



TAPA Cofffee

Thayer Middle School

October 7, 2026

Welcome

TAPA Leaders

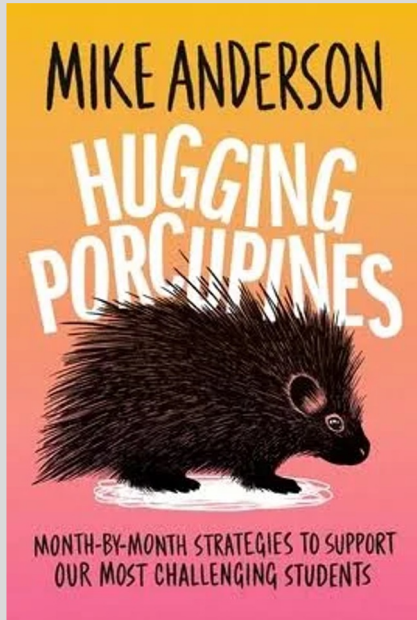
Kate Nedelman Herbst '98, P '31 - M.S.
President

Maribeth Flakes P'32- M.S. Vice President

Lisa Kazakis P '31, '32 - M.S. Secretary

Ophelia Ardayfio P '27, '30, '33 - M.S.

Getting back into the Rhythm of School



Galen McNemar Hamann, P'31,
Middle School Director

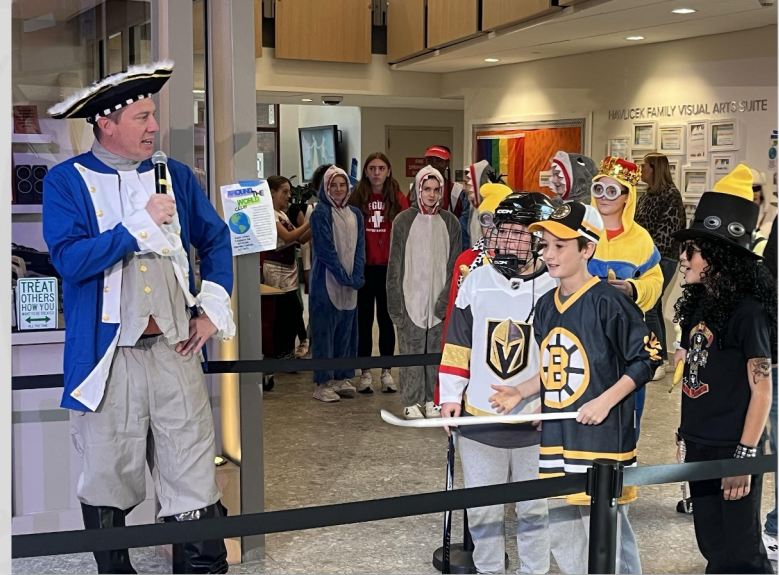
Global Speakers

Dr. Lisa Damour & Arn Chorn-Pond



Coming up this Fall

- Parent conferences- Thursday Friday Oct 15-16
- Middle School Student social and parent social- October 30, 7-9pm
- Activities Period 2:45-3:45 Nov 9,10, 16,17,18
- Matilda- Friday, Nov 13, 7pm
- Arts night- Thursday Nov 19, 6-8pm
- Grandparents and Grandfriends Day - Friday Nov 20, 12-2:30pm



Student Educational Support

Maryann Shafter

Associate Director of Hale Learning Center

The Setting:

- + A quiet environment
- + Phones in another room*
- + Distraction free (no TV)
- + Visible to you
- + A supplies box on hand: calculator, pencils, highlighter, paper, ruler

The Process:

- + **Routine:** try to have a usual homework time (after snack, dinner, or shower)
- + **Planner/MySchoolApp:** determine long-term assignments (more than 2 days) and then short-term assignments
- + **Record** them in the planner and **prioritize** them (number them)
- + **Begin working!**

If the “first step” seems too big, make it smaller:

- + work for 20 minutes, take a 5 minute break (Pomodoro method; a timer is helpful)
- + start with the easiest homework
- + provide sentence starters for writing assignments
- + break a long assignment into manageable pieces (“chunking”)

Tips for Studying For Assessments:

1. R-Y-G: what they know vs what they need to focus on
2. Repeated, spaced exposure (no cramming)
3. DO SOMETHING with the material:
 - a. Create a **chart** of the important names, dates, events, terms, etc. from the review guide
 - b. Use a **graphic organizer**: list the muscles of the body and their functions; compare turtles
 - c. **Write out** the answers to the identifications, essays, short answer, etc.
4. Recreate the test situation:
 - a. Use blank graphic organizers or charts and fill them in without using notes
 - b. Quiz them, if you are able
 - c. Have them teach the dog/cat/sibling
5. Beware the “recognition vs recall” dilemma!
 - a. This is why they need to TEST themselves!

Student Social and Emotional Support

Sammy Kominiarek

Middle School Counselor



**“Mental Health is
having feelings that fit the
situation and managing
them well”**

- Lisa Damour

Common Middle School Topics & How We Can Support Together

	Worry	Friendship	Resilience
What I work on with students:	- Understanding what worry is - Naming what worry feels / looks like - Building a toolkit of strategies	- Discussing strategies for making friends / joining a group - Repairing conflict - Normalizing that friendships shift and change	- Reframing setbacks / challenges as things they can move through - Using problem solving skills - Building the confidence to try again
How parents can support:	- Validating the feeling - Letting them sit with the worry instead of avoiding it - Modeling calm coping out loud when you're stressed	- Creating casual spaces to talk about social situations - Staying curious - Valuing quality friendships over quantity	- Letting kids struggle before stepping in - Praising effort and strategy over results - Sharing your own setbacks and how you handled them

8 THINGS ANXIOUS KIDS NEED TO HEAR MORE OFTEN:

"You're allowed to feel nervous. I'm here to help you through it."

"Let's figure out the first tiny step together."

"Your worry is loud, but you get to make the plan."

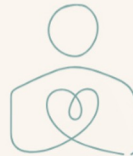
"Let's help your body settle before we solve the problem."

"It's okay to not know what to do yet. We'll find the next step."

"You're safe. I'm staying with you while the worry passes."

"Your feelings make sense, and they won't last forever."

"Your worry is not the boss of your next step. You are."



@counselorkeri

Questions and Conversation

