

**Superintendent's Report
Orange Board of Education
November 8, 2011**

The following is a report of the Superintendent of Schools for the November 8, 2011 Board of Education meeting:

CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

First Marking Period Comes to an End

- We have come to the end of the first making period. This is a crucial time for all scholars. Parent conferences should have been scheduled for all students that have an average in any content area level below 72%. Attendance and tardiness should have also been reviewed to determine its impact on student achievement. In addition, this is also the time that students should be participating in after school programs to increase their academic stamina. Moreover, it is critical to remember that students should be reading at least 20 minutes to an hour every night over and above their homework assignments.
- Finally, as we support our young people, it is important to remember that the next marking period is filled with many distractions. With the holidays and so many competing activities, students will be required to focus on their academics at a level much higher than the first marking period. We are all partnering to work together to ensure that the students of Orange's meet with academic success.

CURRICULUM AND TESTING

- Professional Development is being offered in an embedded format in Language Arts and Mathematics, as well as Coaching and Instructional Leadership. Consultants from several internationally renowned firms are working with teachers on content, instructional practices, and data analysis and management. Administrators are attending workshops and webinars from the Lead and Learn organization, and are turnkeying data management and instructional practices to staff.
- Language Arts teachers in grades 5, 6 & 7 have been working with NJ DOE LEADS representative, Neil Webster, for the purpose of identifying and utilizing balanced literacy components for reading and writing. Specifically: Readers' and Writers' Workshop, guided reading techniques, and the identification of specific skill set gaps. Master Teachers have also visited a statewide model LEADS classroom in Union City in order to see how to use LEADS strategies in the classroom. In OHS and OPA, consultant Ira Bolterman continues his embedded work with teachers to have a more student-centered approach to Language Arts instruction.

- The Arts Department began the year with Professional Development. The K-7 visual arts staff had two days of hands-on workshops by at the Art Educators of NJ State-Conference. The K-7 performing arts staff honed their skills on rubrics. The new Marching Band Director, Ben Krupit is awaiting delivery of new uniforms for the band, dancers and flag units. OPA, OHS, and Park Avenue Schools have all presented art shows at the BOE offices. The Art Department is expecting a visit from Essex County Executive Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr. to recognize the detailed work and community awareness of Art Teacher, Mrs. Benay Lipstein, for her art display of recycled materials and the "Going Green" exhibit. Three OHS strings players, Heavenly Odom, Esther Pierre, and Tolani Walker, under the tutelage of Tiffany Tanner and Nathan Thomas performed at the Mayor's Ball held at Mayfair Farms, West Orange. The quintet was cited for excellence and Mayor Hawkins personally addressed their accomplishments.

MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

- The Mathematics and Science Department has completed a three-week trial run of weekly 5-minute math content assessments for all students at both OPA and OHS. Because of the success of the initiative at both schools, it will be expanded to all elementary schools for grades 3-7, beginning the week of November 14, 2011. These weekly student data results will be used to compare student proficiency at each grade level across schools and will help drive classroom instruction. Weekly postings of student performance data will be made available to the district.
- The Mathematics and Science Department has begun working with NJIT to provide our students with a variety of hands-on activities designed to expand their knowledge of science and engineering. Students participating in the program have visited the campus of NJIT for the past two Saturdays to work with their staff and have been introduced to work in such scientific tracks as Architecture and Environmental Sciences, Film Making, Bio Medical Engineering, Smart Phone Apps, and Robotics Competitions. Twenty campus visits are scheduled throughout the year.
- The Mathematics and Science Department has partnered with Liberty Science Center to expand the delivery of interactive STEM activities to Orange Students. During this year long program, students and their families will be able to participate in a variety of offerings such as Live Video Conferencing from Surgeries, Traveling Science Programs, Community Evening Events, Family Pass Programs, and free Field Trips to Liberty Science Center.
- The Mathematics and Science Department has entered into a year long working agreement with an Everyday Mathematics consultant considered an expert in working with the program. Everyday Mathematics Teachers grades K-5 will participate in a rotating schedule of yearlong Professional Development with the consultant, by utilizing technology and facilities in the district to minimize costs. Teachers will meet by grade levels at Mt. Carmel to collaborate and discuss different units and aspects of the program with the consultant via, conference calls, Video Skyping, and e-mails.

SPECIAL SERVICES

Individualized Education Program (IEP) Writer Vetted

- The Special Services Department is committed to strengthening and expanding our services and programs to meet the needs of our special needs population in our district. A web-based special education management and IEP software program will increase time spent servicing children by reducing the amount of paperwork, providing staff with instant access to electronic student records, reports, documents and updates to improve data driven decisions, and improve collaboration in creating, editing, and revising individual education programs in REAL-TIME. Additionally, parents can leave meetings with IEPs.
- The second goal is to ensure our district meets state and federal compliance and completes all state reporting, in a timely fashion. The web based IEP program includes features to track timelines and tasks. For example, the web based special education management and IEP software program automatically calculates annual review dates, meeting timeline dates with built-in compliance checks and reviews and the IEP validation checks ensure accountability. Additionally, the web based program writers are capable of interfacing with the district's student management system, which allows for seamless uploads of special education student demographics, and student data, which saves time and increases data accuracy and improves overall compliance.
- The third goal is for the Special Services Department to improve and increase data driven decision-making as it relates to making decisions about appropriate program recommendations, related service recommendations and instruction. The web based program provides a "virtual" filing cabinet of each student's special education documents, files and other content stored electronically. The program provides one repository for storing student documents, reports, forms and updates that is instantly assessable 24/7 thus increasing data driven decision-making based on current reports and information and ultimately improving services and instruction to the student. Staff can instantly access student documents with different right of entry and privilege levels will established for each user.
- Jewish Vocational Services
On Thursday, November 3, 2011, the Department of Special Services participated in the Annual Fall Breakfast: Tools for Transition – Job Placement for Students on the Spectrum. The workshop consisted of:
An Overview on Asperger Syndrome/Autism Spectrum Disorder, Autism and Asperger Syndrome Incident Rates, A History of Asperger Syndrome, A discussion on Pervasive Developmental Disorders, Autism Spectrum Disorders differences:
 - Autism
 - Pervasive Developmental Disorder (PDD)
 - Asperger's Syndrome (AS)
 - High Functioning Autism (HFA)

- Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Challenges with Community Participation
- Employment of Persons with ASD
- Strengths of an employee with AS
- Workplace Challenges
- Work Preparation Strategies
- Employment Strategies
- Job-Matching for AS

This program is offered on a non-sectarian basis to classified students with the following disabilities: emotional, neurological, sensory, physical, communication, learning, developmental and ASD.

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

- **Rutgers Talent Search Grant**

The district is collaborating with Rutgers University, Newark with a federal Talent Search Grant awarded to Rutgers. The grant provides the opportunity for 250 students in grades 7-12 from Cleveland, Lincoln, OPA, OHS and Park who meet the grant criteria to participate in a 5-year program offering college preparation. The students will attend workshops and college visits as well as receive individual counseling leading to entrance into higher education.

- **Hispanic Heritage Celebration**

What a success! At Lincoln, each school hosted exhibits displaying different Spanish speaking countries. OHS students performed a mock trial on immigration rights. All experienced food, fun projects and learning. Thank you World Cultures staff for such a thoughtful learning experience for the students and community.

HUMAN RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

- Prepared district website and star ledger ads for vacant positions.
- Met with all prospective candidates to negotiate salary and review district benefits and employment paperwork.
- Represented the District in court for tenure litigation.
- Represented the District in Employee mediation litigation.
- Prepared staff files for NJ SMART submission.
- Responded to Board Attorney requests for documentation and completion of interrogatories for two employee lawsuits.

BUSINESS DEPARTMENT

Facilities:

Facility Committee Meeting was held on November 7, 2011 at 2:30 PM at the Board of Education Administration Building, 451 Lincoln Avenue Orange.

Discussion and updates were presented on the following items:

- a. Renovation of the current Orange High School Home Economics room to a standard Culinary Arts Program
- b. 123 Cleveland Street building renovation project to house the Alternative School Program
- c. Renovations of Orange High School Science Labs, vendors are being solicited to obtain quotes and or proposals.
- d. Renovation of Cleveland Street School smoke stack (emergent need resolution is being presented on November 8, 2011 to the Board for approval)
- e. Renovation of Orange Preparatory Academy roof parapets (emergent need, quotes are being obtained at the present time)
- f. Renovation of Orange High School HVAC system (98% completion, additional funds are being sort from NJSDA to finalize the project)
- g. Renovation of Orange Preparatory Academy gym lights (finally approved and additional documents as requested by NJSDA are being sent for funds to be released to start the project)

- **Finance:**

The business office has completed the district audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011. Yesterday, the district auditors held and exit conference with the Board Finance Committee to explain vital details of the audit process and findings.

- **Awards:**

The district received a \$33,140.63 for the *2011 Safety Grant Award*, this is the grant sponsored by the New Jersey School Boards Association Insurance Group's (North Jersey Educational Insurance Funds) this is the third consecutive year that the Orange School District has received this award. The intent of the award is to assist the school districts to meet and improve school health and safety needs.

UPCOMING EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES:

Cleveland Street School

- November 1 -18 - Food Drive sponsored by the Student Council
- November 15 - Passing on the Love of Literacy, Fourth Grade students will visit the YWCA preschool program to read to students and distribute a new or gently used book. This is a partnership that we plan to continue throughout the school year.
- November 23- First Marking Period Awards Assembly

Park Avenue School

- November 2 - Art Show Board Opening at 6pm
- November 17 - Bring Your Parent to School Day from 9:00-2:00

Heywood Avenue School

- November 1: Family Book Club
- November 1: Picture Day
- November 1-16: Study Island and Writing Benchmark Assessments
- November 6-14: Student Council Food Drive
- November 16: Coffee with the Principal 8:30
- November 16: PTA meeting 6:30
- November 18: Community Service Day for Grades 5-7
- November 23: Awards Assembly Grades 1-4

Forest Street School

- November 9 - First marking period ends (44 days); EYL Mentoring Program 6:00 p.m.
- November 14 - Second marking period begins
- November 15 - Forest Cares Food drive ends
- November 17- SMT Subcommittee baskets due
- November 21- Staff pot luck
- November 21- Staff meeting
- November 22- Pre-K-1 Multicultural feast
- November 28- SMT meeting
- November 28 - Forest for families drive begins
- November 29 - Parent Teacher Report Card Conference 6:00-8:00
- November 30 - Assembly 6th grade presents 10:00
- November 30 - Parent Teacher Report Card Conferences 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Lincoln Avenue School

- November 13, 2011 6pm - Family Math Night
- November 3, 2011 - PTO Family Math Night - 6pm
- November 9, 2011 - End of 1st Marking Cycle
- November 14, 2011 - Picture Day
- November 18, 2011 - Portfolio Walkthrough
- November 21, 2011 - School Management Team (SMT) Meeting
- November 29, 2011 & November 30, 2011 - Parent Conferences

Orange Preparatory Academy

- **Zumba Classes Begins** 11-09-11 @ 6:00 - 6:30. Come prepared to move your body and have fun. Creating a healthier community one movement at a time. \$5.00 per class. Please consider joining us and bring a friend.
- **Membership Drive:** 11-09-11 Looking for parents, teachers, students, neighbors and community representatives to join our PTSO. Also if you know of anyone who is interested in taking computer classes let us know. Resume Writing Workshop coming soon.
- **PTSO Meeting:** 11-16-11 This meeting is themed So You Think You Can Dance A Thon. Tickets are on sale now. Anyone participating in the Zumba class will be admitted free. Bring the whole family; invite your friends and neighbors. Donation is \$5.00 for advance tickets and \$8.00 at the door. Food available for purchase.
- **School Closings:**
November 10 & 11, 2011
November 23, 2011 (12:30 Dismissal)
November 24 & 25, 2011
November 30, 2011 (12:30 Dismissal)

Orange High School Athletics

- November 11, 2011 – Orange High School vs. West Caldwell at Bell Stadium at 7:00 p.m.