

# Southeast Delco School District

## *Board & Community Update*

### *Back to School*

#### *2013 / 2014 School Year Kicks Off*

Summer break has ended and students and staff have returned to the district to begin the 2013 / 2014 school year. Prior to welcoming students, the teaching staff attended two days of professional development.

Students in grades 1–9 returned to school on August 28<sup>th</sup>. Freshman at Academy Park had the entire school to themselves for their first day of high school on Wednesday and the day off on Thursday, when students in grades 10–12 returned for their first day.

The Kindergarten Center split the class and had boys report on Wednesday, August 28<sup>th</sup> and girls on Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>. All district schools were closed on Friday, August 30<sup>th</sup> and Monday, September 2<sup>nd</sup>. Students in all grades reported for school on Tuesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>.



### *Back to School for Southeast Delco Students*



*Academy Park High School*



*Darby Township School*



*Delcroft School*



*Harris School*



*Sharon Hill School*



*Kindergarten Center*

## *Annual Back-To-School Luncheon*

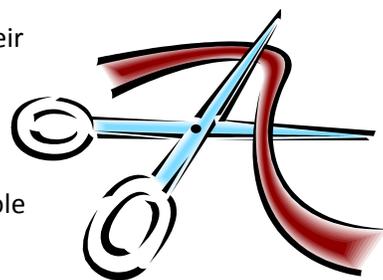
The First African Baptist Church celebrated the opening of the 2013 / 2014 school year and welcomed back district staff at their annual back to school luncheon on Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>. Former district teacher, Dolores Ellison, served as Mistress of Ceremonies and students who are also church members warmly welcomed and provided direction to each person as they arrived.

Under the theme of the “Southeast Delco Deli” parishioners provided a delicious buffet of soup, salads, and sandwiches, as well as a desert table that was overflowing with fruit, home-made cakes, peach cobbler, and bread pudding.

Many thanks go out to Reverend Dent and the congregation of the First African Baptist Church for their kindness and generosity. Southeast Delco is fortunate to have such a committed and caring community partner.

## *Save the Date for APHS Ribbon Cutting Ceremony*

Construction is rapidly ending and students and staff will be happy to continue their work in the beautifully renovated Academy Park High School. The ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the end of the three year project and the beginning of a shiny new life for the building has been scheduled for October 10<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM. The ceremony will be held prior to the regularly scheduled Committee of the Whole Meeting, which will also be held at Academy Park.



## *Students and Staff Return*

The new school year has gotten off to a smooth start, with each school freshly cleaned and in great shape to greet our eager, excited students and staff. Due to our before Labor Day start, transportation was able to begin their runs to district schools before adding all of the out of district locations during the first week of school.

Enrollment in district schools has increased over last year. Current enrollment is 4,125 students, with every school except one having more students enrolled than last year.

## *Parents as Educational Partners*

We hope that all of our parents, new and returning are able to attend the Back-to-School nights planned at each school. The district is facilitating additional avenues for parents and schools to partner for student success. We are continuing to build our Home Access Center, which allows parents to view their child’s attendance, grades, and discipline online.

We are also asking parents to participate in school-level and district-level strategic planning. Any parent who wishes to offer suggestions or would like to volunteer to help in any of our planning efforts should contact their child’s school. We value your input and encourage your participation.

## *Curriculum*

Teachers will introduce a new reading series to students in grades K–5 this school year. Middle school math teachers will present a new math series for general math and accelerated Pre-Algebra and Algebra I courses. New classroom library books were also purchased for grades K–5 classrooms.



Pat Alford, along with Dr. Watson, has been working with the General Manager of WalMart in Glenolden to provide back to school items for students in each of our six schools. Several administrators handed out brochures soliciting donations from shoppers at WalMart. The school items will be delivered to each of our six schools in the near future. Thank you WalMart!

Students have been instructed to submit their summer reading logs and projects by September 23<sup>rd</sup>. Teachers have been planning various prizes for those students who have completed all of their required summer reading and math assignments.

Music teachers in grades K–8 will receive 5 new guitars and 5 new keyboards for their music rooms this year. New sheet music has been ordered for the winter and spring elementary concerts.

### *Professional Development*

New Teacher Induction / Orientation was held on August 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> for the few teachers new to our district this school year. Teachers read *The First Days of School: How to Be an Effective Teacher*, by Harry Wong and learned how to create routines and procedures to make the first weeks of school go smoothly.

Teachers had a full day of district professional development on August 26<sup>th</sup> and a full day of building-level meetings on August 27<sup>th</sup>. Various topics to improve skills were presented for teachers at the district level and principals developed material tailored to the needs of his or her building on the second day of in-service training.

Twenty-two teachers were trained in the *Leveled Literacy Intervention* by Fountas and Pinnell on September 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Teachers began with grades K–2 levels last year and found the program to be successful in intervention classes for getting children up to grade level in reading comprehension. With that success, the district has decided to also implement LLI (Leveled Literacy Intervention) in grades 3 and 4. This system is for students that are 1 ½ to 2 years below their grade’s reading level. Reading interventionists work with small groups of three students to catch them up with 18–24 weeks of intensive instruction.



### *Special Education Highlights*

The first couple of weeks of the new school year have been very exciting for the special education department. The Kindergarten Center welcomed over 40 new students who received early intervention services through the intermediate unit. Now that these students have entered the school-aged program they will be reevaluated to determine if they continue to require specially designed instruction.

### *Autistic Support*

Can you believe the district is starting the fifth year of having an in-district autistic support program? The program began in 2009 with just one teacher, Sue Heaney, and 13 students. At the start of the 2013 / 2014 school year, the program enrollment was 47 students in grades K–6. Seven of the students in the program came from early intervention this year.

Due to the high number of students enrolled in the program, a fifth class has been added. The new class is designed to provide middle school programming for students in grades 6–8. Ms. Diane Condon, previously an emotional support teacher at Sharon Hill School, was transferred to the new middle school autistic support classroom, which is housed at Delcroft School. Ms. Condon is highly qualified in all content areas and earned an autism certificate this past year.

### *Community Classroom News*

The community classroom is beginning its second year. Three classes at the high school use the community classroom on a weekly basis. The students learn how to cook, clean, manage, and care for a home, providing students with necessary life skills to be successful as they transition to adulthood. The students plan menus on a weekly basis, shop for necessary items, and prepare meals.

The community classroom is sad to announce that their beloved pet guinea pig, Leo, died this summer due to complications related to pneumonia. Leo was truly loved and will be missed. The students received a new pet guinea pig from Ms. Brown at the beginning of this school year. The new piggy's name is Cookie Dough. He is a spry 2 year old male calico guinea pig and the students are very excited about their new pet. They enjoy walking Cookie Dough on his leash, taking turns grooming him, and making sure his cage is cleaned.



### *Gifted Students Offer Support*

The gifted program is working on developing a partnership with the District's special education programs this school year. Ms. Colleen DiMaggio has established a relationship with *Pals for Life*. This program provides service animal visits to students with disabilities. One of their programs is *Reading to Rover*. This program consists of *Pals for Life* bringing up to twenty service dogs to the school and having children with disabilities read to the dogs. The dogs enjoy being read to and do not criticize the children if they cannot read well. The gifted students will buddy with the students in the autistic, life skills, and emotional support programs.

### *Transition Planning*

The district has been assigned to an indicator 13 cohort monitoring process. Indicator 13 of the state performance plan indicators addresses transition services for students with disabilities. All students with disabilities ages 14 and older must have transition plans in their individualized education plans (IEP). These plans must include post-secondary training, education, and independent living learning activities. The district is required to develop an indicator 13 team that will be directly involved in the monitoring and professional development plan.



The district participated in this process in 2008 and the transition planning in this district is top notch. The teachers have many resources to evaluate transition needs, as well as a dedicated resource page on the special education Wikispace ([www.sedelcospecial.ed.wikispaces.com](http://www.sedelcospecial.ed.wikispaces.com)). This process will prove to be painless for the special education team as they are well versed in the regulations and have the resources to provide appropriate transition planning.

## Parent University

Parent University will receive more focus this school year. We ask that all parents go to the Southeast Delco School District website and complete the survey in the parent section under Parent University. There is a space for parents to leave their names and contact information if they want to be involved in the Parent University planning committee.



## Security Update

Several upgrades to security have been initiated at district schools. The Raptor Visitor Management system is being installed in all schools and will provide web-based technology and monitoring for visitor, student, and volunteer management. Installation is underway and will be completed within two weeks.

Police call buttons have also been installed in each school and will be used in the event of a major threat to students or staff. Upon activation, the alarm will notify the Delaware County 911 Center and police will be dispatched immediately to the school. The alarms are being paid for by a federal grant through the Southeast Pennsylvania Regional Task Force Schools Group.

With the completion of the high school renovation, several security upgrades are evident. A new closed circuit television system (CCTV) has been installed throughout the school to monitor activities. As with all district schools, all exterior doors at the high school are locked at all times and visitors must be buzzed in through the main entrance, identified, and issued a pass before gaining access to the school.

## Future Board Meetings

Committee of the Whole	Thursday, September 19, 2013	6:00 PM	ESC
Board Business Meeting	Thursday, September 26, 2013	7:00 PM	ESC
APHS Ribbon Cutting	Thursday, October 10, 2013	5:30 PM	APHS
Committee of the Whole	Thursday, October 10, 2013	6:00 PM	APHS
Board Business Meeting	Thursday, October 24, 2013	7:00 PM	ESC
DCCC Board Appreciation Dinner	Wednesday, November 13, 2013	TBD	

## School Events

- **Delcroft School – Back to School Night – September 18<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 PM**
- **Darby Township School – Back to School Night – September 25<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 PM**
- **Early Dismissal – District-wide – October 2<sup>nd</sup>**
- **APHS – Back to School Night – October 3<sup>rd</sup> – 6:00 PM**
- **District-wide - Progress Notices Issued – October 4<sup>th</sup>**
- **APHS – Blood Drive – October 8<sup>th</sup>**
- **District-wide Teacher In-service – October 14<sup>th</sup> – No School for Students**
- **District-wide – Red Ribbon Week – October 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup>**