

Superintendent's Report



May 15, 2019

Student & Staff Recognition

This evening we have a few special presentations to recognize some outstanding accomplishments of our students and staff. These include:

- Teaneck High School's Robotics Team – won second place in the state-wide 2019 Panasonic Creative Design Challenge (over 50 NJ high schools participated including public, private, regional and county high schools). Our team members (William Milun, Saima Jamal and Itai Epstein) received a scholarship of \$3,000.00 and electronics gifts from Panasonic Corporation.
- Ms. Margot Mack, Assistant Principal Teaneck High School, for being named Women's History Month Honoree by the Bergen County Commission on the Status of Women
- Ms. Barbara Finklestein, teacher at Benjamin Franklin Middle School, who won a \$4940 grant from The Fund For Teachers to attend the Creativity Workshop in Prague, Czechoslovakia in July.
- Ms. Germaine Tarver, English teacher at Thomas Jefferson Middle School, was selected to present at The New Jersey Department of Education's Statewide Equity Conference on July 31. The conference is designed to highlight educational expertise from across the state in order to share best practices and strengthen teaching
- Lilia Bose (10th grade) - the winner of the Fox Trail's Statewide Alzheimer's and Dementia Awareness Essay contest. As the essay contest winner, she will receive \$1500 each of her 4 years in college.

District Strategic Plan

We have conducted a thorough analysis of the rich data that we received from all stakeholders. To date, we have identified five priority areas as opportunities for improvement. These areas are: academic programming, infrastructure and facilities, communication and community partnerships, equity and inclusion, and talent acquisition, development and retention. We are now focused on crafting specific goals for each priority area.

I want to thank the steering committee for working arduously to craft both the mission and vision statements. The work that was produced from this meeting will serve as the foundation for finalizing our district's mission and vision. I look forward to sharing the completed plan in the weeks ahead.

FDU & TPS Summer Dual Enrollment Program

I am pleased to announce our latest collaborative college program – the Fairleigh Dickinson University & Teaneck Public Schools Dual Enrollment Summer Program. Through this program, Teaneck High School students (grades 9 – 12) will have the ability to take up to four FDU college courses at our high school for only \$250 per course. This offer is also available to our non-public high school students at a slightly higher price – but still a significant savings.

FDU and Teaneck Public Schools will be hosting an “Information Night” on Wednesday, May 29 at the Teaneck High School from 7 pm – 8 pm. At that time, interested students and parents can learn more about the summer program including the elective courses offered and the specific dates and times. They will also learn more about scholarships that will be available for qualifying Teaneck Public School students. We will recognize all participants with at the end of the program.

Pre-K Grant for 2019-2020

We have received State approval to proceed with our third preschool location with a contracted provider (AUCC Academy). This means our Pre-K program will be operating at three locations for the 2019-2020 school year. Each of these locations will be implementing a high quality preschool program, as set forth in the NJ State Implementation Guidelines and Code. Tools of the Mind will continue to be our chosen curriculum at all locations, and all teachers will continue receiving professional development to support its implementation. The pre-k lottery is now complete and notification letters will be sent home to all families by end of this week. For those who will receive acceptance letters, registration will take place – by appointment – between May 29 and June 14. For families who do not receive an acceptance letter, their child's name will be placed on our waitlist.

Superintendent's Advisory Committees

The six committees (Student, Faculty, Beyond Diversity, SEPAC, Faith-based and Student Code of Conduct Review) all provided summary reports of their work-to-date to be included in our Strategic Plan development. The Student Code of Conduct Review committee will be presenting at the June Board meeting. We continue to post the committee meeting notes on our website:

<http://www.teaneckschools.org/SuperintendentsMessagesandReports.aspx>

TOPS 5k and Color Run Event

I want to take a moment to thank the T.O.P.S. organization, their staff and all who came out on Sunday, May 5 for our second annual Teaneck 5k and Color Run. Despite the rain, we had an amazing turn-out – of all ages – and I believe everyone enjoyed the event.

Student Liaisons to the Board

This is our last evening with the 2018-2019 High School Student Liaisons to the Board. Before we hear their final updates, I would like to recognize all four students – Saima Jamal, Vernon Johnson, Stephanie Menendez, and William MacIntosh – for their leadership and monthly contributions this past year:

Curriculum & Instruction*Athletics:*

- Girls Track - The 800m Sprint Medley has qualified for the New Balance High School National Championship, being held at North Carolina A&T University on June 15th.
- Softball participated in the BCWCA County Tournament and has earned the 10th seed in the North 1 Group 3 State Tournament
- Boys Volleyball participated in the Bergen County Tournament and will be participating in the North 1 Group 3 State Tournament
- Two of our boys volleyball players have accepted the opportunity to continue their playing career in college. Charles Pampliega will be playing at The College of St. Elizabeth. Manuel Peralta will be playing at John Jay University.

ESL:

On May 9, the after-school ESL club at Bryant School, celebrated reading and writing by authoring their own books and reading to different members of the community. Parents and family members gathered together to listen to the children read and to watch students present using the school's smart board. The afternoon ended with families enjoying light refreshments in the Bryant School garden. Please join

us on Wednesday, May 22 as we close the 2018-2019 school year with a district-wide learning celebration facilitated by both teachers and students.

Community Relations & Volunteer Services

Over this past month, this department has been focused on the completion of the 2019-2020 kindergarten registration (over 170 children registered by May 10 deadline), the processing of over 200 pre-k applications, and the oversight of the interview process for several leadership positions.

Other notable current projects include:

- The BergenPAC "Chasing the Dragon" assembly (about use of opioids), took place on May 13 with our 9th and 10th grade students.
- Superintendent Video messages – the second of three video messages was released this week. This one focused on the FDU & TPS Summer Dual Enrollment program.
- Meeting on May 7 with Bergen Community College to explore more dual enrollment options and their "Early College Program" for our high school students
- Teacher of the Year Reception – planning underway for the special reception on June 12
- Camp K Hiring and Registration – we completed interviews for the director and assistant director. Email and Facebook posts were issued to promote camp registration.
- The Supervisor of Community Relations will be attending Bloomfield College's annual President's Dinner being held at the Cedar Hill Golf and Country Club on Thursday, May 16.

Technology

The majority of NJSLA is complete. Most schools have completed, or are close to completing, the English Language Arts and Mathematics tests. Grades 5, 8, and 11 will have to complete Science testing this month. I am pleased to report that there have been no significant issues, and testing has been very successful.

Teaneck Public Schools will soon be using Gaggle software to help keep our student's content safe on Google. Gaggle identifies inappropriate words and images in the G-Suite for Education platform and notifies designated people for review. The safety management software will be used to review content 24/7 to ensure our students are safe. A memo will be sent home to all parents and guardians.

Bryant Elementary School

Recent and upcoming activities/events at Bryant include:

- Bryant school presented its last FLIP's (Families Learning In Partnership for Success) meeting of the year. About 40 parents from Bryant and TELC came out to hear presentations on "Transitioning to the next grade". Parents had a chance to see classrooms and curricula materials and hear from current teachers. Many questions were answered and the presentation can be found on the Bryant school website. Several teacher volunteered to support this event so we could provide different classrooms for the varied grades.
- We are teaching the final character trait of the year which is "Perseverance" (Guidance Program). To highlight this trait, Career Day Thursdays have been held during the month of May. Parents and Community members have been presenting interactive and exciting to K classrooms. During May, the school was visited by a doctor, two nurses, a cartoonist, and a sign language interpreter. We look forward to having a Grammy award-winning guitarist and cardiologist in the coming weeks. Pictures were posted on Bryant's Facebook page

- There are two upcoming shows for Bryant families: Pre-K classes will present "Swimmy" on May 16 and kindergarten students will perform on May 22.
- On May 30, kindergarten students will visit their "next school" from 9 am - 11am. In the meantime, Bryant will host an open house for all incoming kinder families. Families will have an opportunity to visit Bryant and hear an interactive presentation, sign up for PTO and various committees, and meet the school's support staff.

Hawthorne Elementary School

Recent and upcoming activities/events at Hawthorne include:

- Hawthorne had a blast raising over \$500 for the 4th grade class at their Tape The Principal To The Wall event! Over 550 pieces of duct tape were applied to Mr. Jennette.
- NJSLA (formerly PARCC) testing is taking place May 6 – 23. .
- The school celebrated Teacher Appreciation Week (May 6-10) and School Nurse Appreciation Day on May 8.
- Several special events have taken place this month including a 4th grade field trip to Waterloo Village, Kindergarten field trip to Farmstead Estates, 1st grade field trip to Meadowlands Environment Center.
- On May 15, the Hawthorne Art Around the World student art show combined with the PTA Ice Cream Social will take place from 6pm – 8:30pm; and the Hawthorne Spring Dance/Art To Remember Event from 7pm – 9pm.
- During the week of May 20, the school will host the SUEZ "H2O Olympics" presentation for the 4th grade and the K-4 Family Engagement Literacy Night (7pm – 8pm on May 23).
- Mr. Jennette is currently preparing the Hawthorne 2019/2020 Title I School Wide Grant.

Whittier Elementary School

Recent and upcoming events/activities at Whittier include:

- NJSLA Testing took place from May 1 through May 13 in ELA and Math for all third and fourth grade students.
- Whittier School's National Elementary Honor Society has organized a "Mix It Up" Lunch on Tuesday, May 14. The objective is for students to interact with people outside of their circle of friends to promote acceptance, respect, kindness and a stronger sense of community.
 - Kindergarten Students are taking a trip to Flat Rock Brook Nature Center in Englewood. Students will learn how weather affects animals, plants and humans.
 - Fourth Grade students will take a trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art where they will have the opportunity to explore the Museum and view various artworks/artists that they have been studying throughout the year. The students of the National Honor Society, TAG and 4th Grade Ambassadors will take a walking trip to Benjamin Franklin Middle School to participate in a Humanitarian Conference run by the TAG students of the middle school. This will be a collaboration across grade levels to discuss ways to be more involved in both their local and global community.
 - Students in Grade 2 will visit the Tenafly Nature Center to learn about habitats and pond ecology. National Honor Society students will visit The Seeing Eye—a philanthropic organization whose goal is to enhance the independence and confidence of blind people through the use of Seeing Eye Dogs. Students will learn about the needs of those with

- visual impairments through hands-on activities and experience how people and animals provide important service needs.
- Ed Walsh Field will take place on May 29 at the Rothman Center at FDU for all special education students. This event teaches students about sportsmanship, cooperation and teamwork through competitive activities.
- Kindergarten visits and Middle School visits will take place at the end of the month. Thomas Jefferson Middle School and Benjamin Franklin Middle School will host parent information nights for the parents/guardians of current fourth grade students on May 30.
- The Whittier PTO will be hosting a Spring Someone Special Dance on May 17.
- This month's PTO meeting is scheduled for May 28.

Benjamin Franklin Middle School

Recent and upcoming activities/events at BFMS include:

- On May 10, there was a Student of the Month ceremony in honor of students who were nominated for demonstrating strong commitment.
- The quarterly Student Recognition ceremony will be held on May 14 in honor of students who earned honorable mention, honor roll, and principal's honor roll. This ceremony will be held prior to the PTO meeting on that evening.
- The beautiful sounds of the performing arts department will be in full bloom during the spring concert on May 16.
- The NJHS will be hosting a humanitarian conference on May 17.
- On May 21, their 8th graders will be participating in the annual track meet at Teaneck High School. Students will compete in various track events.
- 8th graders will be wearing their finest at the 8th grade dinner dance at the Glenpointe Marriott on May 23. On that date, the 5th graders will be traveling to Van Cortlandt park for a field trip.
- One of the school's female empowerment groups, DREAMS, will be visiting Care One and offering community service on May 28. On that same date, they will be celebrating their parents with a Parents Appreciation Ceremony. Parents will receive honorary degrees, as participants of Parents University, and other mementos. This year, there will be a cruise theme.
- BFMS students will be participating in the Ed Walsh Memorial Field Day on May 29.
- Also on May 29, the dance and drama program will be showcasing their performances during the school day and the evening.
- On May 30, the school will host 4th grade visitors during the day. This visit entails a presentation, as well as a school tour. In the evening, they will hold their 4th grade parent visit.
- The annual Men's and Women's Day will take place on May 31. The Student Council-sponsored Brain Challenge will take place on that date as well.

Thomas Jefferson Middle School

Recent and upcoming activities/events at TJMS include:

- NJSLA testing took place at Thomas Jefferson Middle School April 29 –May 3 for grades 5 – 8. NJSLA science testing for grades 5 and 8 took place May 7–10. The school thanks their staff and the Technology Department.
- On May 3, assemblies were held for all grades to familiarize students with Ramadan and answer any questions they may have about it. Ms. Odatalla met with Ms. Arjumand, a former Board

member, to discuss this program to provide information to the students regarding Ramadan. The program was very well received.

- The TOPS 5K and 1K Color Run took place on May 5. A team from Thomas Jefferson Middle School participated in the event.
- On May 9, Ms. Taylor, social studies teacher, took a group of her students on a field trip to the African Burial Grounds in New York. The feedback was very positive from the students and staff who attended.
- The Third Marking Period Honor Roll Ceremony was held on May 9. Many family members attended the celebration.
- On May 9, 8th grade students and their families were invited to attend Teaneck High School's 8th grade Transition Night.
- The Food Advisory Committee Meeting will take place on May 14. Twelve students and staff members will meet with Kristen Appel from Food Services to discuss ways to improve school lunches. The committee had previously met in October 2018.
- On May 15, Ms. Szalay's Forensic Science class will go on a field trip to the BCI Building in Hackensack.
- Ms. Spadaro and Mr. Lane will be showcasing the talents of the Dance and Drama students in a performance on May 16 at 7:00 p.m.
- Dr. Bush and the Environmental Activist Club will be hosting twenty-minute Earth Day assemblies for each grade throughout the afternoon on May 21.
- The May PTO Meeting will take place on May 21st at 7:00 p.m. in the Cafeteria, which will include a Math Night for parents and students.
- On May 22, progress reports will be available on Skyward.
- On May 23, Ms. Tarver, a Language Arts/Literacy teacher, will be taking a number of 8th grade students on a field trip to see *To Kill a Mockingbird* in New York, NY.
- The spring Vocal/Instrumental Concert will take place on May 23 at 7:00 pm.
- Several students will be participating in this year's Ed Walsh Field Day will be held at Fairleigh Dickenson University on May 29.
- Twirling demonstrations by Ms. Mayer's Teaneck High School students will be given after school on May 29 and May 30 for 8th graders interested in trying out for the Twirling Team at the high school for next year.
- On May 30, 4th grader students from Hawthorne, Lowell and Whittier Schools will visit Thomas Jefferson and spend the morning in TJMS' 5th grade classrooms.
- Vocal and instrumental music students will be competing at the High Note Festival in Freehold on May 30.
- The school's annual Walk & Talk for the families of incoming fourth graders will take place on May 30 at 6:00 – 7:30 p.m. starting in the auditorium. They will take a tour of the building and visit fifth grade classrooms.
- Also on May 30, Ms. Connors, Ms. Iappelli and Ms. Roberts will host a Family Summer Reading Meeting in the Cafeteria at 6:30 p.m.
- DEAR Time (Drop Everything And Read) will take place for 10 minutes (Period 7) on May 30.

Teaneck High School

Recent and upcoming activities/events at THS include:

- On Monday, April 29, THS hosted the cast of “Bruce!” an independently produced movie that has garnered such accolades as The American Black Film Festival (Best Director), Urban World Film Festival, and the Audience Award (HBO). Among the cast is THS alumni, Ysmael Reyes (Class of 2006) who was also Associate Producer on the film. He brought with him Cesar Pledger (Actress/AP), Jean Goto (Actress), and Eden Marryshow (Writer/Director/Actor). The discussion was moderated by Mrs. Green and Mr. Murphy. The cast share their journey from high school to careers, along with the trailer for Bruce! and participated in a Q & A with THS students.
- Teaneck High School Dance Ensemble presented “Love Is the Answer” on May 10 and 11. This was Ms. Bettina Peets’ first production as the THS Dance Ensemble teacher.
- Ally Week! Students were able to take the pledge to be an Ally to the LGBTIQA community throughout the week of May 6 – May 10. Taking the pledge means:
 - Not using anti-LGBTIQA-language or slurs
 - Intervening , if you safely can, in situations where students are harassed
 - Supporting efforts to end bullying and harassment
- The Heroes and Cool Kids are going to have their last mentoring workshop for the 2018-2019 school year with the 6th grade students at Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin Middle School on May 16.
- H.E.A.L will host their 8th Annual Powder Puff Football game on the Teaneck High School Football field on June 5 starting at 4:30 pm. Girls from each grade compete in touch football. A portion of the proceeds will go to Breast Cancer Research.
- Senior Prom will be held at the Westmount Country Club on May 22 from 7 pm to 11:30pm.

Human Resource Management

Staff Vacancy Updates – see attached document