

# Southeast Delco School District

## *Board & Community Update*

### *APHS Ribbon Cutting Ceremony*

The ribbon cutting ceremony celebrating the end of the three year construction project and the beginning of an exciting new life for Academy Park High School was held on October 10<sup>th</sup>. District Superintendent, Dr. Stephen Butz, welcomed Board members, administrators, district staff, students, and community members to the celebration, which included addresses from Board President, Mr. Donald Young and Academy Park Principal, Dr. Edward Small.



Attendees were treated to refreshments and a tour of the facilities. All agreed that the renovations created a welcoming environment for students to learn.



### *School Performance Profile*

The Pennsylvania Department of Education recently released its School Performance Profile, or SPP, for all schools in Pennsylvania. This profile is a change in the way that schools are rated under No Child Left Behind. In the past, schools were judged to have made Adequate Yearly Progress, or AYP, based on a variety of academic achievement factors. Now schools are rated on a numerical scale, which bring academic and other factors into play.

SPP scores are determined using five areas of scores. The first four areas are all based upon academic achievement factors. These factors include overall academic achievement, closing the achievement gap for all students, closing the achievement gap for “historically underperforming students”, and academic growth. The fifth factor is other academic indicators such as graduation rate, promotion rate, attendance data, and advanced classes offered.

Title I schools that score in the bottom 15% of all schools across the state are labeled and fall into an increased level of oversight from the Department of Education. No Southeast Delco school fell into the bottom 15% of schools. District schools scores ranged from 73.8 (out of 100) to 58.6.

More information on School Performance Profiles is available at <http://paschoolperformance.org>.

## *Afterschool and Credit Recovery Programs*

This year, the Kids' College Afterschool program at district elementary schools and the Afterschool Credit Recovery and Saturday School Success Academy at the high school are funded through the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers grants. All of the programs began on October 15<sup>th</sup> and will end in May. The elementary program runs from Monday through Friday, from dismissal to 6 PM, Monday through Thursday and from dismissal to 5:30 PM on Fridays. The afterschool credit recovery program at the high school runs from dismissal until 5:55 PM Monday through Thursday. Saturday School Success Academy will begin in November.

This year, we have approximately 600 students currently served by all of the programs. We utilize several curriculums for tutoring in the elementary afterschool program, including the Developmental Studies Center's Afterschool *KidzLit* and McGraw-Hill's *Number Worlds*. We also supplement the program with *Flocabulary* and *Readers' Theater*. In credit recovery we incorporate a combination of both traditional tutoring instruction and the Aventa software program. All afterschool programs also include homework help.



Organized physical and recreational activities are also part of the afterschool programs. This year, we are thrilled to continue our partnerships with the Ridley Area YMCA, Penn State University Extension, and the Nutritional Development Services of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. We are also excited to grow our partnerships to include Dyer's Karate of Collingdale, Holcomb Behavioral Health, and Educational Standards from the University of Delaware.

## *Audit Reports Summary*

State auditors from the Pennsylvania Department of the Auditor General conducted a performance audit of the district's compliance with state laws, regulations, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures and recently completed their field work in the district. The state auditors were in the district from August 12, 2013 to November 4, 2013. The audit covered the fiscal years 08-09, 09-10, 10-11 and 11-12.

Local auditors, Barbacane Thornton & Company, began their annual audit of the district on October 30, 2013. The local auditors audit the financial statements and internal controls of the district to assure compliance with

Government Accounting Standards.

Audit reports will be issued from both the local and state auditors in the coming months. The reports from both audits will be presented to the board.

## Curriculum

Teachers are becoming acclimated to their new *Journeys 2014* resources for reading in grades K - 5. This is the second year of *Go Math*, our grades K-5 math program. This past spring, teachers developed district benchmarking assessments in grades 1 – 8 math and reading, which are administered three times a year to determine in which eligible content / standards students are strong or need reinforcement. All information is chronicled in Performance Tracker, where teachers can now review a history of each child's assessment to develop a unique learning plan.



Middle school math teachers are implementing a new Holt McDougall math program for grades 6 - 8, as well as new Pre-Algebra and Algebra I programs in grades 7 and 8. Teachers are currently developing new district Algebra I benchmarks, which will also give teachers information as to what content standards need to be taught / retaught in preparation for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders who will be taking the Algebra I Keystone in May 2014.

English language arts teachers in district middle schools will continue to pilot *Pearson 2015*, as one of two programs from which they will select a new reading program. Teachers were introduced to the new Holt / McDougall middle school reading program, *Collections*, which will be piloted during the second semester of this school year. A decision will be made in May on new resources.



New cumulative writing portfolios have been implemented in grades 1 - 5, where published pieces will be filed and will follow each student through the elementary / middle school years.

Summary sheets for grades 1 and 2 have been recently revised by the elementary reading interventionists to reflect new changes in DIBELS Next, the Reading Continuum, and intervention. These sheets are shared with parents during the fall and spring parent-teacher conferences.

The district welcomed 25 student teachers from West Chester and Widener Universities this fall, along with many field study teachers from those universities and St. Joseph University.

## Professional Development

The October new teacher induction monthly meeting in October featured Director of Special Education, Ms. Kim Brown and Special Education Teacher, Ms. Cheryl Smythe, who presented on co-teaching. In November, our new teachers are reading two books to inform their practice: *The Art and Science of Teaching* by Bob Marzano and *Teach Like a Champion: 49 Techniques That Put Students on the Path to College* by Doug Lemov. They will be doing an action research project using the strategies learned from these two authors. In November, parent teacher conferences will also be discussed.

The district has five elementary and four middle school reading interventionists, as well as four interventionists assigned to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century afterschool program. These teachers meet monthly, conducting their own professional learning community with the purpose of improving their practice as reading specialists. Recently, two of our reading specialists attended the Keystone State Reading Association Conference held at Penn State. Nicole Bourke of Darby Township School and Cindy Silverthorn of Harris School shared information from the conference with their colleagues and will present the information to all teachers at a future time. Anita Kaplan of Delcroft School attended the 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Conference of the International Dyslexia Association and presented to her colleagues on the differences between the disadvantaged reader and the dyslexic reader. The middle school reading interventionists are also reading Kylee Beers' book, *When Kids Can't Read, What Teachers Can Do* and are doing instructional plans for specific students attuned to the type of reading deficit of the student and the exact strategies recommended to combat that deficit. The elementary reading interventionists are working on revising the formative assessment menu given to teachers to use as alternatives to weekly Friday reading tests. They are also working on creating a system of providing Common Core Exemplar Poetry and Text for intervention.

Twenty-two teachers, including reading interventionists, will complete day three of an intensive three day training on *Leveled Literacy Intervention* by Fountas and Pinnell on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Teachers began with grades K - 2 levels last year and found the program to be successful in getting children in intervention classes up to their 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 who are 1.5 to 2.0 years below in reading levels. Reading interventionists work with small groups of three students to catch them up in 18 - 24 weeks of intensive instruction.



On September 30<sup>th</sup> through October 4<sup>th</sup>, Jody Pittock of REACH Associates met with all grade 1 - 5 reading teachers and special education teachers to extend the teachers' knowledge of the district Literacy Framework, to review intentional reading instruction in whole group curricular and small group differentiated, as well as, review / reteach the strategies for doing interactive read alouds in their reading classes. All components of this training are research-based, best reading practices and are meant to strongly develop each reading teacher. On October 28<sup>th</sup> through November 1<sup>st</sup>, Ms. Pittock returned to review best practices in teaching the three modes of academic writing: Argumentative / Opinion; Narrative; and Informative, to all teachers and special education teachers in grades 1 - 5. She also worked with district science teachers in the middle school to incorporate writing in their content area through a process called the literacy design collaborative. Social studies and English language arts teachers have been trained in this process last year and will be expected to develop new LDC teaching modules for the coming year to ensure students are writing with depth in those content areas all throughout the school day. Middle school ELA teachers also learned about common core instructional shifts, close reading, and the importance of teachers using academic language in their daily discourse.

A district professional development day was held on October 14<sup>th</sup>. Sessions included the following: *Journeys* consultants met with elementary teachers; Cindy Kruse of DCIU met with the middle school and related arts teachers on *The Power of Words*; and middle school science teachers worked with Dr. Nadine McHenry of Widener University on their year-long topic of teaching science using the inquiry method. Physical education teachers have begun background work on writing a new health curriculum, IPADS in the classroom, and

progress monitoring of interventions.

A second district professional development day was provided on November 5<sup>th</sup>. All grades K - 8 teachers and aides attended a mandatory human resources session led by Thomas Hauptert on reporting child abuse and the new laws on this topic. The assistant principals presented on techniques from the Doug Lemov book, *Teach like a Champion*, principals reviewed the *Effective Teacher Evaluation* with their staffs, and teachers reviewed current assessment data to plan for their students learning experiences. The related arts teachers attended in-service developed through DCIU or CCIU on their particular area of certification, while art teachers worked on murals or playground games in their home schools.



Dr. Watson attended the PASCD (PA Association of Curriculum Directors) Conference in Hershey. Topics of interest included learning targets and a discussion with State Director of Education, Carolyn Dumaresq, on Chapter 4 and SLO (Student Learning Objectives), a segment of the new effective teacher evaluation process.

On November 7<sup>th</sup>, Jeff Ryan, Jennifer Peterson, and Dr. Watson met with the Houghton / Harcourt team regarding eLearning modules for teachers that are online reading professional development sessions developed to support the teachers' work in *Journeys*.

### *Future Board Meetings*

DCCC Board Appreciation Dinner	Wednesday, November 13, 2013	6:00 PM
Board Business	Thursday, November 21, 2013	7:00 PM
Board Picture	Monday, December 2, 2013	5:30 PM
Board Organization	Monday, December 2, 2013	6:00 PM
Board Business	Thursday, December 19, 2013	7:00 PM

### *School Events*

- ***Parent University / "Great American Smokeout" – Darby Township School – November 19<sup>th</sup> – 6:00 PM***
- ***Thanksgiving Holiday – November 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> – No School for Students or Staff***
- ***Delcroft School Winter Concert – December 5<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 PM***
- ***Progress Notices Issued – District-wide – December 6<sup>th</sup>***
- ***Darby Township School Winter Concert – December 11<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 PM***
- ***Harris School Winter Concert – December 12<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 PM***
- ***Sharon Hill School Winter Concert – December 17<sup>th</sup> – 6:30 PM***
- ***Academy Park Winter Concert – December 18<sup>th</sup> – 7:00 PM***
- ***Winter Break – December 23<sup>rd</sup> to December 31<sup>st</sup> – No School for Students or Staff***