

Wharton Board of Education Newsletter

In partnership with the community, the Wharton School District is committed to educational excellence and guarantees challenging learning opportunities for all students to become life-long learners and productive and responsible members of society.

With one-third of the school year under our belts, the district has many proud accomplishments to share:

- The **MacKinnon School-wide Enrichment Project** is designed to involve the total school population in engaging, hands-on, technologically-oriented learning activities. 6th grade students calculated the circumference of the earth during the Noon Day Project. They also completed an Egyptian Web Quest in their world history class. 7th grade students completed a math/science project in which they graphed, in Excel, the results of their pendulum lab. They are currently working on a Revolutionary War newspaper article in their social studies class. Along with grade level projects, various Independent Enrichment Teams are working on contest-related projects or projects that involve working with students in the lower grades.
- **A-STARS** (Aspiring Students to Achieve Real Success), a joint venture between the Wharton and Mine Hill School Districts, is the new special education program housed in the Canfield Avenue School. The program was introduced this September by virtue of a \$277,378 Governor's Initiative on Autism grant. Students enrolled in the program and are making exciting progress in academic areas, social development and interaction with typically-developing students.
- The **Park Lake Satellite Program**, a partnership with the Educational Services Commission of Morris County, is a new program for students with disabilities that has opened in the MacKinnon Middle School. In addition to their academic program in the MacKinnon School, students travel to the Park Lake School on a daily basis to participate in life skills and vocational skills education. Field trips and activities from both MacKinnon and Park Lake are available to the students, providing them with a rich educational experience.
- **INCLUDE** – The district received official notification on December 20 that it has been awarded a \$160,539 grant to improve academic achievement in mathematics by using educational technology effectively, and to ensure all students in the general education classroom are provided the necessary accommodations that will support their achievement in the NJ Core Curriculum Content Standards. This will allow the district to continue to introduce new technology and cutting edge teacher training without impacting the local tax levy.
- **Granny Awards, Musical Fairy Tale Revue, and Winter Concert**, the recent performing arts production, was truly delightful. Congratulations to Mrs. Brennan, her assistants, and more importantly the students, who so skillfully and confidently displayed their talents and demonstrated their achievements.
- The **Shared Service Partnership** between the Wharton and Mine Hill School Districts was recognized by the New Jersey School Boards Association as a **Best Practice**. The partnership between the districts has been recently expanded to include the positions of Business Administrator and Educational Facilities Manager. The administrations and Boards continue to explore opportunities to improve the quality of services in a cost efficient manner.

On behalf of the staff, administration, and Board of Education . . . best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday!

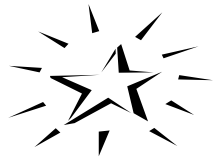
Richard Bitondo, Superintendent

Board Highlights

The following are highlights of the October, November & December Board of Education Meetings.

Minutes from the following Board of Education Meetings were approved: September 20 Work and Closed Sessions; September 27 Business and Closed Sessions; October 18 Work and Closed Sessions; October 30 Business and Closed Sessions; November 20 Work and Closed Sessions; November 27 Business and Closed Sessions.

At the October 30 Business Meeting teachers Joyce Fox, Carmen Silfa-Veras, Angela Harrigan and Debralee Madsen were presented with certification honoring their attainment of tenure.



The Student of the Month Award is presented to students at Alfred C. MacKinnon Middle School who have best personified those qualities of citizenship and academic achievement that reflect the highest ideals of the Wharton School District.

September Students of the Month

Grade 8 – Anthony O’Sullivan

Grade 7 – Patti Bautista

Grade 6 – Mateo Cuartes

October Students of the Month

Grade 8 – Maria Cardona

Grade 7 – William Gorgas

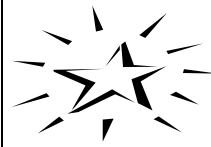
Grade 6 – Chris Schmidt

November Students of the Month

Grade 8 – Dexter Vargas

Grade 7 – Max Caamano

Grade 6 – Rose Hussain



Support Staff Stars

Summer

Rosita Rodriguez – Instructional Aide

October

Suzanne Cummins – Instructional Aide

November

Lisa Whipple – Instructional Aide

Curriculum

The following curricula and entitlement applications were approved:

- Research Skills/Career Exploration Curriculum to guide instruction in research skills/career exploration for grade 8 students
- Temple Shalom Literacy Mentoring Program to develop a love of reading and to promote literacy by connecting individual students with trained adult literacy mentors
- Out-of-district placements were approved for four students

The following policies and regulations relative to curriculum and instruction were approved:

- 5512.01 Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying
- 5530 Substance Abuse

Personnel

The Board advanced the following:

- employment of substitute teachers, an instructional aide, and substitute aide
- a personal request for leave without pay
- acceptance of the resignations of the MacKinnon School Girls' Basketball Coach, an Instructional Aide, and an A-STARS Aide
- a side bar agreement with the Wharton Education Association, which provides a \$500 pensionable stipend to MacKinnon homeroom teachers
- teacher David Hanslowe's advancement on the salary guide
- placement of practicum students and student teachers for winter and spring 2008
- an increase in hours for a kindergarten instructional aide
- placement of coaches, advisors and other special assignment personnel
- revision of the job description for Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction
- designation of Board members Stephen Skelly, Marc Towne and Robin Ghebreal to the WEA & WESPA Negotiations Committee

District Operations

The following contracts for the 2007-2008 school year were Board approved:

AES Fire Service –annual inspection of district's fire alarm system

CR Service – maintenance / repair of district HVAC equipment

At the October 30, 2007 Business Meeting the Reciprocal Agreement - Nursing and Custodial Services between Mine Hill Township and Wharton Borough was approved. Also approved were the School Nursing Services Plan for the 2007 – 2008 School Year, the District Quality Assurance Annual Report and the Comprehensive Maintenance Report.

At the November 27, 2007 Business Meeting the 2007 – 2008 District and Board of Education Goals were approved.

The first reading of the following policies and regulations relative to operations were advanced:

- 5330 Administration of Medication
- 8461 Reporting Violence, Vandalism, Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse
- 8601 Pupil Supervision After School Dismissal

Finance

The Board approved:

- Payment of Bills
- Budget Transfers – July, August, September & October
- Payroll – September, October, November
- Board Secretary's & Treasurer's Report - October

The Board accepted a donation from Nancy and Jim Greuter for equipment for the Health Services Office.



Important dates to remember!

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| Jan 2 | Welcome back |
| Jan 8 | PTA Meeting 7 PM TLC |
| Jan 17 | Band Concert 7:30 PM Gym |
| Jan 21 | School Closed – Teacher Professional Development Day |
| Jan 24 | Board of Education Work Session |

Jan 31	Board of Education Business Meeting
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