

# Superintendent's Report



November 14, 2018

## **Superintendent's Advisory Committees**

Representatives for the six committees (Student, Faculty, Beyond Diversity, SEPAC, Faith-based and Student Code of Conduct Review) have been selected and notified, and the committee lists have been posted on our website. Each of the committees will hold their first meetings this month and we will post quarterly updates on their respective sections of our website. Once again, Board Trustees are welcome to attend these meetings and bear witness to the type of conversations that I expect to take shape.

## **Preschool Education Expansion Grant Approved**

After hosting a well-attended Community Forum on October 25<sup>th</sup>, our current Bryant parents were provided application forms that they needed to complete and return by November 7<sup>th</sup> (to approve or decline placement into full-day sessions). Meantime, new applications were made available from November 5<sup>th</sup> through November 16<sup>th</sup> for placement into one of the available seats at Bryant or Christ Episcopal Church. As of today, 94 applications have been picked up, and 61 completed and returned to us. All applications are due by Friday, Nov. 16<sup>th</sup>. Next week, we will conduct a lottery and parents will be notified of acceptance/ assigned placement by end of November. Registration for new students will then take place at the district office from December 3 – 19. Additionally, preparations are underway to ensure Christ Episcopal Church is ready to open on January 2, 2019. We plan to host a ribbon-cutting ceremony in January and as details are finalized (including date), I will share them with you.

## **District Strategic Plan**

Last week, I make a presentation to the Board regarding the district's Strategic Planning process. The "kick-off" meeting for the Strategic Planning Committee is Wednesday, November 28<sup>th</sup>.

## **Security Town Hall**

On Tuesday, November 27<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 – 8:00 pm at the High School, we will host a Security Town Hall featuring Dr. Thomas Gambino, NJDOE's Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning and William Stallone, Bergen County Prosecutor's Office. The focus of this Town Hall is to share best practices in school security and to have a chance to hear from our community. I will open the meeting, and have invited Teaneck's Lt. Seth Kriegel (Juvenile Bureau Commander) to say a few words.

## **Recent Student Recognition**

Earlier this evening, we recognized over 100 students including those who achieved a "5" (exceeding expectations) on both the 2018 PARCC ELA and Math, or who received a *perfect score* on one of these assessments. It is my intention to make this an annual celebration and I want to thank you for joining us this evening as we celebrated these outstanding student accomplishments.

## **Student Liaisons to the Board**

Updates from Saima Jamal, Vernon Johnson, Stephanie Menendez, and William MacIntosh.

**Curriculum & Instruction**

**Language Arts:** Teachers within the English department are working through the process of triangulating data to drive future instruction. At the elementary and middle schools, the first round of MAP testing has ended. As such, teachers are looking at student data results and are collaborating with one another to discuss responsive instructional moves that match the needs of our learners.

**English as a Second Language:** The ESL department is in the initial phases of planning our first ESL family night! Our first family night will consist of sharing helpful tips for celebrating biliteracy in the home. In the past, we have had an incredibly successful turnout among our families, and we are looking forward to another great event.

**Practical Arts:** The high school culinary teachers met with various members of Maschio's Food Services to discuss possible collaboration ideas. The head corporate chef of Maschio's, Steven Escobedo, will work with various culinary classes on menu development. Students will develop ideas for school lunch menus and elicit feedback from the school community. The menus will include the components that are required in school menus. Maschio's will conduct a school advisory meeting to hear the menu ideas. The head chef and the culinary students will prepare a sampling of the foods on the selected menus. The best and tastiest menu that meets Maschio's criteria will be featured on a future menu at Teaneck High School. Chef Escobedo will also visit the culinary classes to discuss food service careers, as a supplement to students' learning.

**Physical Education & Health:** Teachers in the department, along with Mr. Murphy, Supervisor of Physical Education and Health, have begun the process of reviewing new health textbooks to update our curriculum resources.

**Teaneck Athletics:** The Teaneck High School Girls' Volleyball and Soccer teams gained County and State playoff spots during the fall season. Sophomore Cross Country runner, Grace McCullough broke a school record by running a 19:22 in the Bergen County Meet of Champions on October 28, 2018. She also finished 4th in the North 1, Group 3 State Sectional Championships on November 3, 2018, and will run in the State Group 3 Championships in Holmdel, NJ on November 10, 2018.

**Community Relations & Volunteer Services**

Thank you to all of the students and families who attended this evening's PARCC "Exceptional Achievers" celebration (previously noted).

Aside from organizing this event, Ms. Corallo, Supervisor of Community Relations & Volunteer Services, has been supporting the communication, application and registration efforts regarding the Preschool Education Expansion Aid grant; planning for the upcoming Security Town Hall; and oversight of the Superintendent's Advisory Committee notifications and postings. Additionally, she successfully facilitated the launch of the afterschool Chinese Program at the Teaneck Library; and is now working directly with TOPS to start an afterschool Chess Club at each of our elementary schools (to begin in January). On December 4<sup>th</sup>, she will bring together a focus group of current school volunteers to review and assess the district's Volunteer program in order to make recommendations on how to improve the program moving forward. In our ongoing effort to promote positive news, Ms. Corallo secured prominent placement in *The Record's* Election Day issue, which featured one of our female high school students. She has also continued to make improvement to the website including a revamp of the homepage photo section, layout improvements to the mobile version, and addition of the "District Accomplishments" section. Community outreach includes attendance at the Meet the New Library Director, Teaneck Chamber of Commerce, and Teaneck Film Festival events.

**Bryant Elementary School**

Bryant hosted a successful pre- school expansion meeting with over 200+ families coming together to learn about the expansion. They are in the final stages of accepting applications for the program at Bryant.

This week, they will be reaching out to families to contribute to their Harvest of Kindness canned food drive; and will host a visit from the director of the Food Pantry as their students assist in packing up the items. On November 13, they hosted parents for their FLIPS meeting in which parents learned about how to best support their children with emergent math skills. The next meeting on LAL will take place in December 4.

**Hawthorne Elementary School**

Updated Student Council: Fourth grade will be holding a Town Hall meeting during which candidates will give speeches, electronic voting will be held in classes, and winners announced on November 16<sup>th</sup>. Grades 2 and 3 will rotate different students at bi-weekly meetings so that every student has a chance to represent his or her class throughout the year, and learn the formal process, roles, and responsibilities of Student Councils;

Principal Jennette has coordinated all efforts to have the 2018/2019 Title I A/S Program ready for BOE approval at the 11/14/18 meeting.

In line with our Title I Parent Engagement/Parent involvement goal, two events are planned for the end of November and the second week of December. Event announcements and RSVPs to be issued and collected electronically via Google document.

In line with our School Level Goal of producing teacher/staff generated video tutorials, Mr. Hernandez will be presenting a "How To" meeting to show staff how to produce and post such videos to YouTube and or Instagram. Links to be available on the Hawthorne School web page as specific skills/standards based tutorials are completed.

**Lowell Elementary School**

Registration is now complete for 180 students to participate in the After School Math and Literacy program. They also expanded the program to include a Math Club. The expanded roster is part of the school's Title 1 School initiative. Last week, they began a school-wide Math Fact competition. Classes compete against each other in multiplication, division, addition, and subtraction. The winning class will be awarded a certificate to post in front of their class. The Math coach, Ms. Ahearn, and the Physical Education department's Ms. Ryerson, put the competition together in a bracket-style resembling the NCAA tournament. They will have Teacher Rounds from November 15<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup>. The Teacher Rounds are an advanced form of critical collegueship — a professional learning environment that helps teachers expose their classroom practices to other educators and enables them to learn from data-driven feedback offered from a stance of inquiry.

**Whittier Elementary School**

During October's Week of Respect, Whittier students participated in activities to foster a positive school climate, and to reinforce the message of respect for themselves, others and the school community. Each day had a theme connected to respect and anti-bullying. Students attended grade level town hall meetings. They watched a film "Things We Should Say More Often" and engaged in discussions on how to cultivate kindness and respect in their classroom, school and relationships. The week ended with a school wide pep rally and respect dance. Principal Valdes recognized the students who achieved a score of 800 and above on their PARCC tests and students who had perfect attendance/punctuality for the month of September.

In conjunction with Hackensack University Medical Center, students attended an assembly for International Walk to School Day. Students walked the perimeter of the school accompanied by Teaneck Police Officers, learned about pedestrian safety and had an opportunity to view police, ambulance, paramedic and fire vehicles. For Fire Prevention Week, the Teaneck Fire Department visited Whittier School. Students had an opportunity to learn about fire safety and the important job of the fire department.

Parent/Teacher Conferences were held on Thursday, October 25. The turnout was positive -- approximately 80% of parents met with their child(ren)'s teacher. The month ended with Whittier's annual Vocabulary Parade, which celebrates the love of words and reading. The event concluded with the Monster Mash Dance.

**Benjamin Franklin Middle School**

Amelia Earhart, Dorothy Height, Benjamin Franklin, Katherine Johnson, and Mona Lisa were among the historical figures walking around BFMS on October 31st. BFMS staff members seized teachable moments by dressing up as historical figures and sharing the stories of those icons.

Other events this month:

- November 1<sup>st</sup> – BFMS hosted its 2nd Annual Literacy Night. Families learned about the ways in which games can enhance literacy skills, and had the opportunity to rotate through several stations of board games with a side of milk and cookies, donated by the BFMS PTO.
- November 2<sup>nd</sup> was a busy day at BFMS. The Student of the Month ceremony was held in honor of our October recipients for demonstrating the character trait of "respect". A narcotics task force presentation took place for our seventh grade students. Finally, students who sold a certain number of items in a PTO fundraiser were spectators for an extreme basketball show.
- November 7<sup>th</sup> – Seventh grade students attended a gang presentation, provided by the Bergen County Prosecutor's Office.

**Thomas Jefferson Middle School**

TJMS' annual Awards Ceremony for students who made Honor Roll/Principal's Honors for 1st - 4th marking periods last school year was held on October 8<sup>th</sup>. Seventy-three students received plaques for Principal's Honors. Eighty students received trophies for Honor Roll.

Other TJMS events this month:

- A Book Fair was held October 8<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> in the Media Center. The theme was “Enchanted Forest”, and sales were very good. Ms. Eisele, art teacher, and several of her students helped create the enchanted entrance to the Media Center.
- On October 14<sup>th</sup>, Teaneck Comes Together, in partnership with Teaneck Public Schools, presented a Benefit Concert entitled “Healing Hearts” to honor members of the Trinidad Family (sisters Kaitlyn, Danna, Melissa and Allison, and their father Audie Trinidad) who lost their lives in a tragic accident in July. All who attended enjoyed presentations of vocal and instrumental music, dance, and poetry. The \$5.00 donation will be used to establish a scholarship in honor of the sisters. Following the concert, a moving ceremony took place in the newly planned and constructed garden in honor of the girls. Benches were placed in the garden with plaques with Melissa and Allison’s names (the twins who recently graduated from Thomas Jefferson in June).
- On October 16th, Thomas Jefferson had six students participate in the auditions for Bergen County All-County Band this year. Olivia Mitchell received the top French horn score. Madison Santos and Edward Nguyen, trumpet players, were also accepted into the ensemble. The concert will be held on Sunday, November 18th at 3 p.m. at Emerson Jr./Sr. High School.
- On October 30th, Thomas Jefferson Middle School’s Drama Club presented an evening of Hispanic/Latino Heritage Month Presentations entitled Viva, which included songs, dances, and special presentations. After the program, the PTO offered a food tasting for a minimal cost in the school’s cafeteria.
- Back to School Night was held on Tuesday, October 9th and was well attended. Parent/teacher conferences were held on Thursday, October 18th in the afternoon and evening.

### **Teaneck High School**

THS hosted many different events throughout October and November including:

- Week of Respect was celebrated with daily activities including “Poets Against Prejudice”
- National Hispanic Heritage Month was celebrated with daily announcements and an assembly on October 12<sup>th</sup>
- October 29<sup>th</sup> – Hosted the 1st Annual Civics Quiz Bowl along with the Teaneck League of Women Voters
- October 30<sup>th</sup> – Hosted annual College and Career Fair
- November is always about Homecoming and celebrating school pride. Homecoming week activities this year include:
  - November 15 -To kick off Spirit Week, each grade will design and paint a banner to represent their grade after school. The banners will be hung in each grade level hallway.
  - November 16 – H.E.A.L will host their 8th Annual Powder Puff Football game will be held on the football field starting at 3:30 pm. Girls from each grade compete in touch football. A portion of the proceeds will go to Breast Cancer Research.
  - November 17 –The 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Coed Volleyball Marathon is back. The volleyball Marathon will be held on Saturday, November 17<sup>th</sup> in the gymnasium. All staff and students are invited to play
  - November 19 - Meme Monday –All students and staff are encouraged to wear something that would represent a positive and funny Meme.
  - November 20 –Twin Tuesday –All students and staff are encouraged to “twin with another student or staff member”

- November 20 - Homecoming Dance –The 4th annual Homecoming Dance will be held at the Glenpointe Marriott on Tuesday, November 20<sup>th</sup> from 7 pm -11 pm and is open to all 11th and 12th grade students.
- November 21 – All students and staff are encouraged to promote Teaneck High School by wearing Teaneck High School gear.
- November 21 – Our Homecoming Pep Rally will begin at 4:30 on Wednesday followed by the annual bon fire. Alumni and parents are encouraged to attend this annual event. The Homecoming Court will be announced, and this year the students vote on Google classroom.
- November 22 –The Homecoming game will take place in Hackensack this year. The annual parade will begin at Hackensack Middle School on State Street and proceed to Hackensack High School. Kickoff is at 10:30 am. Everyone is invited to come out and support our team.

**Human Resource Management**

*Staff Vacancy Updates – see attached document*