Southeast Delco School District

Board & Community Update

Scholarship, Service, Leadership, Character, and Citizenship

The superintendent received a very nice letter from the US Department of Veterans Affairs thanking the district for donations made to patients at the Coatesville VA Medical Center.

In November, members of Darby Township School’s National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) held their annual Operation Gratitude Drive. Over a span of 4 days, they collected 12 bags of candy, 79 toothbrushes, 32 tubes of toothpaste, and 28 containers of dental floss for donation to our troops.

In the letter, Kirk Fernitz, Director of Community and Congressional Affairs at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs stated, “It is through the efforts of community partners like you that allow us to continue the quality care and services that we seek to provide our deserving Veterans.”

Membership in the NJHS is awarded to students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, service, leadership, character, and citizenship. Through their actions, DTS members continue to validate their affiliation with this exceptional group of middle school students from all across America and Canada.

Pen Pal Program Delights Local Seniors

In December, a senior citizen / student pen pal project was initiated. Each month, 20 students – 5 from each school - will travel to the Good Neighbor Senior Center with a letter and a small gift to exchange with a member of the center. The following week, the member will respond to their student’s letter and pass the letter to the center’s program director, who will contact Mrs. Alford to pick-up the letters and distribute them to the students.

The program kicked-off on December 13th. Five 4th grade students from each school, along with Ms. Pelka and Mrs. Alford, traveled to the center to meet their pen pals. The moment the students entered the room, the senior members brightened up and warmly welcomed the students.

The students and seniors shared stories about school, family and work. Much to the surprise of the students, the seniors presented each student with a box of treats. There was a great deal of excitement and both the seniors and the students were fully engaged.
Afterschool Program

Funded by the 21st Century Community Learning Center grant, the district afterschool program provides services to 240 students in grades 4 – 8. Each school is allotted 60 student slots and currently all four of the grades 1 – 8 schools have a waiting list.

At the end of each week, the lead teacher at each school checks the attendance of students enrolled in the program. Parents of students who are not attending regularly are contacted regarding the status of their child’s participation in the program. When a student is dropped from the program, a student from the waiting list is invited into the program. To date, 29 students have dropped out of the program.

The students receive 90 minutes of instruction in the Read 180 program daily. The students rotate their activities with 30 minutes of computer training, 30 minutes of independent reading and 30 minutes of teacher conferencing. New computers were purchased for use in the program and they have made a significant difference in the student participation and success.

Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)

Students in grades 3 through 8 are preparing for the 2017 / 2018 school year PSSAs. The window for English Language Arts assessment will begin on Monday, April 9th and conclude on Friday, April 13th. The Mathematics PSSA will be administered on Monday, April 16th through Friday, April 20th, and testing will conclude after Science assessments of students in grades 4 and 8 on Monday, April 23rd through Friday, April 27th.

Teachers and administrators will work together to create a productive schedule during testing days so students get to engage in light instructional activities combined with team-building activities after students have taken the test each day.

Comprehensive Planning

Southeast Delco is starting its latest comprehensive planning process to guide the district in the 2019 / 2020 through 2021 / 2022 school years. Comprehensive planning is a process that helps the district align its vision for schools with the needs of the community. The process centers on nine characteristics of successful school districts including having a clear and shared focus, a high-level of collaboration and communication, a supportive learning environment, and ample community and parent involvement. The process the district must follow includes providing a description of the district demographics, mission and vision statements, conducting a needs assessment to determine the district’s strengths and weaknesses, and identifying action plans towards the completion of identified goals.

Southeast Delco will focus this work in four committees: (1) professional development / teaching & learning (2) safe & supportive schools (3) special education, and (4) technology & operations. The committees will include members of the school district, the community and local businesses. These representatives will work on selected committees over the course of the spring and summer, with approval by the school board slated for the fall of 2018.
Once approved by the school board, the comprehensive plan will be submitted to the state and will guide the district’s decision making over the next couple of school years. The special education portion of the plan must be submitted separately to the state by May 1, 2018. In addition, all school improvement plans will be updated to align with the district’s new plan.

**Career Fair Participation**

Human resources has plans to participate in a number of upcoming career fairs, including several out of state career fairs hosted by Howard University and the University of Delaware. At present, the district does not anticipate a high-level of turnover as in previous years due to the limited number of employees eligible for retirement. HR director, Mr. Wilson is looking forward to a robust season of recruitment and retention.

**Act 93**

Work is continuing with the Act 93 Administrative group in an effort to make adjustments to the Agreed Compensation Plan (ACP). After finalizing the ACP in July, several new administrators were hired, and as a result, adjustments will need to be made to the ACP to include projected increases in salary over time for new hires.

**2018 / 2019 General Fund Budget**

The February 15th committee of whole meeting will include an update on the proposed 2018 / 2019 general fund budget.

The district received the first look healthcare increases on November 1, 2017. Healthcare premiums for district employees are projected to increase by 13.61% for the 2018 / 2019 school year. The district should receive the second look rates on March 6, 2018.

The PSERS retirement rate for 2018 / 2019 increased from 32.57% to 33.43 %. The adjusted Act 1 index for the district is 3.6%. The board of school directors approved the resolution to not raise taxes above 3.6% at the December 21, 2017 school board meeting.

The administration continues to work on the 2018 / 2019 budget.

**Maintain Don’t Gain Challenge**

The annual district-wide “Maintain Don’t Gain Challenge” was conducted for the holiday season. Approximately 95 percent of employees who participated successfully completed the challenge by remaining within 2 pounds of their recorded weight at the beginning of the contest. With incentives in the form of prizes donated by community partners like Independence Blue Cross and Extreme Gym in Folcroft, 36 employees were randomly selected and awarded for their efforts. Gift cards, gym memberships, and cook books were some of the prizes included in this year’s contest. Activities such as this are a big part of our school district’s overall employee wellness plan, as it is directly related to our ability to retain a healthy workforce.
Property
The district is planning some extensive renovation projects for the summer of 2018. Delcroft School is scheduled to receive 2 new gym rooftop ventilation units and 2 new building heating boilers. These projects are currently being prepared for the public bidding process.

Harris School is scheduled to receive 2 new building heating boilers in the 1957 wing of the building. There is also an extensive concrete replacement project being submitted for public bidding. This project is being planned for the Darby Township, Delcroft, Harris, Sharon Hill, the Kindergarten Center, and Knight Field sidewalk areas.

2018 / 2019 Budget Timeframe
December 21, 2017  Adopted Resolution to Not Exceed Index
January 18, 2018  Committee of the Whole – Budget Work Session
February 15, 2018  Committee of the Whole – Budget Work Session
March 15, 2018  Committee of the Whole – Budget Work Session
April 19, 2018  Committee of the Whole – Budget Work Session
April 26, 2018  Board Meeting – Adopt Proposed Final Budget
May 17, 2018  Committee of the Whole – Budget Work Session
May 24, 2018  Board Meeting – Adopt Final Budget

Future Board Meetings
Committee of the Whole  Thursday, February 15, 2018  6:00 PM
Board Business Meeting  Thursday, February 22, 2018  7:00 PM
Committee of the Whole  Thursday, March 15, 2018  6:00 PM
Board Business Meeting  Thursday, March 22, 2018  7:00 PM

School Events
- APHS Valentine’s Day Dance – February 15th – 7:30 PM – 10 PM
- Teacher In-service – February 16th – No School for Students
- Presidents’ Day Holiday – February 19th – No School for Students or Staff
- Progress Notices – February 23rd
- What’s Your Passion Festival – February 24th – APHS
- Early Dismissal – March 7th – APHS – 11 AM / Grades K – 8 – 12:45 PM
- District Band Concert – March 14th – 7 PM – APHS
- Frosh Dance – March 16th – 7 PM – APHS
- End of 3rd Marking Period – March 23rd
- Teacher In-service / Flex Day – March 26th – No School for Students
- Spring Break – March 27th – March 30th – No School for Students or Staff
- Teacher In-service / Flex Day – April 2nd – No School for Students
- Early Dismissal – April 9th – Grades K – 8 – 12:45 PM – Parent / Teacher Conferences
  - APHS Evening Parent / Teacher Conferences – April 12th – Grades 9 – 12
  - English Language Arts PSSA Window – April 9th – April 13th – Grades 3 – 8
  - Math PSSA Window – April 16th – April 20th – Grades 3 – 8
  - Science PSSA Window – April 23rd – April 27th – Grades 4 & 8
  - APHS Junior Prom – April 20th – 7 PM – Lazaretto Ballroom
  - District Musical – April 27th & 28th – APHS – 7:30 PM
  - District Musical – April 29th – APHS – 2 PM
- Early Dismissal – May 2nd – APHS – 11 AM / Grades K – 8 – 12:45 PM
  - Progress Notices – May 2nd
  - District Musical – May 4th & 5th – APHS – 7:30 PM
  - District Musical – May 6th – APHS – 2 PM
  - Senior Prom – May 11th – 7 PM – DuPont Hotel
  - Knight of the Arts – May 16th – 7 PM – APHS
  - Senior Awards Night – May 23rd – 7 PM – APHS
- Memorial Day Holiday – May 28th – No School for Students or Staff
  - Spring Blood Drive – May 31st – APHS