the council also collected canned goods, volunteered in special education classrooms and held a spring swing fundraiser.

"If they're accustomed to being involved and giving back, they're going to continue down that path," said Froment.

The students have also have started a broadcast news program, "What's Striking About Letourneau?," running on the local cable channel. "It's definitely a learning process, but it's been fun for the kids."



## Student Council Officers

Briana Jusseaume-*President*  
Alisha Casteneda-*Vice President*  
Alyana Cabecinha-*Secretary*  
Alex Nunes-*Treasurer*

## Student Council Members

Nicolette Griffin Zhang  
Beyonce Guerrero  
Ilianetzy Rivera  
Mercedes Miranda  
Cameron Pacheco  
Haily Buckley  
Shamilet Pagan  
Fabiana Isador  
Trista Gomes  
Jaeda South

# Schoolwork + play = more productive learning

BY KEVIN DOYLE

Just how important is recess at the elementary school level? According to an article "School Recess and Group Classroom Behavior" published in the journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics, recess is a key component of the overall learning experience. The study indicated that among 8- to 9-year-old children, having more than one daily recess period at least 15 minutes in length was associated with better teachers' rating of class behavior scores.

Which is precisely the mission of national nonprofit Playworks of Berkeley, Calif. Founded in 1996, the organization strives to transform schools by focusing on structured play, conflict resolution and physical activity at recess and throughout the school day. Fall River is one of 22 cities to utilize Playworks' adult coaches and the program has been well-received.

Cathy Carvalho, Principal of the Samuel Watson Elementary School, is a big fan.

"I have nothing but great things to say about the program. Since Watson has no playground, it is imperative that the students have something to do that teaches them teamwork and organized play and gets them moving," Carvalho said. "The students love the games and through our Physical Education time we choose a 'Game of the Week.' The game is introduced through PE, then played during the morning and lunch recess."

At the Mary L. Fonseca Elementary School, Playworks has fostered strong relationships between the adult activity leaders and students, who are encouraged to take part on a daily basis according to school Student Support Coordinator Daniel Erickson.

"Space is allocated for student-led activities, but the vast majority of our students choose to participate in the larger group games. The structure of this system has helped

us to provide our students with a consistent experience that is both safe and inclusive. Playworks has also helped us in our efforts to promote conflict resolution. These strategies are effectively utilized by our students during recess and in the classrooms," Erickson said.

The school will seek to add a peer leadership component to the program in the future.

Marie Chase of Alfred S. Letourneau Elementary School said Playworks "has increased the number of students and staff participating in healthy play activities and has increased the culture of inclusion. This program has given us universal 'attention getters' and signals to use at recess time as well as within the school."

"Going forward, our goals are to further develop our 'youth leader' program, increase training to staff and to improve our use of the Playworks program in our undersized playground used for kindergarten, first- and

second-grade students," said Chase.

William S. Greene Principal Joel Jocelyn said, "Playworks changed the way we did recess last year. It definitely helped and we noticed fewer issues."

"Since the inception of organized play, our infractions at recess have gone from approximately 15 per recess period to less than a handful," said Frank M. Silvia Elementary School Principal Denise Ward. "Children are actually learning how to play games, not just run and chase, capture and shoot. This program has allowed us to think about teaching kids how to play games, not only safely, but with rules and structure and exercise incorporated into an organized recess period. They are solving conflicts, they are making new friends, and learning how to play. They even take these new games to their yards and neighborhoods and have fun instead of picking fights out of frustration and boredom."



# Mahjoory scores goal

## Former Durfee star comes home to teach

BY MEAGHAN CASEY

Every now and then, a student reaches such heights that, like a boomerang, he or she eventually comes soaring back home.

Terry (Pacheco) Mahjoory, a 1993 graduate of Durfee High School, is one such example. Mahjoory was a stand-out athlete at Durfee, holding the record as the top field hockey player in the school's history. She went on to earn a full athletic scholarship to Michigan State University, where she was the university's rookie of the year, a three-time Big Ten All-Star and an All-American.

Coming full circle, Mahjoory returned to her Fall River roots at the start of this school year, accepting a position as a physical education teacher at Frank Silvia Elementary School.

"It was always my plan to come back and teach in this district," said Mahjoory. "I see myself in so many of these kids, and I want each and every student to leave Silvia School believing that with hard work and determination, they can go to college and make something of themselves."

Mahjoory started out at the former John J. Doran School Annex, which closed with the opening of the Viveiros Elementary School. She was inspired to pursue a career in teaching by her former PE teacher Jan Jezak.

"She was a mentor to me growing up, and a driving force in my decision to become a PE teacher right from the get-go," said Mahjoory. "She made everyone feel like they could do anything, and she instilled in me the desire to dream big and believe in myself."

Mahjoory went on to excel at Kuss Middle School and Durfee, where she started on the varsity field hockey team for four years and finished with school records for goals in a career (70) and in a season (30). She had 30 goals and 11 assists as a junior and 26 goals and 19 assists as a senior, and was a two-time All-State player. She also played varsity basketball and softball and helped the softball team to a 20-0 regular season as a sophomore. In 2011, she was inducted into the Durfee Athletic Hall of Fame.

Despite the fame from all of her accomplishments, as the youngest of seven children in her family, Mahjoory knew that earning a full scholarship to college was the best gift she could give to her family. At Michigan State, she earned a degree in physical education and exercise science and met her future husband, Stu, who works in finance



Silvia Elementary School teacher Terry Mahjoory stands next to her "Little Free Library."

and is a selectman in Somerset, where the couple lives. They have four children, ages 5 to 12. Mahjoory spent the last 12 years raising them, temporarily putting her career on the back burner.

"I did some subbing at first, but I knew I wanted a big family," she said. "I always said I would start teaching when my youngest started kindergarten. This year has definitely been a learning year for me, but I think the real-world knowledge I've gained helps me come in with a different perspective. Being a mother of four, I really try to treat each and every student as if they were my own. It's my intention that they leave my gym feeling confident that someone in this world has faith in their abilities and is behind their efforts to succeed. That's what this school system did for me many, many, years ago."

Mahjoory is working alongside PE teacher Glenn Chatterton, a friend and mentor, who was also one of her coaches in high school.

In addition to teaching her students the value of physical activity, Mahjoory has also taken on a new initiative, installing a "Little Free Library" in the gym. Started in Wisconsin by social entrepreneur Tod Bol, Little Free Libraries – many the size of bird houses – are popping up everywhere. As a non-profit group, the Little Free Library has turned into a worldwide book-sharing movement, promoting literacy and free access to books, along with do-it-yourself woodworking.

For Silvia's debut Little Free Library, Mahjoory enlisted the help of her brother, who built the structure out of recycled wood and Mahjoory painted each side to represent four of the major sports – soccer, baseball, football and basketball. Students can access the library, which is filled with non-fiction sports reads, when they exhibit good sportsmanship. Many of the books come from Mahjoory's own personal library, and several other teachers have stepped up to contribute as well. She also received financial assistance from Marc Megna, a Fall River native who had a pro-football career that spanned several seasons in the NFL and CFL for the New York Jets, New England Patriots, Cincinnati Bengals and Montreal Alouettes.

"It's a great motivator and the students love that they can bring books in from home to swap or to give back to the library," said Mahjoory. "It gives them a sense of ownership and membership."