



HADDONFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT

... news from the Board of Education

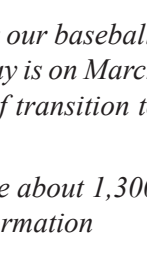
FROM the SUPERINTENDENT

Greetings, and thanks for taking time to read our late February Haddonfield School District newsletter. Moving forward is an exciting time in schools, and there is a lot to anticipate in March in our excellent programs. Along with the Phillies opening day on March 28, we look forward to our high school hosting a Model UN event on March 2 and our spring musical, "West Side Story," held on March 8, 9, 10, 15 and 16 (check the scrolling Google calendar on the HMHS web site for times). Our elementary schools will hold their annual talent shows during March, and the spring sports season begins for our baseball, softball, tennis, lacrosse and track folks. Read Across America Day / Dr. Seuss Day is on March 2, so go to the library and read a good book! It's an exciting month, a month of transition to longer days and warmer nights ahead.

I also want to invite you to become one of our Facebook followers. I see we have about 1,300 people following us, so if you're not a follower, plan to become one! Lots of information about the Haddonfield schools is posted there.

I encourage you to reach out to the district's communications specialist, [Polly Mitchell](#), with suggestions and comments. And, as always, I'd love to hear from you as well. Have a wonderful March and Go Phillies!

- Larry Mussoline, Ph.D.



BOARD NEWS

DISTRICT AWARDED DIVERSITY INITIATIVE GRANT

Dr. Mussoline announced that we applied for and were selected to receive a \$10,000 grant to support our diversity initiatives. In particular, the funds will be applied toward expenses associated with Dr. Shelley Zion and her team from the Center for Access, Success and Equity (CASE) at Rowan University. As reported in the January District Newsletter, Dr. Zion was hired to work with our staff as we make a "much more concentrated and intentional effort to embrace diversity and to foster global competence."

UPDATE on the STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

On February 4th and 5th, we continued to develop the district's strategic goals as a core team of 30 leaders met to review data, read survey results and discuss what critical areas of focused work will best serve our K-12 learners as we approach the next 3-5 years. The core team – led by consultant Judy Wilson – consisted of current parents, principals, high school students, a union representative, teachers, district administrators, support staff and community members who are not currently district parents.

The members of the core team are: Amy Adams, Tatem Elementary School (ES) parent rep; Carolyn Barshay, Central ES parent rep; Robert Berman, Central MS parent rep; Gerry Bissingier, elementary principal; Rachel Bonnet, HMHS student rep; Toni Bonnette, community member; Stacey Brown-Downham, HEA / teacher; Steve Burns, Business Administrator; Laurie Bushey, Tatem teacher; Michelle Cannaday, Middle School teacher; Jake Cedar, HMHS student rep; Margaret Gammie, HMHS teacher; Chuck Klaus, acting Assistant Superintendent; Debra Licorish, Middle School teacher; Tracy Matozzo, Middle School principal; Tammy McHale, acting HMHS principal; John Miller, Director of Technology; Colleen Murray, Chief Academic Officer; Larry Mussoline, Superintendent of Schools; Bobbi Newman, HMHS parent rep; Michelle Pracher, HMHS teacher; Mike Prevoznak, Middle School teacher; Gino Priolo, Director of Special Education; David Reader, HMHS teacher; Katy Roussos, Elizabeth Haddon ES teacher; Kathleen Ruiz, Central ES teacher; Adam Sangillo, BOE President; Aimee Subramanian, Elizabeth Haddon ES parent rep; Thomas Vecchio, BOE member.

Members of this core team recognized sound traditions of success and celebrated the many points of pride shared across the Haddonfield schools. Then they turned their attention to current student needs, societal factors influencing schools and learners, contemporary research on the art and science of excellent instruction, the roles of technology in our lives and classrooms, and the expectations for schools of excellence in the 21st century.

While there were many needs and challenges identified, the critical work that rose to the top level of impact and priority were: *social-emotional learning, cultural competency and contemporary teaching and learning*. Over the course of the next three months, action plans will be developed to map the specific strategies that will drive progress in each of those three areas. The impact of this work will reach every student in all five schools and will matter to them not just as learners in the world of K-12 education but also as individuals well-prepared for post-secondary studies and personal success in our greater, complex world.

The core team also tackled the development of a mission statement appropriate for today and the years ahead:

We nurture. We inspire. We empower.

The Haddonfield School District nurtures, inspires and empowers every learner. In collaboration with our community, we nurture unique abilities and foster a climate conducive to taking risks in pursuit of excellence. We inspire lifelong learners to excel in their endeavors. We empower each other to be inclusive, flexible and critical thinkers in a global community.

"I'm am so excited to see the product of our collective community's input," said Board President Adam Sangillo. "I really feel that we captured the overarching values of all stakeholders in our village using a very democratic process. It's rewarding to see things coming together and our district moving forward!"

DIVERSITY INITIATIVES in HADDONFIELD MEMORIAL HIGH SCHOOL

Haddonfield School District schools always strive to be safe and welcoming environments, but since September, we have made a much more concentrated and intentional effort to embrace diversity and to foster global competence.

In this issue of the district newsletter, we will share details of the work that has occurred in our high school. In future issues, we will share the work being done in our middle and elementary schools.

During the summer of 2018, Haddonfield Memorial High School (HMHS) administration met and consulted with representatives of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), Restorative Justice administrators from Penn and Dr. Shelly Zion from the Center for Access, Success and Equity (CASE) at Rowan University. The NAACP and CASE made presentations to the HMHS staff on topics such as how to facilitate difficult conversations with students.

In the spring, all HMHS students had taken a survey on school climate in terms of diversity and acceptance. Data from these surveys helped to define and design eight Human Dignity units held in classrooms in the fall of 2018. All students participated over a two-month period, and staff led class discussions with guidance from the ADL. Teachers reviewed the lessons in advance, and parents had access to the lessons on the day classes were held. Several faculty members and administrators were available after school to meet with parents and/or students who wished to continue the discussion.

Additionally, the Human Dignity lessons were scheduled in such a way that each student had conversations with eight different groups of students and with all of their teachers in all subject areas, and each teacher moderated the experience with all of their classes. This allowed for increased and varied exposure for the experience, and, we believe, increased comfort throughout the school community.

Another survey was conducted prior to and immediately after the Human Dignity units to gather data and drive future initiatives. One result of this initiative was that all HMHS students signed a resolution of respect in response to their experiences.

While planning the Human Dignity units, students were introduced to the A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute Peer Training Program during the summer of 2018. The program's position is that anti-bias education can and should be spread by the most powerful "agents of change" in a high school – the students themselves. Through the unique combination of instructional and peer influence strategies, the program helps students combat name-calling, bullying and harassment, thus creating safer and more inclusive school communities. ([Read more here.](#))

Numerous students applied to become Peer Bias Leaders, and 24 students were selected using a process of written essay, teacher recommendation and a group interview. These students received three days of extensive training. The training included discussions about:

1. identity, of all participants and of others
2. the language of bias
3. culture and communication and how culture affects communication
4. our own bias(es)
5. ways to challenge bias
6. action plans

On the second day of training, students were given an activity to plan. They practiced on day two and facilitated in front of the group on day three. This practice will prove particularly helpful when the HMHS Peer Bias Leaders visit the Middle School in March to conduct acceptance and discrimination activities. Meeting once or twice a month, they developed the lessons for Middle School and planned the third "No Place for Hate" project. Because of their excellent work, the HMHS is on track to be recognized as a "No Place for Hate" school next year.

In December, a second, smaller group of seven students was selected to attend ADL's "Youth Leadership Conference: Exploring Diversity, Challenging Hate." They are now part of the Peer Bias Leaders group and will serve as student leaders in acceptance.

ADL's Youth Leadership Conference was designed to reach high schools in the Greater Philadelphia Area, including schools that participate in ADL's No Place for Hate® initiative, A WORLD OF DIFFERENCE® Institute workshops and Bearing Witness™ program. The goal of the conference was to bring together student leaders to explore the value of diversity, to participate in anti-bias workshops and to learn practical tips and techniques that they would bring back to their own schools to encourage change in school culture. In addition to the training, the students heard keynote speaker Charles Middleberg. Middleberg was born in a small town outside of Warsaw, Poland in 1931. Although his parents died in Auschwitz, he and his brother escaped the concentration camps because a Catholic family took them in, converted them to Catholicism and hid them in plain sight. Middleberg shared his story and stressed the importance of being an ally and standing up to hatred and intolerance.

Looking ahead to next year, Peer Bias Leaders will provide programs during freshman orientation in the fall.

Parents, administrators, teachers and a representative of the Peer Bias student group have formed the No Place for Hate committee (previously called the Equity Group). This group will meet four times this academic year to reflect and to plan for 2019-20.

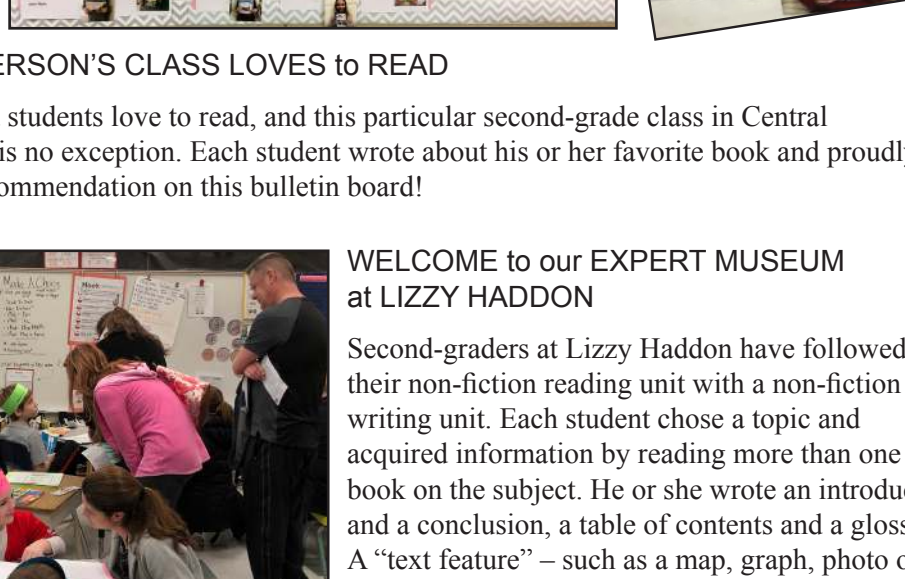
Because of these classes and discussions, we have also taken a hard look at our curriculum. The high school now offers "Race, Class and Gender" every semester as well as "Women's Literature" and "The Holocaust" every year. We are hoping to encourage students to take these courses to further their understanding of equality, diversity and acceptance.

Finally, the HMHS community will choose an (optional) summer reading book to be on a topic addressing human dignity.

CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS WIND DOWN

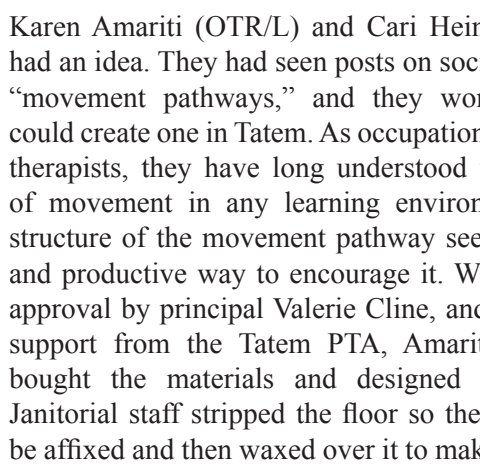
The district-wide construction project is beginning to wind down, and students and staff have begun to enjoy various new and improved features. It is important to note that everything is not 100% complete. Site work that will continue includes concrete/asphalt repair, interior and exterior painting, landscaping, and installing the new HMHS gym floor. [Click here](#) to enjoy a photo album of some of the completed projects.

SCHOOL NEWS



MS. PATTERSON'S CLASS LOVES to READ

Haddonfield students love to read, and this particular second-grade class in Central Elementary is no exception. Each student wrote about his or her favorite book and proudly displayed a recommendation on this bulletin board!



In photo: Students wore headbands that said "Expert" to reflect their topics.

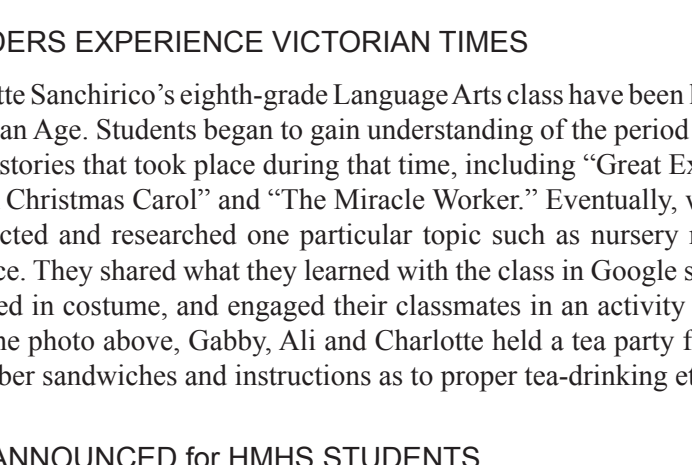
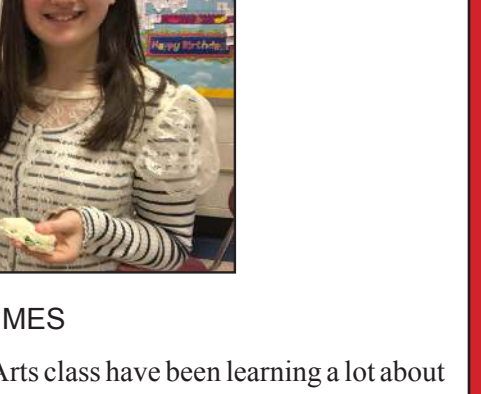
WELCOME to our EXPERT MUSEUM at LIZZY HADDON

Second-graders at Lizzy Haddon have followed their non-fiction reading unit with a non-fiction writing unit. Each student chose a topic and acquired information by reading more than one book on the subject. He or she wrote an introduction and a conclusion, a table of contents and a glossary. A "text feature" – such as a map, graph, photo or drawing – was required. On February 8, family members were invited to a "learning celebration," during which the students shared their excellent writing and their expertise!

TAKE a WALK on the TATEM TIGER PAW PATH

Karen Amariti (OTR/L) and Cari Heinzel (PT, DPT) had an idea. They had seen posts on social media about "movement pathways," and they wondered if they could create one in Tatem. As occupational and physical therapists, they have long understood the importance of movement in any learning environment, and the structure of the movement pathway seemed like a fun and productive way to encourage it. With enthusiastic approval by principal Valerie Cline, and with financial support from the Tatem PTA, Amariti and Heinzel bought the materials and designed their pathway. Janitorial staff stripped the floor so the patterns could be affixed and then waxed over it to make it permanent.

How will it be used? Each section requires a different movement, such as hop scotch or "bear walking" using both hands and feet. Amariti and Heinzel made a video to demonstrate all of the different movements to Tatem faculty so the teachers can use the path for students. A whole class or an individual student may traverse the pathway when a physical break is needed or just use it on the way to the library or computer lab.



EIGHTH-GRADERS EXPERIENCE VICTORIAN TIMES

Students in Annette Sancharico's eighth-grade Language Arts class have been learning a lot about life in the Victorian Age. Students began to gain understanding of the period between 1837 and 1901 by reading stories that took place during that time, including "Great Expectations," "Gift of the Magi," "A Christmas Carol" and "The Miracle Worker." Eventually, working in groups, the students selected and researched one particular topic such as nursery rhymes, medicine, weddings or dance. They shared what they learned with the class in Google slide presentations, sometimes dressed in costume, and engaged their classmates in an activity reminiscent of the time period. In the photo above, Gabby, Ali and Charlotte held a tea party for the entire class, including cucumber sandwiches and instructions as to proper tea-drinking etiquette.

ACCOLADES ANNOUNCED for HMHS STUDENTS

Acting principal Tammy McHale announced that seven HMHS students were selected for Camden County's Best of the Class. Annually, the Best of the Class is a chance for extraordinary students to be recognized in the following categories; community service, leadership, most improved, best overall, most courageous, performing arts and school spirit. The students will be recognized at the Camden County Board of Freeholders and Constitutional Row Officers Best of the Class Ceremony on Monday, May 13, 2019. The HMHS students honored are:

- Community Service: **Sasha Feinstein** – who volunteers her time to help with community activities
- Leadership: **Eleanor Dengler** – who demonstrates, by example, a positive attitude
- Most Improved: **William Bentley** – who exhibits perseverance when faced with a challenge
- Best Overall: **Ethan Spellmeyer** – who excels in leadership, dependability and sociability
- Most Courageous: **Leonardo Casta Torres** – who has been a symbol of fortitude, heart, resolution and spirit
- Performing Arts: **Jake Cedar** – who exhibits creativity in the field of music, dance or drama
- School Spirit: **James Foley** – who demonstrates passion, support and dedication to the school

Additionally, two students, **Ethan Spellmeyer** and **Mohamed Jishi**, were notified that they advanced to National Merit Finalists, placing them in the top 99% of all test-takers. Each year, over 3.5 million high school students take the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, also known as the PSAT. Approximately 34,000 of these students receive Letters of Commendation from the National Merit Scholarship Corporation, and about 15,000 of them are named as finalists. In March, about half of these students will be notified that they have earned a college scholarship.

Finally, **Sam Tichansky** (photo right with McHale) has received the President's Volunteer Service Award, a program sponsored by Prudential that "encourages citizens to live a life of service through presidential gratitude and national recognition."

Director of Athletics Lefteris Banos shared the following spectacular statistics. First-semester grades are in, and the following represents the average GPA for each of these teams. They are truly "student-athletes."

Girls Tennis	96.3	Girls Soccer	95.0
Field Hockey	96.3	Fall Crew Boys	94.6
Girls XC	95.6	Boys Soccer	93.9
Boys XC	95.3	Fall Crew Girls	93.7
Cheer	91.7	Football	90.9



Haddonfield School District News is created and shared monthly throughout the school year. It is written by Communications Specialist Polly Mitchell and distributed to staff, families and community members. Suggestions and comments are welcome.

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