



# WEEKLY WEDNESDAY UPDATES

May 22, 2024 Edition

## A Message From Dr. Spencer

Dear Teaneck Families,

It is a thrill and delight to bring greetings to our extraordinary community. Undoubtedly, Teaneck Public Schools are committed to the educational excellence of all scholars. Although we are not perfect, we truly aim to create an environment that is attentive, responsive, and committed to our stakeholders. We want the inclusive environment that we pursue to create a safe and conducive school district and community. For this reason, we encourage each of you to join us in our efforts to unite our school communities.

In hopes of encouraging you to become a partner in the work of educating our scholars, I would like to share a few accomplishments:

- We have established an Early College High School program that encourages the participation of all learners.
- We have organized multiple groups of 25 scholars to participate in Togetherness and Belonging: Safe Spaces for All training sessions with the NJ Division on Civil Rights.
- We have established an International Baccalaureate World School program at Whittier Elementary School and a Health Science Magnet program at Hawthorne Elementary School.
- We have arranged scholar-centered mediation sessions to discuss respect, acceptance, and conflict resolution.
- We have held numerous musical performances displaying the diverse talents and accomplishments of our scholars.

These accomplishments are possible because of the dedication and commitment of adults like you. For this reason, I want to say, "Thank You!"

As I stated in this letter, we are not perfect. Nonetheless, I strongly believe that we are better together.

Educationally Yours,  
Andre D. Spencer, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

## 60 Year Anniversary Integration

The 60th anniversary of the integration of Teaneck Township, NJ, marks a significant event in the history of civil rights in the United States. On May 13, 1964, Teaneck made history by becoming the first community in the United States to desegregate its public schools through a community-led effort voluntarily.

Before this milestone, Teaneck, like many other communities across the nation, struggled with racial segregation in its schools and society at large. However, in the early 1960s, fueled by the burgeoning civil rights movement and a growing awareness of racial injustice, Teaneck residents from diverse backgrounds came together to challenge the status quo and advocate for change.

The integration movement gained momentum. Led by a coalition of concerned citizens, including parents, educators, clergy members, and activists, it worked tirelessly to promote racial harmony and equality in Teaneck through grassroots organizing, advocacy campaigns, and community dialogue.

One of the pivotal moments in this journey occurred on May 13, 1964, when the Teaneck Board of Education officially voted to implement a voluntary integration plan for its public schools. This groundbreaking decision was met with praise and criticism, reflecting the complex dynamics surrounding issues of race and education during that era.

The integration process was not without challenges, as it required overcoming deep-seated prejudices, institutional resistance, and logistical hurdles. However, the collective determination and collaboration of Teaneck residents prevailed, setting an inspiring example for other communities striving for racial integration and social justice.

The integration of Teaneck's schools marked a significant step forward in the fight against racial segregation and discrimination, illustrating the power of grassroots activism and community solidarity in effecting positive change. It serves as a reminder of the ongoing struggle for racial equality and the importance of upholding the principles of inclusivity, diversity, and justice in our society.



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## Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month, which occurs annually in May, dismantles stigmas and fosters a deeper comprehension of mental health. Through advocacy, education, and support, it facilitates discussions and initiatives prioritizing mental well-being for all.

Mental Health Awareness Month is not just about acknowledging the prevalence of mental health conditions; it's about challenging the stigma surrounding them. Mental health issues affect millions of people worldwide, irrespective of age, gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status. Yet, many still hesitate to seek help or discuss their struggles due to fear of judgment or discrimination.

Founded in 1949 by Mental Health America (MHA), this observance has grown into a global movement, rallying individuals, organizations, and communities to advocate for mental health awareness, support, and resources.

### How can you help:

- Educate yourself about mental health.
- Start open conversations with friends and family.
- Support those facing mental health challenges.
- Get involved in local mental health initiatives.

**Let's stand together, Team Teaneck!** On Thursday, May 30th, let's proudly wear **GREEN** to conclude Mental Health Month on a positive note by demonstrating our support.



**BE SEEN IN GREEN**



## ED School Climate Survey (EDSCLS)

Parents of students enrolled at BFMS, TJMS, and THS, you recently received an email from Mr. Paul Morgan. You received the email because we need your perspective on school climate as part of federally funded activities to improve the schools. Students and staff are also participating in similar surveys. Your opinion is important. Please make sure you check your email and follow the link to participate in the survey. Please fill out the survey by May 31, 2024.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### Half Day - May 24 / District Closed - May 27



Teaneck Public Schools will have a Half Day/Early Dismissal on May 24. Please check the WEBSITE for the Early Dismissal schedule.

The District will be closed on Monday, May 27, in observance of Memorial Day.

Come out to the Teaneck Municipal Green on Monday, May 27 for the Annual Teaneck Memorial Day Ceremony. Music for the ceremony will be performed by the Teaneck High School Band.

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**TEANECK  
MEMORIAL DAY  
CEREMONY**  
11:00 AM  
**TEANECK  
MUNICIPAL GREEN**  
MONDAY, MAY 27, 2024  
Music by the Teaneck High School Band  
beginning at 10:45  
REMEMBER AND HONOR

## Whittier's Museum of Art - May 30, 2024

This event is a celebration of the artistic achievements of our students, who have poured their hearts and imaginations into creating stunning works of art.

Join us for an evening filled with creativity, inspiration, and community spirit. Meet the young artists behind the artwork, engage in lively discussions about their creative process, and immerse yourself in the beauty of their creations.

Coming soon! Save the date!!

**Whittier's  
Museum of Art**

**May 30, 2024  
6:00 - 8:00pm**

Location:  
2nd floor hallway- outside of  
the art room.  
Room 208

Refreshments served!



## Coalition of Neighborhood Associations for a Better Teaneck

It's a potluck picnic in support of Teaneck Public Schools! Join the Coalition of Neighborhood Associations for a Better Teaneck as they sponsor their 1st Annual Potluck picnic. The event will take place on Sunday, June 9th, from 2pm to 6pm at Votee Park. Come and meet other Teaneck families. Enjoy an afternoon filled with student performances, games, prizes, giveaways, and more.



## ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Bergen County Teen Arts 2024 - May 17, 2024



This past Friday, Bergen County celebrated its annual Teen Arts 2024 event, showcasing the incredible talents of young artists from across the region. The festival featured captivating performances by students from Benjamin Franklin Middle School (BFMS) and Thomas Jefferson Middle School (TJMS). Highlights included dynamic dance routines by BFMS Dance, engaging theatrical performances by TJMS Theatre, and stirring musical presentations by the BFMS Concert Band, TJMS Concert Chorus, TJMS Concert Band, TJMS Orchestra, and BFMS Orchestra. In addition to the performances, students attended workshops in all these fields, gaining valuable insights and honing their skills under the guidance of experienced professionals. The event was a vibrant display of creativity and skill, leaving audiences inspired and proud of the artistic accomplishments of our youth.

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to visit the Teaneck Visual and Performing Arts Webpage.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Approved 2024-2025 District Calendar

The Board of Education has approved the 2024-2025 District Calendar. The calendar can be found on the District Website page or by [CLICKING HERE](#)

## Congratulations to our Winter All League All County Athletes

To all our Winter All-League All County Athletes, congratulations! Your dedication, hard work, and sportsmanship have showcased our community's athletic talent throughout the season. You have exemplified the values of teamwork, perseverance, and excellence. Your achievements have not only earned you recognition but also inspired those around you. Remember to cherish the memories made and the friendships forged, and continue to strive for excellence in all your future endeavors. For a list of our Winter All-League All County Athletes, please [CLICK HERE](#)

