



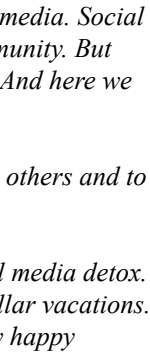
# HADDONFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

## ... news from the Board of Education

### FROM the SUPERINTENDENT

Dear Haddonfield Families:

As we prepare for a week off next week and for the upcoming holidays, this is a perfect time to reflect on the past two months of the school year and compare where we are now to where we were when we started in September. The marking period is ending for our secondary students, and it's about to end for our elementary division children. Time just flies by. No question about that.



Let's talk today about making insightful comparisons. Reflecting on ourselves and comparing where we are today to another time is fine. That sort of internal reflective comparison is good for the soul. Comparing ourselves to others, on the other hand, could suck the life out of anyone. And the problem is that our human brains are designed to compare, so it's difficult to just stop. And just maybe it's a double-edged sword.

One aspect of our world today that lends itself to detrimental comparisons is social media. Social media is fun. It's a way to connect. It keeps people together. It builds an online community. But there's a dark side. More often than not we see people on social media at their best. And here we are with a lot of imperfections.

Here are a few tips from Jess Carpenter from [Ideapod](#) to stop comparing yourself to others and to help us reduce stress.

1. **Unfollow people** – If they make you feel inferior, stop looking and do a social media detox.
2. **Stop talking negatively** – You are the best, even if you don't go on million-dollar vacations.
3. **Be happy for others** – Practice gratitude for what you have and be genuinely happy for others.
4. **Love your imperfections** – Our imperfections are our greatest strengths.
5. **Accept your journey** – Life isn't a linear process. There are heartaches, hurts, stress, regrets and frustrations. Without all that, we can't "learn" to be successful.
6. **Finally, make your own comparisons** – Do you know whom you should be comparing yourself to? YOU! Examine where you are now and make goals to change your life.

The only person who can change your life is you. The Brazilian mystic Ruda Lande tells us, "Fulfillment comes from the inside out ... It doesn't need to change the world. It only needs your heart to be warm and present." Emerson said, "To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment."

Have a learning-filled, self-reflective and fun November.

Larry Mussoline, Ph.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

### DISTRICT NEWS

#### One Newsletter in November and December

In general, the district newsletter will be shared on the 15th and 30th of every month. However, because November and December have a significant number of "no school" days, there will be one newsletter in each. Look for the next two newsletters on November 18 and December 16.

#### Make Note of Information Regarding Weather-Related Closures and Delays

The inevitable approach of winter means that we need to remind ourselves how to be prepared for weather-related delays and closures within the district.

Please read [Dr. Mussoline's letter](#) that explains how we make these decisions. Also please [bookmark this page](#) on our website that lists the various ways you can find out if school is closed or delayed. One-hour and two-hour delayed opening schedules are linked to that page. Thank you!

#### Volunteer to be a Lunchtime Guest Speaker

We are developing a lunchtime speaker series for all five of our schools, aiming to expose our students to various career paths. If you have an interesting career and are willing to share your story with our students, please [email Chief Academic Officer Colleen Murray](#). Thank you!

#### Apply to Join the Technology Committee

The Haddonfield School District is assembling a Technology Committee this year, made up of faculty, staff and community members. The goal is to create a group that will help the district to ensure that we are adequately preparing our students for the technology-rich lives and careers ahead of them. The group will meet three times per year.

If you have expertise in 21st-century technology, please apply to join this committee by [emailing Chief Academic Officer Colleen Murray](#). Additionally, if you know someone who would be a positive addition to this committee, please ask him/her to apply. Thank you!

#### Update on Land Swap

In the district newsletter dated October 15, we reported on the proposed land swap between the Borough of Haddonfield and the school district. The state had approved the disposal of Radnor Field to the Borough, but we have been waiting for approval to acquire several pieces of the former Bancroft School property between the high school and Hopkins Lane.

Within the last several days, Board Secretary Michael Catalano reported that he received news that the acquisition of the Bancroft property has been approved by the New Jersey Department of Education Office of School Facilities.

This approval was one of the last hurdles in the process to finalize the land swap.

#### Congratulations to our Newest Board Member

Welcome to LYNN HOWARD HOAG Esq., who will replace Maureen Eyles as a member of the Haddonfield Board of Education. One of seven candidates interviewed on October 17, Hoag will be sworn in on either November 14 or 21. A resident of Haddonfield for 12 years, Hoag has been an active volunteer in our schools and has formed strong relationships with teachers, parents and students. "As a school board member, I will build upon these relationships as our children and the District continue to strive for excellence," she said.

Additionally, David Seidell was approved as Board vice president, filling the role vacated by Eyles.

#### PSAT Given to ALL Sophomores and Juniors

On Wednesday, October 16, sophomores and juniors took the PSAT at Haddonfield Memorial High School (HMHS). At first glance, this doesn't seem like an unusual event. In fact, this was the first time the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test – or simply the PSAT – was given to all students in those two classes, during the school day, and paid for by the district.

"In the past, students opted to take the PSAT on a Saturday," said HMHS principal Tammy McHale. "It was their choice, so they didn't all take it. Also weekend conflicts such as sports or family activities prevented some students from taking it."

The district spent about \$7,500 to administer the test to 425 students, but the administration believes it is well worth the cost.

"There were 438 students eligible to take the PSAT," said Assistant Principal Dan Licata. "The 425 students who successfully completed the test represent 97% of the sophomore and junior classes. We are extremely pleased with the rate of participation!"

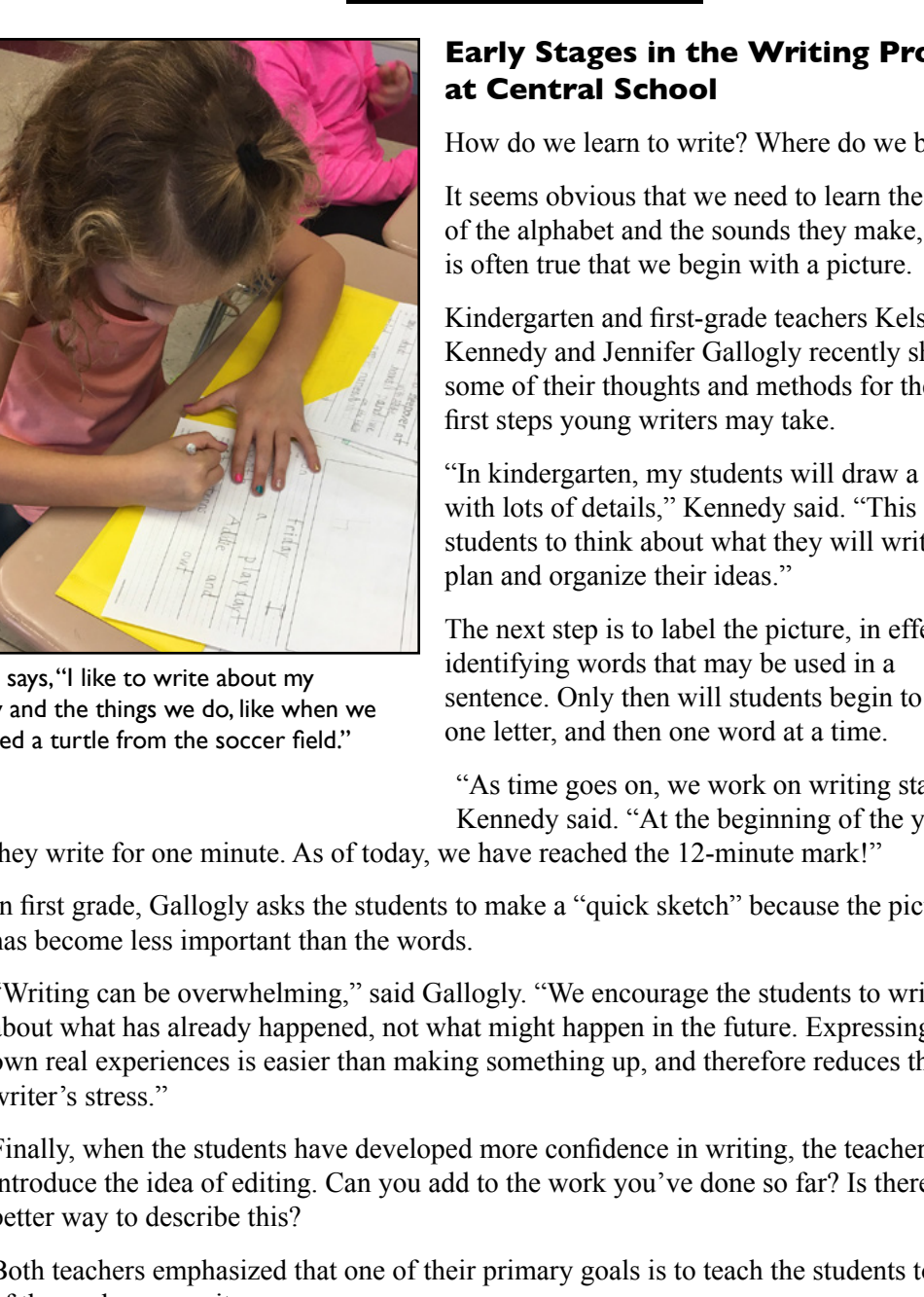
"The PSAT gives a lot of extremely specific information," said McHale. "Specific areas of strengths and weaknesses are very clear in the data, and this helps all of us."

Students and their families can see exactly what concepts the student needs to work on, and faculty can see areas that may need to be reviewed or retaught. The test also provides valuable feedback to parents in an extensive report detailing the student's National Merit Scholarship Index, information about one's success possibilities on AP courses, and information about the free Khan Academy SAT prep course available to all students. It is really important that all 10th- and 11th-grade students take this test.

"The data goes directly into LinkIt! (the district's data warehousing and analysis software) with other student information such as results of the NJSLA testing and grades from individual classes," said McHale. "Having all of this data in one place makes it easy to adjust day-to-day instruction as well as the overall curriculum."

Identifying areas of great strength is helpful too and feeds into the career- and college-matching function of the PSAT, providing direction for students in those areas.

"Taking the PSAT is good practice for the SAT and enters every student into the National Merit Scholarship competition," said McHale. "Overall, this is a win-win for the students and the district."



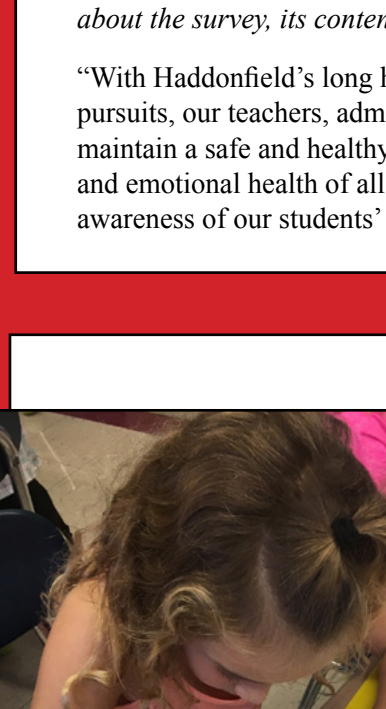
Many teachers took advantage of Promethean Board training.

#### Promethean Boards Enhance Classroom Experience

Researched, tested and piloted in the 2017-18 school year, Promethean Boards now exist in 61 classrooms throughout the district. That translates to approximately 40% of our elementary, middle and high school classrooms.

Promethean Boards are large, interactive displays that provide access to educational apps and classroom tools that make it easier for the teacher to deliver differentiated instruction. Both teacher and student can write on the surface, import any content from any source and annotate, edit or highlight it. Whether examining a map, making calculations, drawing or writing, the screen can be saved and revisited later.

"One of our strategic plan goals is Contemporary Learning," said Chief Academic Officer Dr. Colleen Murray. "Promethean panels support this goal in a number of ways. Some teachers use the board to create interactive questioning, differentiated lessons and tangible touching and manipulation of shapes, words, pictures and numbers. Images of anatomy, for instance, can be manipulated to see multiple perspectives of a heart – from inside the organ, to outside the body, to the cellular level."



"In my class, the Promethean Board has been invaluable in terms of saving notes from the daily classroom lessons," said Kyle Williams, HMHS chemistry and physics teacher. "As the class works through physics problems, I can make note of our calculations and results in a way that is immediately visible to everyone and that links seamlessly to Google Classroom. Graphs, photos and our notes are available to every student, even when the student is absent."

"The Promethean Board is very much like a Smart device," said Angela Lloyd, third-grade teacher at Tatem. "I have access to all kinds of learning apps. Additionally, my phone is connected to the board, so I can take a photo with my phone and then project the image on the board."

"The split screen feature allows two students to work at the Promethean Board at the same time," said Katie Green, first-grade teacher at Central. "Students love to use the magic marker to write and draw, and the fact that I can adjust the height of the board makes it easy for our youngest students to reach."

"The Promethean Board is just more fun," said HMS German teacher Garrett Watkinson. "The students like to manipulate vocabulary words in a digital space, and the board makes it easy to jump from one subject to the next."

"Haddonfield took advantage of an offer to attach a mini PC to each Promethean Board," said Director of Technology John Miller. "That gives the teachers the best of both worlds, PC and Android. When the teacher chooses PC input from the main menu, he or she can access the Internet, turning the board into an enormous computer screen and sharing virtually anything that is available online."

"The possibilities are immense," said Murray. "This tool is helping us imagine new ways to learn that will prepare our students for the future and spark a love of learning."

#### How does HSD Address the Social and Emotional Needs of our Student Body?

Last year, after many months of thoughtful deliberation, in collaboration with staff and community members, the Haddonfield School District approved a mission statement that would drive strategic planning efforts over the next few years.

One of three goals that resulted from the strategic planning process is social and emotional wellness. That goal states:

***We will nurture self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making to ensure the social and emotional well-being of our learners.***

What have we been doing to work towards this goal? Quite a lot! In fact, there is so much to write about that the topic will be published as a three-part series.

Today, read about district-wide plans and action steps. In November, we will share what is going on at the elementary level, and in December we will explain what happens in the middle and high school. One exception: because the middle school Wellness Day was quite recent, you will see an article about that event below.

#### SCHOOL CLIMATE

Every school has a Anti-Bullying Specialist (ABS). The ABS chairs a School Climate committee made up of parents, teachers and administrators and works with student groups to communicate that our schools should be safe places. Each ABS receives three days of training on bullying laws, how to investigate an HIB (harassment, intimidation and bullying) claim, advanced investigation techniques and the role of the school climate team.

Student groups design activities to contribute to a positive school climate, and their participation strengthens their commitment to respect, kindness and inclusivity. All are encouraged to voice concerns when problems are observed or experienced. Students create ways to recognize and reward positive behavior in various ways. As one recent example, HMHS faculty were encouraged to write down the name of any student who exhibited a random act of kindness. The names were placed in a jar, and, at the end of the week, a student was selected for a special treat.

"Knowing that your school is a safe place contributes to a positive school climate, and a positive school climate contributes to school safety" said School Safety Specialist Sandy Horwitz. "Last year, district employees and students participated in a large number of programs, activities, workshops and trainings on a variety of subjects including HIB, cyber bullying, child abuse prevention, student voice, responsive classroom and positive messaging, to name only a few. These school climate programs and activities communicate to students that their safety and the safety of others are a priority."

Every school has its own particular traditions and activities that make the students, faculty and families feel as though they are part of a larger, nurturing program. Community meetings, school songs, unique bulletin boards, "word of the month" programs are some of many initiatives that bring this point home. In November's and December's newsletters, we will explore more school-specific examples.

#### COUNSELORS

For the first time, we have at least one full time **counselor** in every school. Counselors play an important role in addressing social and emotional needs of our students. In addition to serving as one more trusted adult to talk to, they manage different in-school programs; establish and lead small groups based on students' needs; participate in IEP, 504 and I&RS (Intervention and Referral Services) meetings; consult with district staff and outside clinicians; communicate with families; and much, much more.

#### ANONYMOUS REPORTING

Although it is still true that a student may be comfortable talking directly to a staff person about a friend who needs help, there are times when that sort of in-person communication is difficult. In the summer of 2018, the district invested in an app called **StopIt!**, a reporting app that allows anyone to send an anonymous message of concern. For example, if a student is afraid that his friend is self-harming, he can report it without fear of being identified. Administrators will follow up and attempt to make a caring course correction before the situation becomes an emergency. Students and staff from elementary through high school were trained in its use, and parents received information about it as well. Use of StopIt! has already resulted in immediate and significant help.

#### CONTINUOUS TRAINING

On October 15 and 16, Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) committee co-chairs Dr. Gino Priolo and Ms. Laurie Bushey (grade 5 Tatem), along with school psychologist Dr. Kristin Leren, attended two days of **comprehensive RULER training at Yale University's Center for Emotional Intelligence**. RULER is an acronym that stands for the five skills of emotional intelligence: Recognizing, Understanding, Labeling, Expressing and Regulating emotions. The framework of the RULER program aims to develop enhanced mindsets about emotions, deepen social and emotional skills and foster healthy emotional climates for both the adults and students in our schools. Priolo, Bushey and Leren are now collaborating with the district's administrative team, as well as the district's SEL team, to establish the frameworks of the program throughout the school district. You can learn more about the RULER approach [here](#).

In addition to this recent RULER training, district professional learning days frequently include training in one or more areas of SEL.

#### ELICITING INPUT

In late November and early December, the district will administer a **comprehensive SEL survey** to faculty, staff and students in grades 3-12. The data will be centered on the current development of social and emotional intelligence, as well as data on the overall climate in our schools. This information will be shared with the community and will help to inform policy and practice moving forward. *Look for more comprehensive information about the survey, its content and how the data will be shared on or near November 4.*

"With Haddonfield's long history of academic excellence and competitive collegiate pursuits, our teachers, administrators and Board members are united in a strong desire to maintain a safe and healthy school climate and to make every effort to improve the social and emotional health of all of our students," said Dr. Mussoline. "We aim to increase awareness of our students' needs and to respond in a caring and effective manner."

### SCHOOL NEWS

#### Early Stages in the Writing Process at Central School

How do we learn to write? Where do we begin?

It seems obvious that we need to learn the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make, but it is often true that we begin with a picture.

Kindergarten and first-grade teachers Kelsey Kennedy and Jennifer Gallogly recently shared some of their thoughts and methods for the very first steps young writers may take.

"In kindergarten, my students will draw a picture with lots of details," Kennedy said. "That allows students to think about what they will write, to plan and organize their ideas."

The next step is to label the picture, in effect identifying words that may be used in a sentence. Only then will students begin to write one letter, and then one word at a time.

"As time goes on, we work on writing stamina," Kennedy said. "At the beginning of the year, they write for one minute. As of today, we have reached the 12-minute mark!"

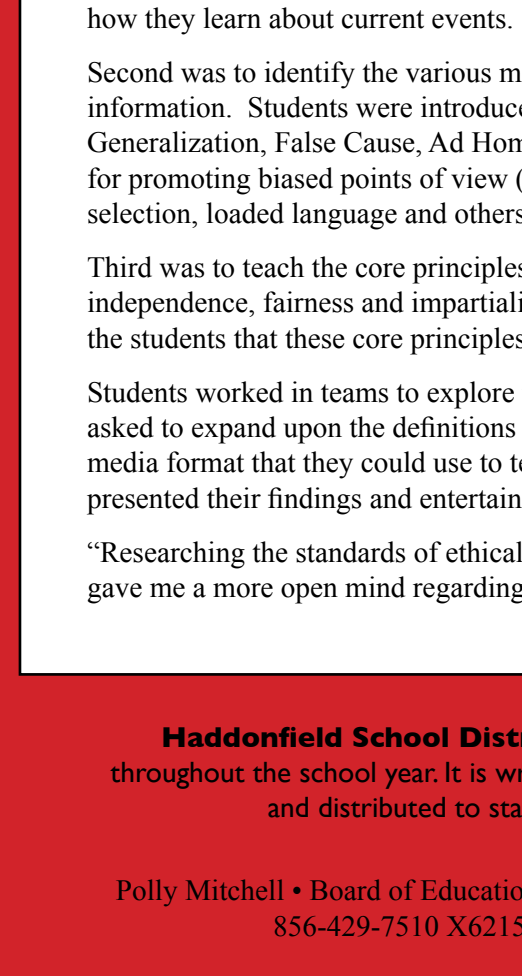
In first grade, Gallogly asks the students to make a "quick sketch" because the picture has become less important than the words.

"Writing can be overwhelming," said Gallogly. "We encourage the students to write about what has already happened, not what might happen in the future. Expressing their own real experiences is easier than making something up, and therefore reduces the writer's stress."

Finally, when the students have developed more confidence in writing, the teachers introduce the idea of editing. Can you add to the work you've done so far? Is there a better way to describe this?

Both teachers emphasized that one of their primary goals is to teach the students to think of themselves as writers.

"When we compare what our students produced during the first week of school with what they write in June, we are proud to be a part of this important process," said Gallogly.



Molly says, "I like to write about my family and the things we do, like when we rescued a turtle from the soccer field."

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#### Lizzy Grade 3 Examines the Structures of Life

Deb Adams' third-graders at Elizabeth Haddon have been studying the structures of life in both the plant and animal world. Using a large, classroom "seed sprouter," the students placed corn, bean, pumpkin and sunflower seeds into water and made daily observations of the structural development as seeds grew into full grown plants.

Studying the structures that support animal life meant identifying bones in a human skeleton, building a life-sized skeleton and drawing the bones in their own hands. What's next? In the next two weeks, students will dissect an owl pellet and try to identify bones they find inside.



#### Students explore STEAM concepts using Zoobs

Zoobs give Tatem students (in Tara Lampman's class) like Andrew and Griffin the opportunity to represent STEAM (science, art, technology, engineering and math) principles. They are open-ended toys that construct, engineer, explore and experiment. ZOOB is not like any other building set; the pieces include gears, axles and joints that snap, click and pop together! With rotating, spinning and extendable parts, you can actually design a toy to play with instead of just building something to look at. We had so much fun!



Science teacher Amanda Leighton taught yoga to the students.

#### Wellness Day Brought a Broad Range of Social-Emotional Health Experiences to HMS

On Friday, October 18, Haddonfield Middle School (HMS) held its annual Wellness Day. One of many programs designed to varied the district goal of social and emotional well-being, Wellness Day offers many and varied topics, activities and learning experiences to the entire middle school student body and staff.

Through interactive presentations and exercises, students learned the proper care of their minds and bodies; to make healthier choices pertaining to eating, exercise, relaxation, posture and stress management; and how decisions about their behavior and lifestyles affect their overall physical, emotional and mental well-being.

A complex schedule allowed each grade to cycle through physical activities such as a health walk through town, salsa dancing, yoga, relaxation techniques and boxing, often led by HMS faculty. Professionals from a martial arts academy, Temple University and Tri-State Caring K9s exposed the students to ways they can help themselves and others. Some of the toughest subjects were addressed by individuals who shared personal stories about a family member's battle with addiction and life choices that resulted in jail time.

"Wellness Day was a teacher in-service program 27 years ago," said event organizer and world language teacher Sharon Verdeur. "Our guidance counselor at that time, John Toto, loved it so much that he adapted it for the students. The entire day has always revolved around the emotional, physical and social well-being of our students and teachers and has become a favorite for our entire school community."

At the end of the day, the students and staff gathered to dedicate the middle school guidance office suite to Mr. Toto, who passed away in 2013.

"John would have been proud to know that this dedication took place on Wellness Day, a day that always meant so much to him," said Verdeur.



#### Studying Bias in the Digital Media Landscape

Accelerated English 9 students just completed a curricular unit titled "Understanding the Digital Media Landscape." It was team-taught by the library media specialist, Brian Stafford, and language arts teachers Holly Maiese and Bill Usher.

There were multiple objectives for teaching this unit.

First was to help students gain a fuller understanding of how the digital media industry has evolved. Students learned about how technology such as bots, algorithms, deepfakes, digital tracking, microtargeting, and social media mobilization influences how they learn about current events.

Second was to identify the various methods used to sway the thinking of consumers of information. Students were introduced to several logical fallacies (Red Herring, Hasty Generalization, False Cause, Ad Hominem, Straw Man and others) as well as methods for promoting biased points of view (bias by omission, bias by labelling, bias by source selection, loaded language and others).

Third was to teach the core principles of ethical journalism (truth and accuracy, independence, fairness and impartiality, humanity and accountability) and impress upon the students that these core principles apply to all media formats.

Students worked in teams to explore the topics that most interested them. They were asked to expand upon the definitions they were given and seek out examples in any media format that they could use to teach their classmates. Using Google Slides, they presented their findings and entertained questions.

"Researching the standards of ethical journalism and learning about bias in journalism gave me a more open mind regarding how issues are reported," said Rania K., pictured.