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Technology & Transitions

A Message From Patrick J. Maguire, Director

There's news, and there's good news, and there's great news. The news: the National Center for Learning Disabilities 2011 report concludes that major improvement is needed in the areas of technology and transitions. This report found that too few students with learning differences have access to the assistive technology they need, and too few LD students are involved in successful transitions planning. Now for the good news: technology and transitions have been areas of improvement at Thomas Edison High School for more than a decade.

Technology

"Few would argue the tremendous value of technology," says the NCLD report, "yet far too few students are provided with the necessary assistive technology devices and services." I am proud that we have provided technology to support our students and enhance their learning. Our Technology Coordinator, Devan Dunn, implemented the Laptop One-to-One Program in order to put a computer in the hands of each incoming student starting in the fall of 2008.

As of fall 2011, the program is transitioning from laptops to iPads. All computers are fully equipped with assistive software such as Dragonspeak

(a program which converts spoken words into typed text) and Natural Speak (a program which reads text aloud). These computers can be used at school and home alike, and, upon graduation, they belong to the student.

Teachers at Edison utilize assistive technology on a daily basis in the classroom. Students in our English classes can borrow iPods with audio versions of the books they are reading in class, enabling students with dyslexia or other processing issues to read books much faster and access information at a higher level.

Students in our art classes have been using the iPads provided to this year's freshman class through the One-to-One Program. Art and science teacher Marco Puccio says that the iPads are "almost too good to be true" in terms of their ease of use in the classroom. From Intel Readers and iPods to laptops and iPads, we ensure that our students are provided with the necessary assistive technology devices. This kind of technology levels the playing field for students with learning differences, and it can make all the difference in a student's education.

Transitions

One of the most important things we do at Edison is to



prepare our students for life after high school. Our graduates need to be ready to succeed in the real world—whether that means attending a post-secondary institution, working a job, or some combination of the two. Our Transitions team includes Daniel Keller, a former Peace Corps volunteer who has recently joined us to teach Senior Seminar; Martha Callahan, a Transitions Specialist with years of experience at Beaverton High School; and Assistant Director David Pontious, the team's fearless leader.

According to the NCLD report, "Transition planning activities must be more heavily influenced by the student and better connected to the skills needed to realize post-school goals." Our Transitions Program spans each student's entire Edison career, giving them plenty of time to personalize their Transitions Plan.

Students begin to explore post-secondary options during their freshman and sophomore years, always keeping in mind their learning differences and how they will need to advocate for themselves

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at college or on the job. As juniors and seniors, students take courses packed with important material to help them prepare for transitioning into life with learning differences after high school. One-on-one assistance from Transitions staff is available whenever needed. Each student graduates with a detailed written plan in place for the following year that addresses education, employment, community living, and daily living.

Growing Success

Here's the great news: according to a survey we took over this past summer, our graduates are more successful with each passing year. Everything we do here at Edison, from technology to transitions, is to improve the futures of our students. *Hearing that they are succeeding is the greatest news of all.* ♦

★ New Student Dessert ★

The words in the cloud on this issue's cover are the attributes and names of the new students entering Thomas Edison this year. We welcome our incoming students each fall with the New Student Dessert in the Community Room of the school. While everyone shares potluck desserts, parents write a list of ten attributes describing their student. Then each family introduces their student. Teachers write the attributes on a white board, then create a record for the student's portfolio.

This annual event sets the tone for what new families can expect during their time at Edison: the recognition of each student's strengths and uniqueness.

Positive affirmation is integral to our curriculum. Staff and students alike respect and celebrate each others' individuality.

The more times a word was used to describe someone, the larger it appears in the word cloud. So we know that many of this year's new students love animals, value being good friends and family members, are hard workers with good senses of humor, and are artistic and kind. We also know that at least one of them loves dessert. And what's not to love about the New Student Dessert, where you get to enjoy treats and celebrate your strengths as you gear up for a new beginning at a new school? Welcome to Edison! ♦

Welcome to the Edison Family!



Daniel Keller joined Thomas Edison's Transition staff in 2011. He teaches Senior Seminar to prepare seniors for life beyond Edison. After earning a B.A. from the University of Oregon's School of Planning, Public Policy, and Management in concert with graduating from the R.D. Clark Honors College, Daniel worked as an Academic Success Coach with InsideTrack in Portland. He then departed for Honduras with the Peace Corps, where he served as a teacher, coach, and community developer for two years alongside his wonderful wife, Emily. While abroad, Daniel enjoyed many adventures, ranging from depths of 100 feet in the Caribbean to over 19,000 feet in the Ecuadorean Andes. His passions beyond teaching include hiking, camping, biking, and leisure reading in his favorite hammock. Although originally a Hoosier, Portland has become a second home for Daniel and he couldn't be more excited to be at Edison. ♦

Carrie Lucas joined Thomas Edison as a part-time counselor and art therapist in 2011. She received her B.A. from George Mason University with a major in Art History. She also has an M.S. in Art Therapy from Eastern Virginia Medical School and is finishing her M.Ed in School Counseling at Lewis and Clark College. Carrie and her husband share their house with a very active dog and a lethargic cat. They are excitedly expecting their first child at the end of October 2011. Carrie has a strong interest in the outdoors and loves to enjoy all that the Oregon forests and coast have to offer, including fishing, camping, and hiking. Carrie takes pleasure in collaborating with multi-disciplinary teams like Edison as an instrument of support and change for students. Working with Edison students is an exciting opportunity to continue her career path in a field that focuses on her strongest passions: academic and personal development. ♦



Fred and Liz Stamps welcomed Cody Nephi Stamps into the world on October 6, 2011, at 8:13 p.m. At birth, he weighed 7 pounds, 8 ounces and was 19.75 inches long. The whole family is doing well and settling in at home. Everyone at Edison sends their congratulations and best wishes to the Stamps. We are looking forward to many more baby photos and to meeting the newest member of the Edison family! ♦

Thomas Edison Art & Science Expo May 2011



Edison parents, students, and donors mingle at the annual Art & Science Expo. Donors enjoyed a preview of the show. Artwork was featured downstairs; science projects were upstairs. All photos courtesy of Mai-Lill Mägi.



From left: Edison parent Richard Dietrich, past parent Jill Whittaker, and board member Sharon Robbins enjoy a preview of the student art and science projects.



Claire Bauman '14 next to one of her drawings.



Daniel Hager '11, "Space Art" (detail), spray paint on foam core, 2011.



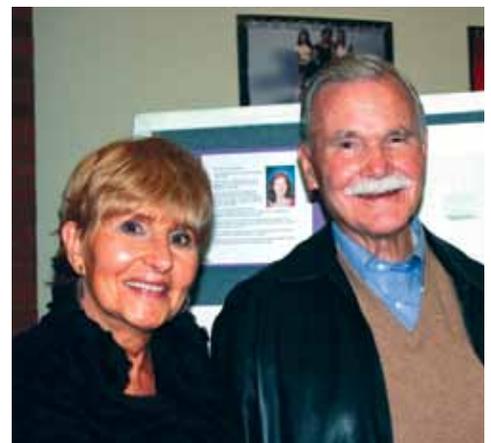
McKenna Parker '14, "Toucan," acrylic, 2011.



Austin Gagnier '14, "Local Value Replacement Study," acrylic, 2011.



Max McCollum '14 with his artwork.



Edison supporters Andy and Virginia Brooks, who established the Ann Brooks Scholarship Fund.

Supporting Thomas Edison's Future with a Legacy Gift

Pat Karamanos, Past Edison Parent and Board Member



As a recent graduate of Edison, my son attended the Edison auction. To my surprise, he raised his paddle and pledged \$50 toward financial aid out of his meager salary. It was one of my proudest moments. This is just one example of how the school impacted his self-esteem and moral character.

I feel grateful that we were able to financially provide this experience for our boys. I have always been a contributor to the school's financial aid campaigns. It is my desire to continue to provide this same experience for other students as well.

I believe in Thomas Edison's mission and take pride in my contributions to the school through time as well as financial support. As a board member from 2000 through 2006, I was able to witness how fiscally responsible the school is. They do what they say they'll do and don't make promises they don't feel they are able to fulfill. I have seen the administrators in action. It is impressive to see what they can accomplish on their tight budget.

My goal is to see Edison thrive. I invite you to join me in supporting the future of Thomas Edison High School with a legacy gift. I have faith in their ability to stay focused on vital issues such as teacher and staff development, technology updates, and financial aid. I trust them to

"We have an opportunity to impact the lives of future students. Please think about what Edison means to you. I invite you to join me in supporting the future of Thomas Edison High School with a legacy gift."

—Pat Karamanos, Past Edison Parent and Board Member

invest in other areas of need that may arise in the future as they continue their work of providing a great education for students with learning differences.

We have an opportunity to impact the lives of future students. Please think about what Edison means to you. Students being encouraged to advocate for themselves? Teachers who are passionate about motivating their students to do their best? Developing a curiosity about the world around them? Being an active member of society? These are the things I think about when I think of Edison.

A few years ago while working on my estate planning, I designated Edison in my will. They gave me a gift for which I will always be grateful. Now it's my turn to invest in the future of Thomas Edison High School. Won't you join me? ✦

Thomas Edison High School holds a special place in my heart. Edison provided a supportive environment for my sons and thus for our family as a whole. The high school years are challenging for all students. Two children with Tourette's Syndrome and ADD feel the challenge and pressure even more.

Edison fulfilled the role of educator and emotionally supported my sons with compassion. The faculty challenged my sons in all facets of their lives. Educationally, emotionally, and as citizens and members of a larger community, Edison encouraged them to give back.

Your Legacy Gift Will Last

Legacy gifts become part of the Thomas Edison High School Endowment. Earnings from the investment of the funds make an Edison education possible for 25-30% of our students who need financial assistance each year. A legacy gift to Edison can reduce your taxable estate while benefiting students with learning differences for generations to come.

How to Make a Legacy Gift

Name Thomas Edison High School as a percentage or specific dollar beneficiary of your will, life insurance, trust, or retirement plan. You can create a permanent fund in your name or that of a loved one for legacy provisions of \$50,000 or more. Please contact Patrick Maguire to discuss a named fund at 503-297-2336 x106 or patrickm@taemail.org.

Let us know about your legacy gift:

Mr. Patrick Maguire, Director, Thomas Edison High School
9020 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy, Portland, Oregon 97225-2436

🎓 Congratulations, Class of 2011!



Roger Krage, board member and Edison parent, welcomes everyone.



Amy Galloway '11, recipient of the Spirit of Edison Award, with faculty Craig Busic.



Hans Weih '12, Sarah Friedman '12, Ross Mortimer '12, Keven Maldonado '12, Eder Maldonado '09, Andrew Gaines '12, faculty Kate Fellows Russell, Lauren Rohlf '11.



Back row, left to right: Daniel Hager, Alex Wilson, Jakob Daum. Middle row: Brandon Davis, PJ McKinnon, Bryce Notbohm, Brandon Partee, David Cahana, Lauren Rohlf. Front row: Abigail Musselman, Nessa Melnick, Amy Galloway, Victor Sandoval, Joren Rash-Gitner, Jeff Krage, Lee Barker.

2011 Awards

Ann Brooks Scholarship:
Victor Sandoval

Joseph E. Weston Public
Foundation Scholarship:
Bryce Notbohm

Spirit of Edison Award:
Amy Galloway

Valedictorian:
Bryce Notbohm

Good Neighbor Award:
The Eagle Family



From left: Edison faculty Fred Stamps, Marco Puccio, and Steve Beard before the graduation ceremony. All photos courtesy of Andie Petkus.



Alex Wilson '11 with Victor Sandoval '11, recipient of the Ann Brooks Scholarship.



Bryce Notbohm '11, valedictorian and recipient of the Weston Scholarship, with his mom Ellen after the ceremony.



Edison Alumni Updates: Where Are They Now?

Edison Faculty Update: Mary Hartrich



Mary Hartrich, Edison Faculty 1973-77 (director for two years), Edison Board 1975-78

Our school’s history stretches back to 1973, and countless people have been involved over the years, helping shape Thomas Edison into the school it is today. It is a special gift when we reconnect with our friends who were instrumental

in creating Edison. We were fortunate to receive a visit from Mary Hartrich, one of our founding members. Mary now resides in Seattle, where she is the director of the Ignation Spirituality Center. She was recently in Portland for a conference and stopped by the school to catch up.

Mary started as a member of the school’s faculty in the church attic where we began in 1973 and took over as director in 1975. Later that spring, she met with Pat Howell, then the principal of Jesuit High School, about moving the Tree of Learning to the JHS campus. He said that he would like to see the school’s philosophy before agreeing to the move.

Mary drafted the Tree’s philosophy on a typewriter. She clarified the idea that we could not be all things to all people—we would need to narrow our focus to students we could serve best (primarily those with special learning needs, who were not being served by alternative schools). Mary’s plan included being as creative as possible and incorporating a student-centered, individual approach to teaching. To this day, the ideas drafted by Mary are still a cornerstone of Edison’s guiding philosophy.

Mary says, “There are so many people who have contributed tremendously over the years. I am so proud of Mr. Maguire and all of those who have brought the school so far forward over these many years.” We are incredibly grateful to Mary for her years of passionate service to our school and for helping to lay the foundation on which Thomas Edison has been built.

Thanks again for keeping in touch, Mary! ✦

Are you an Edison alum with news to share? We’d love to hear about your job, hobbies, family, pets, and more! Please send email and photos to rachelt@taemail.org or update us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/ThomasEdisonHS>

Edison Alumna Update: Nessa Melnick ’11

“I’m currently attending the University of Hartford in Connecticut. I am doing really well! I have made so many friends. I haven’t had a chance to play ultimate frisbee yet because I am focusing on school work right now. I am not taking a math class, which I was excited about, but now all my classes are reading and writing. I am LOVING college, though. And I survived hurricane Irene! Hope everything is going well at Edison.”





9020 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy
Portland, OR 97225-2436
503-297-2336
www.taedisonhs.org

Parents: if this issue is addressed to your child and they no longer maintain a permanent address at your home, please update their mailing information by contacting our Development Associate, Rachel Tobie, at rachel@taemail.org. Thank you!

Please be our guest at the Partner with Thomas Edison Breakfast Thursday, November 10, 2011 • 7:30-8:30 a.m. at the Oregon Zoo



“This school brought hope into my life.”

Join other supporters of our school as we celebrate the progress we have made and share a hopeful vision for the future. The breakfast is free; the experience is priceless.

Please contact Rachel Tobie at 503-297-2336 or rachel@taemail.org by October 28 to reserve a seat for yourself and any guests you would like to bring.

If you are unable to join us, please consider using the enclosed envelope to make a gift. Any and all support is deeply appreciated. Thank you!