



Southeast Delco School District

Knighly News

*Collingdale ★ Darby Township ★ Folcroft ★ Sharon Hill
Communities*

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District Receives Letter of Congratulations from PA Department of Education

Southeast Delco Superintendent Stephen Butz received a letter last week from Renee Palakovic, Division Chief of Federal Programs for the PA Department of Education congratulating Academy Park for having achieved the status of "Made AYP." AYP, or Adequate Yearly Progress, is a state mandated series of tests that measure student achievement. The letter stated:

Dr. Mr. Butz:

It is with pleasure that I write you today regarding Academy Park High School. It is not often that low performing schools are given the opportunity and the resources to institute wholesale turnaround reforms like those provided with Title I School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds. History shows us that, given the many obstacles that confront these schools, additional resources are not always enough to improve achievement. A true commitment to the reform and accountability for its implementation are crucial to turning around these struggling schools.

Based upon multiple Title I SIG monitoring visits and PSSA data collected to date, I would like to take a moment to commend you and your staff on your efforts. Numerous factors and individuals all play their part in changing the entire learning environment of a struggling school. Having them coalesce and effectively work as a whole is a worthy and incredibly challenging task; one that is beginning to show results in Academy Park.

While there is still much to be done, you and your staff involved in the hard work of ensuring some of Pennsylvania's most disadvantaged children receive a quality education are to be congratulated for the early success achieved in the first year of Title I SIG implementation.

I wish you continued success as you implement year two of this school reform initiative. If the staff of the Division of Federal Programs can assist you in any way as you move forward, please contact us.

Sincerely,

Renee Palakovic

Chief, Division of Federal Programs

Kindergarten Registration for the 2012-2013 School Year

Kindergarten registration and testing is now being scheduled at the Kindergarten Center. Call 610-522-4365 Extension 7230 to obtain registration requirements and to schedule an appointment. You can also stop in the office to pick up a packet and schedule an appointment. It is critical that you register your entering Kindergarten students early so that we can hire correctly before school begins. Encourage your neighbors who have soon to be Kindergarteners to call us as well.

Academy Park High School

Celebrating Achievement

Academy Park held its first annual PSSA Recognition Dinner on February 22nd at the Oaks Ballroom in Darby Township. The event recognized students who had a part in Academy Park reaching PSSA proficiency targets for the first time in the school's history. Students were recognized for the highest assessment scores in Math and Reading and earning a proficient score on either test. Several district administrators and community leaders attended, including Superintendent Stephen Butz, Assistant Superintendent Jeff Ryan, and State Representative Nick Micarrelli.



Working Hard to Ensure Continued Success

Staff, students, and community members affectionately refer to Academy Park by its initials . . . AP. These letters have taken on new meaning at the school in the past two years. AP is now commonly referred to as Advanced or Proficient, terms related to the successful completion of the 2011 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). The class motto, "I'm In" began at last year's pep rally, which is one of the many incentives in place for students who will take the test each year. The tests are administered in the late winter / early spring.

The motto came into existence as a result of a rousing rap performance by Academy Park Principal, Dr. Ed Small and Assistant Principal, Nate Robinson. The rap lyrics were crafted to bolster student confidence and challenge their determination. References to "I'm In" are present throughout the school and readily explained by any senior.

Not to be outdone, this year's PSSA planning team has come up with several creative initiatives. First, the team celebrated last year's successful test takers with a recognition banquet. Those students were invited to sign a poster and wear a button displaying the motto. The poster now hangs in the main lobby display case of the school.

The new motto, "I'm In!" recognizes last year's success and creates a buzz around school for the upcoming test. Prizes have been donated from local businesses and community members and are being purchased by the school to incentivize current test takers. Inspiration has come in the form of notes from past test takers and underclassmen, as well as staff members who encourage students to "do their best" and "work hard". A student vs. faculty basketball game has been scheduled following the test window to help take the edge off of the stress created by statewide testing.

And finally, like every great entertainment showcase, the annual pep rally is back with new and improved performances from teachers, administrators, and students.

Upcoming Academy Park High School Events

March

March 7 *Early Dismissal 11:00 AM*

March 13 – 20 ***PSSA Reading / Math – Grade 11 – Early Dismissal 11:00 AM***

March 30 End of Marking Period 3

Darby Township School

Preparing to Achieve

Planning and preparation for the upcoming Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) are well under way at Darby Township School. As soon as school resumed after the winter break, teachers developed a 5-week action plan targeted to focus instruction on the eligible contents of the testing curriculum that either was not yet taught or needed review to ensure mastery of content by students. In addition to regular classroom teachers, specials teachers and teachers of Science & Social Studies have rallied their efforts to teach these eligible contents.

With the help of Dr. Doug Ambler, teachers have identified and created ideal testing groups for grades 3-8 to create the best testing environments for students. The special education teachers of DTS have been hard at work collaborating with Dr. Ambler to make the necessary accommodations for students with special needs.

Darby Township School teachers, Melissa Bennett and Ashley Wise, are spearheading the "PSSA Incentive" initiative and meeting with teachers to gather ideas to motivate students, including distributing candies to reflect different themes throughout the 6 testing days, a pep rally with a built-in time for PSSA questions with prizes for correct answers, and daily drawings for attendance during testing days. DTS is also offering dress down days for positive behavior and attendance during the PSSAs.

Fundraisers and Family Fun

February was a busy month for DTS. Classrooms have been collecting *Pennies for Patients* to benefit the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society, and students have been donating their spare change to help fight blood cancer.

The Darby Township School Home & School hosted its first "Family Movie Night". Students and parents enjoyed the popcorn and spent a relaxing evening with their children. The Women Against Rape organization visited DTS and gave talks to groups of students about appropriate behaviors and relationships. These informational talks, presented in an age appropriate and sensitive manner are meant to raise students' awareness of "good touch / bad touch" principles and to define proper behaviors in different contexts. They also help students identify individuals within their community, families, and schools that they can turn to for help and support.

The *Hoops for Heart* fundraiser was held in the gym on February 10th. Mrs. Adams did a fabulous job scheduling each class, collecting the money for donation, and supervising the students who participated in the activity.

Last but not least, the ACME teacher of the month is Mrs. Christina Cubbage, while Delcroft's "REELED" in staff for this month were Karen Kelly & Ashley Wise.



Hoops for Hearts Fundraiser



DTS proudly acknowledges their Students and Citizens of the Month for February. These students excel academically and best reflect DTS values.

Upcoming Darby Township School Events

March

March 7 *Early Dismissal 12:45 PM*

March 13 – 20 ***PSSA Reading / Math – Grades 3 – 8 – Early Dismissal 1:30 PM***

March 30 *End of Marking Period 3*

Delcroft School

PSSA Spirit Week

Delcroft staff continues to prepare for the upcoming PSSA testing. Many activities have been planned to motivate students and staff for the upcoming assessments. Students will participate in various team building activities and a PSSA pep rally on March 12th. The theme for this year's pep rally is Philly Sports.

The entire school will participate in a PSSA Spirit Week, with each day of the week featuring a theme created to excite and encourage students to do their best. Themed day include:

Crazy Sock Day - We're going to sock it to the PSSA
Hat Day - Hats off to us as we take the PSSA
T-Shirt Day - We've got test taking down to a "T"
Jersey Day - Making AYP is a team effort
Wear Red Day - We're RED-y for the PSSA
Sweat Pant Day - We're taking the PSSA . . . NO Sweat

During each day of testing students will receive a motivational message along with a treat. Students will also have the opportunity to earn up to three reward tickets each day. Students can earn tickets for being on time, behavior, and effort. Students can use their tickets toward raffles for various prizes, including Principal for the Day, movie day, jewelry making, school supply baskets, Scholastic book fair gift certificates, gift cards, and the opportunity to play on the student vs. staff basketball game. The game, which will conclude PSSA testing week, has been "magically" won by staff for the past three years.

Upcoming Delcroft School Events

March

March 7 *Early Dismissal 12:45 PM*

March 13 – 20 ***PSSA Reading / Math – Grades 3 – 8 – Early Dismissal 1:30 PM***

March 30 End of Marking Period 3

Harris School

Harris Preps for the PSSA

While winter is dragging on and everyone is looking forward to spring, students and staff at Harris are in full PSSA prep mode. Happy to regain their AYP status last year, everyone knows they cannot sit back and rest on their laurels. The stakes are higher this year and the scores must keep improving with the eventual target goal of 100% of Harris students in grades 3-8, scoring proficient in both Math and Reading. The proficiency numbers for this year are 78% in Math and 81% in Reading.

To make the goal of achieving AYP students and staff are refocusing their efforts for the final push to the PSSAs. The tests will take place over six days beginning on Tuesday' March 13th. During testing days students will be dismissed at 1:30 each day. For the remaining days leading up to the PSSA's the focus will be on targeted skills, specific interventions, test taking strategies, and motivational techniques.

During the PSSA's, parents can help their children by:

1. Making sure your child is in school and on time during all 6 days of testing.
2. Encouraging your child to listen carefully to the directions and complete all questions.
3. Making sure that your child gets enough sleep before the test.
4. Making sure that your child eats his/her usual breakfast on the day of the test.
5. Encouraging your child to do his/her best!

During the PSSA's teachers and staff will encourage and motivate students by:

1. Award tickets to students that have perfect attendance and are on time each day.
2. Daily drawing at the grade and building level for students to earn prizes.
3. Providing students with a healthy snack each day.
4. Encourage students to do their best frequently throughout the day.

The school theme for testing - **BE ON TIME - BE ON TASK - BE ON A MISSION** - will be posted throughout the building.

Harris Celebrates Black History Month

All throughout the month of February Harris celebrated Black History Month. Each day during morning announcements, students from the 2nd grade, with kind assistance from 8th graders who did the actual research, read facts about historically significant African American's. The students also asked a daily trivia question to go along with the facts. In addition, a display featuring famous African Americans was created in the lobby by art teacher Mrs. Christine Hall.

Pennies for Patients

February was also "Pennies for Patients" time. The fundraiser lasted for three weeks, ending on February 24th. Harris' goal was to raise \$1,000 (Which was exceeded last year!) with all proceeds going to a great cause, the Child and Youth Division of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. The total amount collected will be announced in next month's newsletter after all the pennies are counted.

Upcoming Harris School Events

March

March 7 *Early Dismissal 12:45 PM*

March 8 Spring Picture Day

March 13 – 20 *PSSA Reading / Math – Grades 3 – 8 – Early Dismissal 1:30 PM*

March 27 Grade 2 Field Trip to the Philadelphia Zoo

March 30 End of Marking Period 3

Sharon Hill School

Countdown to the PSSA

Sharon Hill School is gearing up for PSSAs, which will begin on March 13th. Daily PSSA trivia and facts are broadcasted during the morning announcements to help students prepare for the types of questions that they will encounter on the assessment.

PSSA Spirit Week will take place the week of March 5th to get students excited and motivated about taking the state assessments. During Spirit Week there will be daily themes that allow students to show they are "Red-y" to take the PSSA. Lunchtime trivia will also take place to challenge our students and a pep rally will be held on Monday March 12th.

This year's PSSA theme is March Madness. Students will rally to proficiency and reach the Sweet 78% (Math Goal) and 81% (Reading Goal). Teachers have been preparing our students all year and continue to work hard to make

sure students are equipped with the knowledge they need to be successful. During testing students have the opportunity to win prizes for being **“ON TIME, ON TASK, AND ON A MISSION”**.

Celebrating Black History Month

This year Sharon Hill’s theme for their Black History month celebration was African Americans’ influence on music. Students involved in the program researched musical influences from slavery to present time. Students created a timeline and identified influential African American musicians from different eras. Other students portrayed singers and performers during an assembly held on February 29th, as well as our annual Soul Food Night sponsored by Sharon Hill Home and School.



Louis Armstrong



The Jackson Five



Diana Ross and the Supremes



Student Participants

Upcoming Sharon Hill School Events

March

- March 5 – 9 PSSA Spirit Week
- March 7 *Early Dismissal 12:45 PM*
- March 9 Spring Portraits
- March 12 PSSA Pep Rally
- March 13 – 20 *PSSA Reading / Math – Grades 3 – 8 – Early Dismissal 1:30 PM***
- March 15 Chuck E. Cheese Fundraiser for APHS After Prom Celebration
- March 23 PBIS Social
- March 30 End of Marking Period 3
- March 30 Staff vs. Student Basketball Game

Kindergarten Center

100 Days of Learning

The Kindergarten Center celebrated “100 Day” on Tuesday, February 7th. This event, held on the 100th day of school, was a celebration of learning about numbers, number systems, and number relationships. Students brought in 100 Day projects which included displaying a collection of 100 items. The day included counting activities creating many different representations of 100 and a principal read-aloud of the text I Can Count 100 Bunnies.



Parent Conferences

Parent conferences were held at the Kindergarten Center during the last week in January. Teachers shared children’s progress in the January Reading and Math assessments, and made plans with parents for supporting student achievement in the second semester.

Parent Council

Kindergarten Center Parent Council includes a series of sessions for Kindergarten parents to provide information about helping their child to be successful in school. Parent Council for February offered a Math Night that included a demonstration of math games from *Everyday Math* and strategies for using these games at home. Math games were provided as take home activities.

Upcoming Kindergarten Center Events

March

- March 6 Spring Portraits – Uniform Optional
- March 7 Early Dismissal 12:45 PM
- March 23 Makin’ Music Program – 10:00 AM
- March 27 Family Night – Reading is Fun Fair – 6:30 PM
- March 30 End of Marking Period 3

Southeast Delco School District

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