

Southeast Delco School District

Board & Community Update

School Director Recognition Month

The Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA) has reaffirmed a resolution approved on July 18, 1985 designating January as School Director Recognition Month. They further resolved that, “this proclamation be communicated to all school districts, school officials, and local communities in a planned program which brings visibility and awareness of the role of locally elected school officials to the citizenry of this commonwealth.”

In support of that resolution, PSBA has awarded certificates honoring each board member for volunteering their time and talent for the betterment of public education in their community. In addition, they have published information highlighting little known facts about school boards and school directors.

Did you know?

- The “typical” Pennsylvania school director is male, well-educated, 55 – 59 years of age, married with two children attending public schools, and voluntarily devotes 16 – 20 hours per month to school board business
- The number of female school directors in 2014 was 35%
- 16% are retirees, 6% are homemakers, 9% are self-employed or business owners, and 5% are office supervisors
- 57% of all districts involve students at their local board meetings
- All board members are elected to four-year terms
- All school directors serve as volunteers, without pay

Breakfast at Applebee's

The Academy Park Knights are hosting a pancake breakfast to support the Academy Park football team. The event will be held on Sunday, January 18th at 8:00 to 10:00 AM at Applebee's Restaurant, 320 MacDade Boulevard in Folsom, PA. Tickets can be purchased for \$7 and are available at the door.

If you want a good breakfast, at a reasonable price, served by some great people, in a pleasant environment, while supporting a great cause, come out and join us at Applebee's.



Budget Time-Line

The Southeast Delco School District has begun its planning process for the 2015 / 2016 school year budget. As with all Pennsylvania school districts, Southeast Delco is obligated to follow the budget timeline outlined in Act 1, which was passed in 2006. Listed below are the steps all district adhere to in its planning process:

- September 2014 – the state publishes the district’s tax index for the upcoming school year. The index is the maximum percentage that the district can increase property taxes.
- January 2015 – the district creates a *preliminary* budget and makes it available for public inspection or agrees not to raise taxes above the index mandated by the state.
- February 2015 – the deadline to adopt the *preliminary* budget unless a resolution has been adopted to not exceed the index.
- March 2015 – the deadline for homeowners to apply for the homestead exclusion for a reduction in their property taxes.
- April 2015 – a public presentation is provided by the district on the *proposed* final budget for the upcoming school year. The school board must vote on the *proposed* final budget at the April board meeting.
- May 2015 – the *final* budget is available for review by the public and the school board votes on the *final* budget at the May board meeting. The district has currently scheduled the vote for May 2015, but by state law, the *final* budget must be voted on no later than June 30, 2015.

As always, the district appreciates public input and support during the budget planning process. If you have any questions about the 2015 / 2016 budget, please plan on attending the public presentation of the *proposed* final budget in April.

District Audit

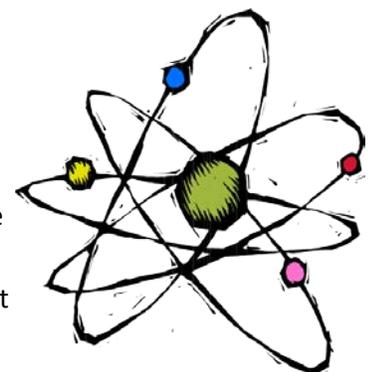
Barbacane, Thornton & Company LLP completed the 2013 / 2014 audit of the district’s financial statements. The responsibility of the district’s local auditor is to plan and perform an audit to ensure the district’s financial statements are free from errors or misstatements. The audit also evaluates the district’s accounting policies, accounting estimates, and budget. The audit found no material misstatements due to fraud or errors.

Ms. Pam Baker, partner, at Barbacane, Thornton & Company LLP presented the audit results and discussed key points at the board committee of the whole meeting on January 15th. The board of school directors will vote to approve the audit report at the school board meeting on January 22nd. Once approved, the audit report will be available for review on the district website at www.sedelco.org and at the Educational Service Center, 1560 Delmar Drive in Folcroft.

Curriculum

Science Pilots K-8

Ten teachers across the grades K-8 schools are piloting Science Fusion from Houghton Mifflin-Harcourt for the second semester. Teachers had written narratives discussing the positive and negative aspects of the Pearson Science series they piloted in the first semester. In April, the pilot team will meet to recommend to the board which series best meets the needs of our students.



Two teachers in the high school English department are piloting Collections and the Holt Anthology as possibilities for new resources in English / Language Arts. The Pearson Anthology was piloted during the first semester. They will also meet in April to make a recommendation to the board on the series that will most challenge and support our students.

High school chemistry and biology continue to pilot a different text for the second semester. Recommendations will then be directed to the board as to which text suits students' needs. Curriculum will be revised to reflect all pilot conclusions.

For the 2015 / 2016 school year, the district curriculum cycle will be reviewing social studies texts and curriculum. Samples will be reviewed with teachers deciding which of the sample series to pilot in September of next year.

New Math Councils Formed

Dr. Watson asked principals to make recommendations for math teachers to become part of the Elementary and Secondary Math Councils. The purpose of these Councils is to be a professional learning community in math, to seek, learn, and share best practices and current research in math teaching. Meetings will be held in February.

National Geographic Bees to Be Held

Our grades K-8 middle schools participated in the National Geographic Bees in January. The building winners will be administered a written test to acquire qualification for the state competition.

Report Card Revision

The report card revision committee met on January 15 to review how the grades K-2 draft was received by parents during their most recent parent-teacher conferences in November. Discussions on extending this draft into grades 3-5 for the next school year will also be held.



Professional Development

Darby Township teachers, Mary Cait Fogel and Nicole Bourque, principal, Ashwina Mosakowski and Dr. Monica Watson attended a training on January 9th entitled How To Teach Teachers To Write Text-Dependent Questions. This instruction is of vital importance because 20% of the reading PSSA will be devoted to answering text-dependent questions. The team will turn around the training to district reading specialists on January 22nd, who in turn work with all teachers in grades 4-8 to develop this teacher skill on February 13th.

Induction was held on January 14th and the group of twenty-seven teachers is reading and discussing "Teach Like a Champion" by Doug Lemov. This book shares 49 powerful strategies that teachers can implement immediately to strengthen their teaching and classroom management skills.

Plans for the February half-day professional development time will focus on teachers analyzing their recent data and revising their teaching plans and groups; teachers in grades 3-8 will also view the 2015 PSSA webinar. High school social studies and English departments will be meeting with REACH's Kathie Orsorio to develop reading strategies, while the other departments are going to review students' samples from their Writing to Learn initiative.

February 13th is shaping up to be a complex professional development day. The following topics will be presented: Safety Cares; Paraprofessional Competencies; How to Deal with Grieving Children; Think Alouds; READ 180 Training; Act 126 Child Abuse Training; Feedback on Teacher Feedback Training; PSSA Preparations;

Class DOJO; Sharing Small Group Reading Ideas; Middle School Science Fair, Teacher Specific Data and PVAAS Updating, and How to Write Text Dependent Questions.

New Laws Regarding Employee Clearances

Act 153 of 2014, which was signed by Governor Corbett in November 2014, requires all current employees to provide updated clearances to their respective employer every three years. This means each employee must provide updated Pennsylvania State Police criminal history, Pennsylvania child abuse history, and FBI criminal background checks throughout their tenure with the district.



Act 153 has clearly defined when the employee must submit their clearances. If an employee was hired before clearances were required or their current background checks are less than 36 months old as of December 31, 2014 (dated after 12/31/2011), the employee will have to provide new clearances within 36 months of the most recent check. For example, if the clearances are dated January 1, 2013, those checks will have to be updated before January 1, 2016.

If the employee was hired before clearances were required or their background checks are older than 36 months (dated prior to 12/31/2011), the employee has to provide updated clearances by December 31, 2015.

The passage of this act will also require updates to board policy numbers 304 and 821, contained within the employee and operations sections of the board policy manual for employees and policy number 908.1 in the community section of the manual, as this law also applies to volunteers. The policies will be updated upon receipt of pertinent information from PSBA.

Security and Technology

As reported in a previous update, one of the tasks the public safety department is working on is the upgrading of the closed circuit television system (CCTV) in all district schools. This project will extend over several years, allowing the district to plan for the expansion of system capabilities and equipment upgrades, while optimizing technological advances and managing costs.

The first step in the process was to inventory the district's equipment and to determine its condition and life expectancy, as well as define our current and future infrastructure capabilities. Working with Andrew Torres in the technology department, most of this work has been accomplished.

Our next step is to conduct a gap analysis. After determining our goals for the future of our CCTV system (5 to 10 years out), the gap analysis will establish what will be needed to accomplish those goals. Sentinel Consulting has been working with the district to provide this analysis and to assist in defining our future steps. The Sentinel group has now spent several days in district gathering information, reviewing the CCTV equipment and systems, conducting tests, and evaluating our current infrastructure's capabilities. The final gap analysis report will be provided to the district by the end of the month.

Future Board Meetings

Board Business Meeting	Thursday, January 22, 2015	7:00 PM
Committee of the Whole	Thursday, February 19, 2015	6:00 PM
Board Business Meeting	Thursday, February 26, 2015	7:00 PM

School Events

- ***Martin Luther King Holiday – Monday, January 19th – No School for Students or Staff***
- End of 2nd Marking Period / 1st Semester – Friday, January 23rd
- Middle School Science Fair – Tuesday, January 27th – 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM at Academy Park High School
- Academy Park High School – Student / Faculty Volleyball Tournament – Wednesday, January 28th – 6:00 PM
- Academy Park High School – Back to School Night 2nd Semester – Tuesday, February 3rd – 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
- ***Early Dismissal – Wednesday, February 4th – APHS / 11:00 AM – Grades K – 8 / 12:45 PM***
- ***Teacher In-service Day – Friday, February 13th – No School for Students***
- ***Presidents’ Day Holiday – Monday, February 16th – No School for Students or Staff***
- Sharon Hill School – Student Council Pancakes @ Applebee’s Fundraiser – Ridley, PA – Saturday, February 21st – 8:30 AM – 11:00 AM
- Academy Park High School – Sports Physicals – Tuesday, February 24th – 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
- Progress Notices Issued – Friday, February 27th
- Read Across America – Monday, March 2nd – All grades 1 – 8 Schools and Kindergarten Center
- ***Teacher In-service Day – Wednesday, March 4th – No School for Students***
- District Honor Band & Chorus – Wednesday, March 11th – 7:00 PM – APHS Auditorium
- Sharon Hill School – Bingo / Pizza Night – Wednesday, March 11th – 6:00 PM – 8:30 PM
- Kindergarten Center – Making Music Assembly – Friday, March 13th – 10:00 AM
- End of Marking Period – Tuesday, March 31st