



# The TOAST Times



Volume 5, No. 1

January/February/March 2012

**Thomas O'Brien Academy of Science & Technology**

<http://toast.albany.k12.ny.us/>

**Principal:** Mr. Timothy Fowler

**Co-Editors:** Mrs. Reynolds-Hoffman & Ms. Whipple

**Theme Team:** Mr. Fowler, Mr. Flynn, Mrs. Ingleston, Mrs. Reynolds-Hoffman, Ms. Whipple

## From the Desk of Mr. Fowler:

### **Happy New Year!**

Welcome back everyone! There are several activities and special events ahead of us before the school year ends. Pay close attention to the calendar of events, and special bulletins that will come home in backpacks with the details. We haven't had the winter storms that would cause school closings or delays, but inevitably that will come! I encourage everyone to sign up for **School News Notifier (SNN)**. This will allow you to receive a text or email message in the event of school closings and delays as soon as the decision is made! Another advantage of SNN is that you can select from various other areas of school news in the District such as information specific to TOAST or any other school or department in the City School District of Albany that you may be interested in knowing about. If you'd like to register for SNN or know more about it, you can visit the District website at [www.albanyschools.org](http://www.albanyschools.org) and click on the SNN link, following the directions accordingly.

Believe it or not, the magnet recruitment process for next school year will begin soon. January 24-26 will be Magnet Open House week. TOAST will host its Open House on January 25<sup>th</sup> from 9:30-1:30 PM and 6-7:30 PM. So if you have any family, friends, or neighbors interested in TOAST, please encourage them to visit our school during that time. Magnet Lottery applications become available February 1<sup>st</sup>.

### General reminders-

- **Do it the right way!** Double parking and letting your children out in areas that have not been designated as drop off/pick up areas is unsafe and unnecessarily holds up traffic. The winter months really compound the issue, so doing it the right way will help everyone. I thank you in advance for your cooperation!
- **Being on time is as equally important as being present for school.** The numbers of tardiness have crept up; so I ask that in the New Year you make an extra effort to ensure your child is on time for school. Every student is marked late after the late bell at 8:10am, including Pre-K students.
- **All parents are welcome to walk their children into school.** However, after 8:10am the school rules for visitors become active. Signing in and receiving a visitor's pass becomes a must! Also, after the late bell, staff members will assist in escorting students to their classes in order to minimize disruptions to classroom morning routines. **Parents desiring to walk their children all the way in may do so before the LATE BELL!**
- **Lastly, dismissal is at 2:30PM daily.** All students being picked up after 2:30PM are recorded. Those with a significant number of late student pick-ups will be contacted by the principal's office, in order to establish a plan that will help remediate the issue.

As always, thank you for your support in making each day of school count and let's have a wonderful New Year at TOAST!

**Mr. Fowler**

**Upcoming TOAST Events:**  
**Please check our website for updates**

**January 2012:**

Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup>: Hats for Hunger; donate \$1.00 and wear your favorite hat

**February 2012:**

Thursday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>: Science/Tech Meeting; 2:45 pm

Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>: School Spirit Day, wear your TOAST T-shirt or TOAST uniform

Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>: Bird Watching; 7:00 am

Friday, February 3<sup>rd</sup>: Report cards go home with students

Monday, February 6<sup>th</sup>: Crisis/Safety Meeting; 2:45 pm

Thursday, February 9<sup>th</sup>: PTA Meeting; 6:30 pm

Friday, February 10<sup>th</sup>: College Friday, wear your favorite college t-shirt or sweatshirt

Monday, February 13<sup>th</sup>: BLT Meeting; 2:45 pm

Tuesday, February 14<sup>th</sup>: wear red, white or pink for Valentine's Day

Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>: Furry Friends Day; donate \$1.00 and bring your favorite stuffed animal to school

Monday, February 20<sup>th</sup>-Friday, February 24<sup>th</sup>: No School; Winter Recess

**March 2012:**

Friday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>: School Spirit Day, wear your TOAST T-shirt or TOAST uniform

Friday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>: Bird Watching; 7:00 am

Wednesday, March 7<sup>th</sup>: TOAST Science Fair (4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade); 5:30-7:30 pm

Thursday, March 8<sup>th</sup>: PTA Meeting; 6:30 pm

Friday, March 9<sup>th</sup>: Half Day - 11:15 am dismissal; Parent/Teacher Report Card Conference Day

Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup>: Science/Tech Meeting; 2:45 pm

Thursday, March 29<sup>th</sup>: MST Night, Jr. Science Fair Expo and Scholastic Book Fair; 5:30-7:30pm

Friday, March 30<sup>th</sup>: **No School for Students**; Staff Development Day for Teachers and Staff

**NEWS FROM THE HEALTH OFFICE:**

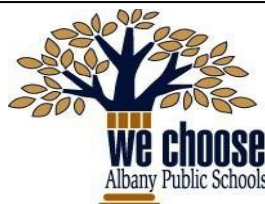
Students in 2nd and 4th grades need to have a physical on file. Any physical completed in the past year (2011) will be accepted. Please check with your doctor and have the physical faxed to the nurse at 475-6883. If you are unsure if your child needs one, - please call me and I will check the health record and let you know!

Students who are 11 years old when they enter 6th grade in the fall will require a Tdap booster. You can submit this to TOAST Health Office if it is given before June.

Get ready for good news!!!! We will be having a Health Fair on April 18, - Wednesday 5:00 - 7:00 pm!! We are in the planning stage, so any ideas for activities or participants are most welcome!! Call the Health Office with your suggestions! We will have a scavenger hunt, and we have prizes to raffle off, - including two -6 month memberships at the YMCA in Albany!!!

There is still quite a bit of illness going around. If your child has severe cold symptoms, a fever, nausea and/or vomiting in the am or the night before school, please keep them home. We can decrease the spread of germs and keep the rest of the school healthier if we all do our part. Frequent hand washing is the most important way to stop the spread of germs!!!

**Ms. Greenwood Phone: 475-6882 Fax: 475-6883**



### News from the Science Lab:

Welcome back!!! I hope that everyone had a fun and relaxing break.

#### **Selected 2011 Highlights**

\*TOAST sent 10 students to the JR LEGO EXPO at SUNY Albany. They built machines and worked hard on their projects. \*All grade 4 and 5 students learned how to use microscopes as they studied cells and cell structure. \*Professor Hopkins from the College of St. Rose visited the Science Lab this past fall teaching students about *Corn, Beans and Squash*. Look for him in the science lab next spring. \*Our first theme, TOAST Rocks was a great success. The entire school spent some time outside learning about New York State Geology at our Rock Park. \* We borrowed a special camera from the New York State Museum that took photographs of warm-blooded animals during the night...we were surprised by the results!

#### **Upcoming**

Our new school-wide theme is entitled, "Up In The Air". Look for displays and special programming as we explore this fun topic.

#### Mark Your Calendars!!!

<b>Science Fair Help</b>	Grades 4 and 5	January 26, 2012	2:30-4:00 pm
<b>Morning Bird-Watch</b>	Come out for an early morning hike;	February 3, 2012	7:00 am
<b>Morning Bird-Watch</b>	Come out for an early morning hike;	March 2, 2012	7:00 am
<b>TOAST Science Fair</b>	All invited	March 7, 2012	5:30-7:30 pm
<b>MST Night/Jr. Science Fair Expo</b>	All invited	March 29, 2012	5:30-7:30 pm

p.s. Does anyone like ice skating? Let's meet at Swinburne Park for a TOAST skate party...details to follow.

### **Computer Lab:**

Happy New Year! Students in grades K-5 have been busy reading in their Raz Kids accounts; Raz Kids provides students with online leveled books that will help them with their reading, fluency and comprehension skills. Students can access their accounts from any computer that has the internet. <http://www.raz-kids.com/main/Login>

Students in grades 1-5 have also been practicing their math skills in First in Math. The family link is available so when your child logs into their account, you will be able to activate the link and learn what they are learning! Students earn stickers and are competing within their class as well as against the entire school to earn the Player of the Day pass and also the Player of the Week VIP pass and certificate. We also have two classroom trophies (one for the primary grades and one for the intermediate grades) so classes are also competing to earn the Team of the Week and the school trophy for the week. <http://www.firstinmath.com/> Please encourage your child to practice as much as possible with Raz Kids and First in Math at home or at your neighborhood library.

Students have also been learning about our themes. From October-December, they learned more about habitats and animals for our "On the Ground" theme through research and websites. Check out some of the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade clue squares outside of the Computer Lab. From January-March, students will be learning about space and weather for our "In the Air" theme. 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade students just finished their email and cyberbullying units in learning.com and will be starting the spreadsheets and word units next.

Our 5<sup>th</sup> podcasting class has starting recording their weekly podcasts; be sure to listen to them each week to learn more. Also, remember to check our website for upcoming events and to view our picture gallery.

<http://toast.albany.k12.ny.us/> If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me:

[dwhipple@albany.k12.ny.us](mailto:dwhipple@albany.k12.ny.us)

Ms. Whipple ☺

### News from the Museum Room:

We've been very busy in the Museum Room the first half of the year. 4<sup>th</sup> graders had an opportunity to board a reproduction of the sailing ship Halfmoon and learn about sailing on the ocean in the 1600's with Henry Hudson. The 3<sup>rd</sup> grade is again participating in the Heritage Grow Program. To start we learned about the Dutch people who first settled in the Albany Area (Fort Orange) and planted Red Emperor Tulips, now we are keeping track of when they will bloom as citizen scientist with Journey North Tracking Spring. The 2<sup>nd</sup> grade was busy learning about winter habitats in the Helderbergs with a trip to Emma Treadwell Thatcher Science Center. Pre-K, Kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> grade have been very busy learning new songs and creating art projects for the "On the Ground" theme Assembly.

It will continue to be busy in the coming year. EcoKids will soon kick off a bottle drive to prepare for building a greenhouse in the TOAST garden area so please start saving your clean bottles and cans. The greenhouse will be made from 2 liter bottles and the rest will be returned and the money will help with lumber and other supplies to build the foundation and frame.

One more thing....thank you to all the families who supported the Kidsmart Holiday Shoppe. The students loved it and I did too.  
Happy New Year

Mrs. Ingleston  
Museum Education Coordinator



There are still some TOAST T-shirts available for sale in Ms. Whipple's Room. Short sleeve shirts are \$7.00 and long sleeve shirts are \$13.00. Please call 475-6875 or email [dwhipple@albany.k12.ny.us](mailto:dwhipple@albany.k12.ny.us) for more information.

### **Community Service Events:**

#### **Hats For Hunger:**

Friday, January 27<sup>th</sup>.  
Donate \$1.00 and wear your favorite hat.

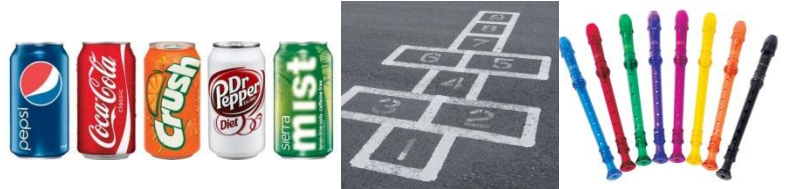
#### **Furry Friend's Day:**

Friday, February 17<sup>th</sup>.  
Donate \$1.00 and bring in your favorite stuffed animal.



### **GRAB YOUR JACKETS AND GET OUTSIDE!**

A new outdoor pavilion that will be built right near the cafeteria will give TOAST students a chance to go outside for play and for learning, rain or shine, hopefully starting next fall. A group of parents, teachers and school administrators has worked for several years on the plan, which the Albany school district has now agreed to support. As soon as the group raises enough money, the district will plan and build the covered pavilion, where students can play hopscotch, tether ball, four square and other games during their lunch period, even when it is raining or snowing. At other times of the day, teachers may take their classes to the pavilion, where Mr. Flynn will be able to teach science close up. So far the group has raised \$13,000 of the \$17,000 to \$20,000 that will be needed. Stay tuned. For questions or suggestions, please call Jane Gottlieb at (518) 427-8339



### **Notes from the Music Room:**

We've been very busy in the music room so far this year! After our wonderful performances in the Winter Concert and the On the Ground Assembly, we've moved on to more exciting musical endeavors. Kindergarten through Second Grade are working on a movement unit and learning about the instruments of the orchestra. Third through Fifth grades are getting ready to take out their recorders. They've been using their creativity to make mnemonic devices to remember the letters of the lines and spaces of the music staff, like Empty Garbage Before Dad Flips and Don't Feed Alligators Cheesy Enchiladas. Soon we'll all be working on rhythm and playing orff instruments.

Don't forget about our All City Concerts in March:  
**All City Band** - March 14<sup>th</sup> at Hackett Middle School; 7:00 pm

**All City Orchestra** - March 21<sup>st</sup> at Hackett Middle School; 7:00 pm  
and

**All City Chorus** - March 28<sup>th</sup> at Myers Middle School; 7:00 pm

♪ Mrs. Reynolds-Hoffman