

Headlight



Written by the students of Marblehead High School for our school and community

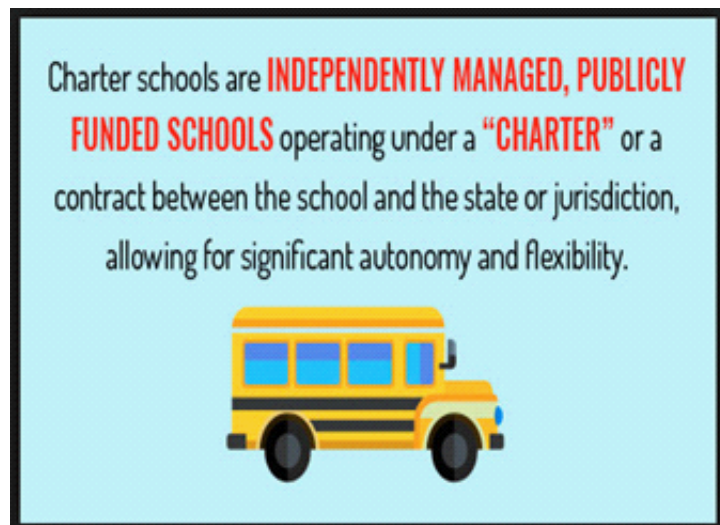
2016-2017 Issue

www.mhsheadlight.weebly.com

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Question 2: Charter School Expansion

Sophie Mae Berman, Junior
Reporter in the Field



On Tuesday, November 8th, Massachusetts voters will have the opportunity to directly impact the quality and accessibility of public education. This proposed law would allow the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education to approve up to 12 new charter schools or expansions in existing charter schools annually. Statewide charter enrollment could increase by up to 1% of the total statewide enrollment each year. New charter schools and expansion plans approved under this law would be exempt from current limits on accepted students and amount of district funding given to them.

Many of those in favor of Charter School Expansion have "kids trapped in failing school districts"(2). Charter schools offer longer schools days, more individual attention, greater focus on STEM and innovative learning techniques. Those who support charter schools are often driven by consistently low-performing district schools, and the limitations of parent boards in making academic decisions.

A few years ago, Salem was designated as a "severely struggling level 4 district"(1) and the Bentley Elementary School in Salem dropped into the lowest performing category. Then, Bentley Elementary became an in-district charter school. With increased state funding, extended hours, more enrichment and community partnerships, this year the Bentley School shot from a Level 4 to a Level 1 school.

When a charter school opens or expands, this takes away funding from the public schools in the district. Although mainly indirect, this year alone charter schools will take away more than \$400 million in funding from already under-funded Massachusetts public schools. Under the Question 2 proposal, the number of charter schools in MA would triple in 10 years, costing public schools districts over \$1 billion a year. Some argue that taking away money from schools that are already falling behind will not yield the widespread education improvement needed, only helping a small portion of children, although almost 33,000 kids today "are stuck on waiting lists for public charter schools" (2).

A teacher from Marblehead High School offers his perspective, as he approaches a time when he must seriously consider the option of Charter school for his own child. Living in a city where the schools are poorly rated, he recognizes charter schools as a viable option for those living in communities with under-performing schools. He recognizes that dedication, parent involvement, and motivation can yield success in diverse school atmospheres, regardless of non-charter, charter or private. Ultimately, he sees a need for accountability of student learning in charter schools and a change in the "lottery system" used to enroll students.

Sources: (1) *The Boston Globe* (2) *Massachusetts Information For Voters*
Images National Charter School Resource Center

The Teal Pumpkin Project

Emma Szalewicz, Junior
Reporter in the Field

For the millions of people all around the world who have food allergies or dietary restrictions, holidays can be challenging, especially Halloween. However, there is a solution this Halloween. The Teal Pumpkin Project was inspired by an awareness activity run by the Food Allergy Community of East Tennessee and was launched as a national campaign in 2014. The Teal Pumpkin Project helps to make sure all children can come home on Halloween with something they can enjoy, regardless of their dietary restrictions. All you need to do is to provide non-food treats for trick or treaters in lieu of or in addition to traditional Halloween candy. Display a printout of a Teal Pumpkin Project Sign in front of your home to indicate that you have non-food treats available. A free printable Teal Pumpkin Project sign is available online on the FARE website.

Last Halloween, households from all 50 states and 14 countries participated. Join in this project this year to ensure a safe and happy Halloween for all trick or treaters!

Ideas for non Food Items:

- Glow sticks, bracelets or necklaces
- Pencils or pens
- Crayons, markers, colored pencils
- Bubbles
- Halloween erasers or pencil toppers
- Stickers
- Slinkies
- Whistles or noise makers
- Kazoos
- Bouncy Balls
- Finger Puppets
- Finger Puppets
- Play Dough
- Clay
- Coins
- Spider rings
- Vampire fangs
- Notepads
- Playing cards
- Bookmarks
- Stencils
- Books

A Season to Volunteer

Becky Twaalfhoven, Senior
Editor in Chief

The holiday season is the ideal time to help the community. Whether required for an honors society or club or simply as a good act, high school students should take advantage of the volunteer opportunities in the coming months. Whether related to festivities or simply a continuation of yearly events, both SPUR and the Magic Hat Thrift Shop offer students many options to get involved and be a part of the season of giving.

SPUR

This holiday season, SPUR is partnering with local organizations to meet its commitment to spreading happiness and cheer. The following events are open to high school volunteers looking to contribute to SPUR's mission; all sign-ups and additional details are available online at www.spur.community

November 5 - December 1: Festival of the Stars

SPUR is making 32" wooden stars for volunteers and donors to bring home and send to members of the Marblehead, Salem, and Swampscott communities this holiday season. The cost to participate in the November 5 kick-off event is \$40 per star pair (one to take, one to donate); or donate a star exclusively for \$30. Registration and payment required in advance. Net proceeds will benefit Friends of Marblehead Public Schools for the 2017 Grant Season and SPUR for our 2016 SPUR Holiday Cheer Drive.

November 12: Annual Fall Yard Clean Up

This annual clean-up assists members of our local communities who physically cannot rake their own leaves and financially cannot afford to hire a lawn service. Volunteers are asked to bring a rake, broom, or shovel, as well as a pack of leaf bags to contribute to the cause. Last year we filled 628 bags of leaves so every contribution toward the cause helps greatly.

November 19 - December 12: Holiday Cheer Drive

Our Holiday Cheer Drive provides essentials and other meaningful gifts to children in Marblehead, Salem and surrounding communities by working with 17 schools and family/children related services who identify children who would be without gifts for the 2016 Holiday Season. Caseworkers, school counselors and homeless education liaisons submit a wish list for each child that lists something the child wants, something the child needs, something to wear, and something to read. Sponsors may pick-up wish-lists from us during certain times or by visiting the following community partners between November 19 - December 1: Mud Puddle Toys, Pint Size and Up (Marblehead); Re~find Men's & Women's (Salem). Volunteers sign up to help check gift bags in, wrap presents, and sort for program pick-up.

November - December: Lifebridge Meal Service

Prepare and/or serve dinner to residents and others who benefit from meals at the Lifebridge Shelter in Salem. Volunteers can serve, prepare a portion of the entree (10 servings) from a recipe emailed in advance, or sponsor a portion of the meal via the SPUR online store.

The following dates are upcoming meal services for November and December:
November 20, 2016, 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM; November 21, 2016, 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM
December 18, 2016, 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM; December 21, 2016, 5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Magic Hat Thrift Shop

Every Saturday 9 AM - 1 PM: Volunteering

The Magic Hat Thrift Shop is always open to volunteers. Open from 10 AM - 2 PM on weekdays, but high school volunteers can contact for more information regarding Saturday mornings.



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Headlight Staff

2016-2017

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