

O'MALEY

Innovation Middle School



O'Maley Happenings – Thursday, November 9, 2017

What's happening at O'Maley this week???

NO SCHOOL – Tomorrow, November 10th for Veteran's Day.

"O'Maley Staff Appreciation Luncheon"

The O'Maley PTO is hosting an Appreciation Luncheon for our awesome staff on Friday, November 17th. Please use the link included in here to visit [Signup.com](http://signup.com), O'Maley Staff Appreciation Luncheon, to sign up to donate \$ towards lunch items, a baked item, drink, etc.! Let's show them how thankful we are... Thank you! O'Maley PTO

"O'Maley Staff Appreciation Luncheon" Click here now: <http://signup.com/go/PXGEcYW>

PTO Meeting Minutes – from Thursday, November 2, 2017 meeting – **see attached**

O'Maley Ski & Board Club - Come ski and snowboard with your friends this winter! The O'Maley Ski & Board Club will offer optional lessons in skiing or snowboarding at Bradford Ski Area in Haverhill on six consecutive Mondays this winter starting on: January 8, 2018 Register online on the O'Maley website or pick up the forms in the Office. See Mrs. Sumner in room 120 with questions.

Our annual Calendar Raffle is now underway. Any student traveling to Washington D.C. is welcome to participate in this fundraiser. The money each student raises by selling the tickets at \$5 each can go directly to that individual student's account. Gloucester businesses were especially generous this year and there are many nice prizes. Tickets are sold through the month of November and the winning begins on December 1st.

Teen Night! Join the Fun! Cape Ann YMCA – Saturday Night, **Nov. 11th from 6-8pm.**

Report Cards – go home with students today, Thursday, November 9th.

Diabetes Awareness Month – Please wear **blue** on Tuesday, November 14th in support of Diabetes Awareness! **See attached flyer**

Does your child have an idea to make O'Maley – and Gloucester – even more

AWESOME? - The O'Maley community has been invited to submit proposals to make O'Maley even more awesome. The top 2 proposals will be awarded \$1,000.00 to see their idea through. All proposals are due Wednesday, November 22. Come see and hear ideas on "Pitch Night" Tuesday, December 5th 7:00pm in the O'Maley Library.

CAREER NIGHT!

For all O'Maley students

Wednesday, November 15, 6-7:30pm
Professionals will be here representing many different careers and all students are encouraged to attend this **very important event!** Students will choose 3 professions that interest them to hear what it's like be in the field and what training/schooling is required. This O'Maley Academy event is part of our 21st Century grant that allows our after school programs to be free of charge. Parents are welcome to join. Homework passes to all students who join us! **See Flyer attached**

ANNUAL FOOD DRIVE for Open Door

Food Pantry - Food collection boxes will be in all homerooms from Nov. 7 - Nov. 21. Please send in non-perishable items such as peanut butter, canned meats, mixes, healthy snack items, cereals, pasta and sauces.

Attention All Students and

Parents – The Lost and found will be out on a table in front of the Cafeteria until Friday, November 17th. On Friday November 17th, all clothes left will be given to Charity!

PAGE 2 - Please scroll down to page two of O'Maley Happenings to see an article that has been written by volunteer members of the O'Maley School community!

Supporting LGBTQ Students

By Mary White, Guidance Counselor

The gains that have been made to support the LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning/Queer) community in recent years are extensive, especially in Massachusetts. At O'Maley, we have strived to be progressive in order to provide optimum support for this sector of our student population. We have many students coming out in middle school now, and a good number of students who are identifying as a gender that is different than was assigned to them at birth (the "T" in LGBTQ). School is often the front line in assisting students as they feel safe and comfortable confiding in the trusted adults who can be objective. At times we help kids tell parents because sometimes we are the first people the adolescents confide in. And students often hold identities at school they're not holding at home. Because of all of this we feel a great responsibility to assist our LGBTQ students to navigate the middle school years successfully and to help them thrive.

At O'Maley, we pride ourselves in our celebration of diversity and emphasize acceptance. Our positive school culture initiative, SAILS (Service, Acceptance, Integrity, Leadership and Success), has Acceptance built into our core school values. We stress acceptance for LGBTQ students by building the celebration of diversity into our SAILS assemblies, and by providing counseling and support groups according to the needs of the current population. Last year a Gay, Straight Alliance club was formed as a result of students seeking more support and a voice. Guidance also has an array of resources and literature that we share with students who are seeking information and answers.

The Safe Schools Program provides us with materials, information and training on laws, initiatives and trends. Safe Schools is joint initiative of the Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth and the Massachusetts Department of Education and we have conducted professional development trainings for staff based off this information. The trainings have tackled issues related to gender identity, sexual orientation and school climate. Because LGBTQ youth are at much greater risk for mental health issues such as depression, anxiety and suicide ideology, our focus is on making students feel comfortable, safe and supported. Many other supports have been put in place, such as the conversion of the single bathrooms in the guidance hall to non-gender bathrooms.

Regardless of personal or religious beliefs of anyone who might question how much emphasis should be placed on our supportive measures for LGBTQ youth at O'Maley, it is important to be mindful that they are in line with the Massachusetts state laws as we are a public school and emphasize the acceptance of all who spend their days in our school community.

Some helpful resources:

For students – NAGLY (North Shore Alliance of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth) <https://www.nagly.org/>. In Salem, provides support groups and activities for middle and high school students.

For parents/guardians – PFLAG (Parents of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth) <https://www.pflag.org>. There is a local parent support group in Essex.

For all - <https://www.glsen.org/>, <https://www.glaad.org/>, www.itgetsbetter.org, thetrevorproject.org