

Superintendent's Report
Orange Board of Education
February 8, 2011

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

- Saturday, March 19, 2011 - Dr. Myron Hackett, Principal of Park Avenue School is being honored by the National Organization of African American Administrators (NOAAA)
- The United Way will host its annual *Celebrity Read* breakfast at the Newark Museum on Thursday, February 17, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. – the Superintendent is the honorary chair.
- MLK Black History Month Celebration: The focus this year is on “Tolerance” and “Kindness. By focusing on tolerance and kindness, students will reflect on the legacy of Dr. King and will join the national effort of engaging in Random Acts of Kindness. The march will be Thursday, February 17, 2011.
- *The Orange Press* publication revised and distributed to all users on the district email system, in an effort to “go green”, on Friday, February 4, 2011. In this publication, you will find pertinent and timely information about the Orange Public School District including school events, activities, student awards, and major school announcements.
- Orange Center of Excellence (OCE) will have an Open House on Wednesday, February 16, 2011, at 6:00 p.m., in the Orange High School cafeteria. OCE is a partnership with NJIT and Orange Board of Education to offer a Science Technology Engineering and Math (STEM) program for middle and high school students in grades 8-11.

Curriculum and Instruction

- The district will be offering a series of “mini” parent sessions during the Saturday Arts Academy. The sessions will run from 9:15am to 10:15am at Lincoln School. There will be a list of sessions and dates posted on the website. All parents are invited. Drop in and join us!
- The second semester has begun for our scholars. We have reached a critical pinnacle in the education year when students need to put forth all of their efforts in being successful academically. If students have a 72% average or lower and they have not had a conference and educational plan developed cooperatively with the teacher(s), please contact the school for an appointment as soon as possible. We ask that parents make sure homework assignments are complete and sign all test results. Over the next several months, our students should be diligently working and focusing on their academic studies. They also should be participating in after-school or Saturday instructional programs to increase their academic stamina. Remember, more than ever students should be reading more than 20 minutes per night. Practice makes perfect!

Curriculum & Testing

- Preparation for the upcoming HSPA assessments is presently underway. The Guidance Department at OHS has been trained by the District Testing Coordinator and by the New Jersey Department of Education to oversee the administration of the HSPA, which begins on March 1, 2011. Parents of Grade 11 students and Grade 12 students who still need to be proficient in a section of the HSPA are encouraged to make sure that their students are present during the HSPA Testing dates – March 1-3, 2011. Makeup will be given March 8-10, 2011. Please check the district Curriculum & Testing website for information to help parents prepare their students for the upcoming state tests. The *Orange Concentrate* winter newsletter focuses on information regarding test preparation.
- The Department of Curriculum & Testing is continuing the effort to improve writing across the district by producing a video presentation series that focuses on writing as a process, and writing as a product. In addition, several new videos and presentations have been added to the library of professional development opportunities for staff. The presentations and videos outline several of the new programs in Orange School District. Parents can also learn about the programs and initiatives by viewing the presentations. Videos will be available on the Curriculum Department website by March 10, 2011.
- All students in Orange will be performing a district writing task within the next couple of weeks. The writing tasks are fashioned after the New Jersey State Assessment Writing Tasks and are grade level appropriate. They will be graded according to rubrics that have been prepared by the New Jersey Department of Education and used in the state assessments. There will also be rubrics that have been prepared by the Curriculum Department that will evaluate the writing of elementary students based on the Six Plus One Traits of Writing initiative. Writing is a major district focus and the data presented by these writing tasks will be used to further drive instruction.

Special Programs

- The Saturday Arts Academy opened in January! The Academy offers dance, art and individual music lessons. Every Saturday Lincoln Avenue School is buzzing with sounds of students in busy exploration of the arts. We plan to expand the offerings in our next 8-week group of sessions that starts in March. The Academy is a collaborative partnership with Arts Incubator. Children from all communities are welcome to participate. Registration information is available at your neighborhood school. Flyers will be sent home with students. Updates are available through Channel 35, the district web site and phone blasts. You do not want to miss this wonderful opportunity! There is a minimal fee of \$50.00 for an 8-week session and \$120.00 for 8 weeks of private instrumental lessons

Special Services

- Twelve students from Park Avenue and Oakwood Avenue Schools' bridge clubs competed in a regional bridge tournament on January 17th at the Hilton Rye Town in Rye Brook, NY. They were among twenty-two students from New York, New Jersey and Connecticut who competed in this youth bridge event.

Chynna Beaumont and Shanelle Whyte from Oakwood Avenue School placed third overall, among six tables of students ranging in ages from 9 – 16, in the Hilton Rye Town Tournament. “It was an exciting event and all of the kids had a great time,” said Ms. Barbara Clark, Director of Special Services who has established the bridge clubs in the Orange Schools.

Enith Friedman, President of the School Bridge League, donated transportation to the event. Pamela Venable, guidance counselor and coordinator of Oakwood's club accompanied the students, along with Oakwood Avenue School PTA President and representative to the district's PTO/PTA/PTSO council, Ms. Redina Laury and her son Rasheed Boyd. Karen Rizio, preschool teacher at Park Avenue School, who substituted for Denise Harlem, technology coordinator and bridge club coordinator, traveled with the group to Rye Brook. “I am very proud of our students,” said Ms. Clark. “Congratulations to our winners, students and staff.”

- The regular education initiative is working in the Orange School District producing the shift from more segregated separate programs to higher quality inclusive programs. The budgeted out of district tuition for the 2011-2012 is approximately the same as that projected in the 1995 school year. The number of students educated in other local education public agencies has increased to 189 while the number of students educated in private placements has decreased from over 100 to 76 students. The district's application for extraordinary aid this year totals \$835,720 compared to \$819,090 in the previous year.
- An Orange Education Foundation is being created to promote, sponsor and encourage educational, cultural, and artistic events that enrich the lives of those who reside in Orange as well as the surrounding areas in Essex County. Additionally, the purpose of the foundation is to build and enhance community awareness in the schools and to engage in fundraising and philanthropic endeavors for the benefit of the students of the Orange Township Board of Education.
- Although the Orange Education Foundation is separate and apart from the Orange Board of Education, interested persons can hold offices in the foundation or serve on committees to help the foundation achieve its mission. If you are interested in serving in either capacity or if you are a hard worker dedicated to charitable causes, please contact Barbara L. Clark at 973 677-4027 or Joan Purkiss at 973 677-4000 extension 6091.

Human Resource Department

- Met with principals to log in second cycle non-tenured observations and tenured staff observations.
- Prepared observation/evaluation matrix for principals and administrators
- Reviewed staff positions with principals and administrators for SY 2011-12-budget review.
- Prepared Personnel agendas for January 11th and January 25th Board of Education meetings.
- Posted recruitment ads in the Star Ledger and Job Education websites for vacant positions.
- Reviewed Collective Bargaining Agreement for the Orange Education Association for Teacher, Secretary, Paraprofessional and Security Units for final approval, signatures and distribution.

Facilities:

The district Facilities Committee met yesterday, February 7, 2011 at 2:30 pm.

- **Lincoln Avenue School**
The committee was updated on the status of open punch list items from the walk-through that was conducted on January 6, 2011 by New Jersey Schools Development Authority (NJSDA) and district staff. It was concluded that approximately 30 out of about 250 items were still uncompleted. On January 28, 2011 the district received a response from Mr. Marc Larkins, NJSDA Chief Executive Officer, in response to the district's complaints at their January 5, 2011 Board meeting. The letter's intent was to provide a summarize status report on the items and concerns the district. The report did not provide a status of the Cleveland Street School renovation and construction.
- Yesterday, at the facilities meeting, Mr. James presented the letter to the committee and all items were discussed. The committee concluded that Mr. Larkins letter was unsatisfactory, and most of the items he reported on were in contrast to the district's opinion, especially when it does not include the Cleveland Street School status. The committee concluded that the district should send another delegate to attend the SDA's Wednesday, March 2, 2011 board meeting so as to resurrect these discrepancies and to emphasis the urgencies of the district open projects. The committee encourage that some parents, students and community members should be mobilized as part of this delegate to present at the SDA board meeting.
- **Orange High School (OHS) Air Handling Unit (HVAC) system upgrade and replacement:**
The district has awarded the bid for this project and a letter of notice to proceed has been issued to by our architect of record to the contractor. A contract will be issued shortly for the renovation to project to start.
- **Old Police Station Building 539 Lincoln Avenue:**
At the Facilities Committee Meeting, the City representative reported that he is still in the process of completing a zoning ordinance for the facility, as requested by the City zoning board. No action has been taken by the City at this time; the Orange Board still holds its emphasis that the City should return the building to the district.
- **Orange Prep Academy (former Orange Middle School) Gym Light Replacement Project:**
The district has received bids for the project; the tabulation has been sent to New Jersey Schools Development Authority. The district still awaits SDA review and approval.
- **Orange Prep Academy (former Orange Middle School) Roof Replacement Project:**
On numerous occasions, the district has presented to SDA and DOE that this roof repair is emergent. In Mr. Larkins letter of January 28, 2011, he responded, "the SDA is presently conducting a review of its 2008 Capital Plan. An important component of this review is a determination regarding funding for the advancement of future emergent projects. We will notify you upon completion of this review, but we are not able to advance additional emergent projects until funding for them has been identified".

Finance:

- The district is currently in the process of preparing the 2011-2012 budget, the School Principals Face to Face budget meeting (except for Park Av School) has been concluded, the Superintendent and cabinet reviewed the Central Office proposed departmental budgets last week. A status budget report will be presented shortly.

Upcoming Activities:

- Saturday, February 12, 2011 – Rosa Parks School at 10:00 – 2:00 p.m. 2011 Black Wealth Initiative
- Wednesday, February 16, 2011 – NJIT hosting an Open House at OHS at 6:00 p.m.
- Thursday, February 17, 2011 - Martin Luther King march at 8:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m. at OPA
- Thursday, February 17, 2011 - Celebrity Read at the Newark Museum at 8:30 am
- February 21 – 25, 2011 - **District will be closed for Winter Break.**
- Wednesday, March 2, 2011 – Lincoln Avenue School's Read Across America with a continental breakfast included
- Saturday, March 19, 2011 - Dr. Myron Hackett, Principal of Park Avenue School- being honored by National Organization of African American Administrators (NOAAA) – see attached
- Thursday, March 24, 2011 - *Kids In Concert* – Celebrating The Artistic Talents of Students in New Jersey Public Schools see attached
- Friday, April 1, 2011 – Retirement celebration Ms. Barbara Clark, Director of Special Services

Central School

- Wednesday, March 2, 2011.at 9:30 am – Black History Program held in the auditorium

Cleveland Street School

- February 11, 2011 - Early celebration of Dr. Seuss with a visit from The Cat in The Hat
- February 15, 2011 - PTO meeting

Lincoln Avenue School

- Wednesday, March 2, 2011 – Lincoln Avenue School's Read Across America with a continental breakfast included

Park Avenue School

- Every Monday - Staff Zumba classes from 4:00-5:00
- Thursday, March 3 - 2nd Marking Period Awards Ceremony 7:00
- Thursday, March 10 - Family Math Night sponsored by the PTO 6:00
- Friday, March 18 - Career Day 8:30-2:00
- Saturday, March 19, 2011 - Dr. Myron Hackett, Principal of Park Avenue School- being honored by National Organization of African American Administrators (NOAAA) – see attached
- Wednesday, March 23 - Liberty Science Center to Park for Grades 3 & 4 10:00
- Wednesday, March 30 - Bright Start Theater Performance 1:00-3:00

Forest Street School

- February 14-18, 2011 - College Week Pre-k-7
- February 14, 2011 - 100th Day of School Celebration Pre-K-2
- February 17, 2011 - Principal & Parent Chat (2:00-3:00)
- February 18, 2011 - Valentines Incentive Dance Gr. 5-7 (3:00-5:00)

Heywood Avenue School

- Tuesday, February 15, 2011 at 6 pm - Family Book Club, (Heywood Library)
- Monday, February 28, 2011 at 6:30 pm - Middle School Awards Program, (Heywood Gym)
- Thursday, March 3, 2011 9:30 am - Black History Program, (Heywood Auditorium)

Orange High School

- April 22, 2011-Starbound Talent Competition at 9:00am Orange High School Dance Ensemble held at the Voorhes Middle School
- April 23, 2011-Starbound Talent Competition at 9:00am – Orange High Dance Ensemble at the Voorhes Middle School