

Southeast Delco School District

Board & Community Update



Read Across America Day

"You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read to a child."

All Southeast Delco grades 1 – 8 schools and the Kindergarten Center will join with thousands of schools from all around the country to celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday on Read Across America Day. This

year's celebration will be held on Monday, March 2nd and each school will stage a variety of Dr. Seuss themed events. Would anyone like some green eggs and ham?

Board members, district administrators, community members, non-teaching staff, and high school students are invited to serve as guest readers. If you would like to join the festivities and share the joy of reading with our students, please contact the school of your choice to volunteer.

Federal Programs

Federal Programs, which oversees Title I and Title II funding, is preparing for the 2015 / 2016 school year. While allocations will not be announced for several months, planning begins now for students in non-public schools who receive Title I services.

Each spring, the district sends letters to every non-public school in the area. The purpose of this communication is to determine which students in non-public schools, living within the Southeast Delco attendance area, are eligible for services under the law. Once eligibility at each area school is determined and the allocation for next year is announced, the district completes its consolidated application. Once the application is approved, it allows for funds to be sent to the Delaware County Intermediate Unit, which provides the services to the eligible students.

Board Policies

The district is awaiting the latest release of policy updates from the Pennsylvania School Boards Association (PSBA.) The district partners with the association to keep its adopted board policies current. Each quarter, PSBA analyzes the latest state and federal regulations and revises the policies they provide to school districts to reflect any changes. Southeast Delco uses the information to create new policies or update existing policies based on their recommendations. It is expected that PSBA will release its first quarterly review later this month. Once released, the administration and school board will consider adopting the updates.

Promoting Healthy Lifestyles

The Wellness Committee has completed its first major offering to faculty and staff. During the weeks between Thanksgiving and New Year's the committee sponsored a contest called *Maintain Don't Gain*. The concept was that a person stays at the same weight over the course of the contest; resisting all of the holiday cookies, pies, and cakes. We had 125 employees participate, approximately 20% of our entire staff.



Employees who maintained or lost weight were included in a raffle drawing and names were selected randomly to receive a prize. Prizes included a \$25.00 Visa gift card, one month membership to Extreme Gym, an autographed Philadelphia Flyers mini helmet with a certificate of authenticity, and Dr. Ann's Eat Right for Life Cookbook, Cookbook Companion, and lunch tote.

A second program will be held on March 4th where Independence Blue Cross will provide Biometric screenings to staff. Employees can have their total cholesterol, glucose, blood pressure, and heart rate checked, as well as their height, weight, body mass index (BMI), and waist circumference measured.

The Wellness Committee has eight members and meets every other month during the school year. This is the second year for the committee.

Autistic Support

So far, the 2014 / 2015 school year has been an exciting one for the district's autistic support team. With relocated classrooms, an additional teacher, two speech / language pathologists and more sensory items, the district's autistic support programs provide an enriching education that includes the necessary social supports that enable our students to make progress and continue to reach their individual potential. The addition of a parent support group, facilitated by Miss Susan Heaney and Mrs. Sarah Warner and supported by all of the teachers, has increased the home and school connection that has been an important element to the department's success.

The students have enjoyed two field trips this year; the first to Linvilla Orchards and then to Playhouse Bowling Lanes. The autistic support team also came together to participate in Delcroft's Red Ribbon Week Door Decorating Contest with a Halloween theme that took first prize!

Several students with autism spectrum disorders are attending responsive classroom (a social skills-based 'homeroom' program), content area classes, and related arts with their grade-level peers. Additionally, our students' peers have joined our classrooms for reading and social activities.

Within the individual classrooms, the autistic support team continues to thrive. Our youngest nine students receive instruction from veteran teacher, Miss Susan Heaney. They work daily on improving social and communication skills. Some are mastering letters, numbers, colors, and shapes, while others are working on reading and spelling and have started tackling addition. They can't wait for subtraction to enter the picture over the winter. They spent sensory time in December working on holiday projects for their families and enjoyed experimenting with new classroom supplies they received from a successful Donors Choose campaign. They are hoping to fund their next project soon, which includes a ball pit and several other exciting sensory products.

The next classroom, consisting of seven students in grades one and two, is taught by Ms. Danielle Visichio. Although Miss V, as she's known, is new to having her own classroom, in the past she has been a presence on the team as a substitute teacher dedicated to autistic support. During the beginning of this school year, Miss Visichio's students worked hard and have made tremendous progress in their reading and math skills. One student is even attending Mrs. Mary Pat Juisti's 1st grade classroom for reading. They enjoyed both field trips to Linvilla Orchards and Playhouse Lanes and were visited by Ronald McDonald and Chuck E. Cheese!

Next in age comes Mrs. Jill Schock's 2nd and 3rd grade classroom. There are seven students in Mrs. Schock's room, three of whom attend specials, responsive classroom, and reading with their peers in the regular education classroom. In addition, the children have participated in all Delcroft School assemblies. The year ended with lessons centered on the winter holidays – a gingerbread mini-lesson being the most enjoyable to date!

Continuing up in age we reach Mrs. Jennifer Livingston's 3rd (one girl) and 4th (seven boys) grades class. Her class is working hard on improving their fluency and comprehension skills in reading. In math, the class is learning to master their multiplication skills. Mrs. Livingston has fostered team-building strategies through various games that promote sharing and taking turns. While enjoyable, the recent bowling trip to Playhouse Lanes also contributed to building the students' social skills in a community setting. Additionally, the class has been learning about various winter holidays and each child has created a holiday A-Z book.

In Mrs. Sarah Warner's 4th through 6th grade class, nine students worked on following directions and expanding their knowledge. Three students achieved success in going to regular education classes for reading and math. Mrs. Warner has two additional students attending responsive classroom where they are busy making friends with their same-aged peers at Delcroft School. In the second semester we hope to include these students in specials, as well as lunch. Mrs. Warner's students' favorite activity this year was the bowling field trip where they were seen singing and dancing throughout the alley.

In its second year, the members of Mrs. Dianne Condon's middle school classroom (eight students in grades six through eight) have been navigating the challenges of adolescence while making respectful, responsible choices. The students are expected to utilize the strategies they've been taught throughout their years at

Delcroft School to show self-respect and regard for others. Also, Mrs. Condon emphasizes their role as models of appropriate behavior to the younger students in Delcroft's autistic support program who look up to these emerging teenagers. Presently, three 7th grade students attend English / language and related arts with their grade level peers; one of whom remains for reading intervention with her 7th grade class. One 6th grade student attends library with his same age peers where he developed a required Power Point project and assisted other children with theirs. We were all excited this fall when a student tried out for and made the 7th grade volleyball team!



The teachers are looking forward to their students' continued growth throughout the school year. Many will continue their own education through the Delaware County Intermediate Unit, which offers a monthly forum of highly relevant topics that will enable teachers to continue learning best practices from experts in the field of education for individuals with autism.

Facilities Updates

Planning is in the final stages for renovations to four restrooms at Delcroft School. Upgrades include energy efficient lighting, heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment, and "low flow" toilet and sink fixtures.

The projected costs for Natural Gas indicate the potential for a 14.2% reduction for the 2015 / 2016 school year.

The Southeast Delco School District plans to continue its participation in the *Demand Response* program for the 2015 / 2016 school year. The program is provided by electricity suppliers for the Northeastern section of the United States. This program provides an opportunity for businesses and school districts to gain significant revenue by agreeing to reduce energy usage in accordance with pre-arranged amounts.

Southeast Delco School District has participated in this program since 2009, illustrating our commitment to energy conservation and embarking on opportunities to provide alternate means of securing additional revenue.



Public Safety Department

Interviews for the vacant security officer position were conducted last week. Once reference checks are completed an offer will be made to the top candidate.

As reported in the October Board and Community Update, the Delaware County Intermediate Unit and the Delaware County District Attorney's Office collaborated on a project called *Delco School Safety NET*. The program provides a secure online and mobile platform for use by school administrators, staff, and emergency responders and is designed to provide immediate access to emergency response plans for each district and school in the county. The contract for the system was awarded to a company called Safe Plans, which has developed the Emergency Response Information Portal (ERIP) that will contain the emergency response plans.

On Monday, February 23rd teams from Academy Park High School and other participating districts will receive training on the ERIP system. The county has set a goal to have the emergency response plans for all high schools online before the start of the 2015 / 2016 school year.

Future Board Meetings

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

- Sharon Hill School – Student Council Pancakes @ Applebee’s Fundraiser – Ridley, PA – Saturday, February 21st – 8:30 AM – 11:00 AM
- Scripps Spelling Bee – Saturday, February 21st – 7:00 AM – 11:00 AM – Neumann University
- Academy Park High School – Sports Physicals – Tuesday, February 24th – 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM
- Seat Belt Assembly – Kindergarten Center – Friday, February 27th – 10:00 AM
- 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***
- Parent / Teacher Conferences – Grades K – 8 – March 4th – 1:30 PM – 7:00 PM
- 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
- ***Spring Break – Wednesday, March 1st – Monday, March 6th - No School for Students or Staff***