

Superintendent's Report  
Orange Board of Education  
October 12, 2010

The following is a report of the Superintendent of Schools for the October 12, 2010 Board of Education meeting:

**District Highlights**

***Orange Educator receives State recognition***

Ms. Mim Kohn, Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialist, received the honor of being named ***New Jersey Division of Early Childhood (NJEC) Teacher of the Year!*** Her demonstration of a clear, consistent vision for inclusive preschool education for students with an IEP and strong personal and professional commitment to making this a reality in the lives of so many little ones was the basis for the receipt of the award. In addition, Ms. Kohn has been an active and loyal member of NJDEC, as demonstrated by her past service on the Executive Board, her participation in both the state and National DEC Conference and advocating for children to receive Summer Special Needs Awards. I want to join the entire staff, especially the Early Childhood Department, to express our pride in the work Ms. Mim Kohn continues to work for the support and education of our youngest students. Congratulations on this well deserved honor.

***Hispanic Heritage Month***

Each year, Americans observe National Hispanic Heritage Month from September 15 to October 15, by celebrating the histories, cultures and contributions of American citizens whose ancestors came from Spain, Mexico, the Caribbean and Central and South America.

The observation started in 1968 as Hispanic Heritage Week, under President Lyndon Johnson and expanded by President Ronald Reagan in 1988, which covered a 30-day period starting on September 15 and ending on October 15. It was enacted into law on August 17, 1988, on the approval of Public Law 100-402.

The day of September 15 is significant because it is the anniversary of independence for Latin American countries Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Nicaragua. In addition, Mexico and Chile celebrate their independence days on September 16 and September 18, respectively. Also, Columbus Day or Día de la Raza, which is October 12, falls within this 30-day period.

Each of our schools is part of this Heritage celebration. All schools are representing a "Spanish country." Students will learn and research about all aspects of that country: contributions, history, politics, government, culture, and current events. From October 25<sup>th</sup> to the 27<sup>th</sup>, each school will showcase their learning at their school for the school and community to enjoy.

On Thursday, October 28, 2010, a culminating display will take place. At this time, each school will have a set place to display their works. The location for our "Spanish Heritage Festival" will be at Rosa Parks from 3:15 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Our *Festival* will culminate with a Spanish dance by "R. Evolución Latina." Come and be part of this cultural celebration!

### ***Call to all Parents***

The district is preparing to launch the parent portal district-wide after the first marking period. Parents will receive information about registering from their child's school. We ask that you take time to return the information to the school to help us expedite this feature on our web site that allows you to view your child's grades, attendance and assignments.

### **Curriculum & Instruction**

#### ***The Orange Public Schools Certified Staff Evaluation System***

The Orange School District has begun to implement a new evaluation system for certified staff (teachers, master teachers, counselors, library media specialist, nurses, and psychologist). The ultimate goal of the system is to improve student achievement through a quality assurance of professional practice. The system is an adaptation of the Frameworks for Teaching developed by Charlotte Danielson. The Evaluation System (based upon the Frameworks) identifies those aspects of a teacher's responsibility that have been documented through studies and research. It is also correlated to the National and New Jersey Standards for Teachers. Professional Development on the system will occur throughout the 2010-11 school year.

#### ***Standards Based Report Cards***

Report Cards for students in grades one through seven will have a different look as well as purpose. The Orange Public Schools will put into practice standards based report cards. The standard based report cards are designed to inform parents of their child's progress toward achieving the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards.

Although the new report cards will debut with the first reporting period in November, parents/guardians will only see an overall grade and will not see the standards based achievement level of the student. There are critical training components for both teachers as well as parents that must occur prior to the standards portion being utilized. This training will occur over the next few months as well as booklets dispersed for in-depth explanations to support the initiative.

#### ***Learning Walk-Through***

In a concerted effort to improve student achievement, the district has implemented a formal walk-through schedule that will allow for three formal visits per school during the 2010-11 school year. The walk-through is an organized visit through the learning areas (classrooms, hallways etc...) to observe teaching and learning, to observe the implementation of district initiatives, to collect data, and to engage in professional conversations in reference to where we are, where we need to be, and how to get there.

The walks-through teams are made up of Cabinet Members, Principals and staff from sister schools and most importantly staff from within the school building itself. The initial protocol used is based upon the walk-through used by the CAPA Review Process. On visits in the future, the protocol will become more in-depth and tailored to the needs of Orange.

## **Special Programs:**

### ***Career and Technical Education:***

The department was approved for our Perkins Grant. This will fund Orange High School to work with teachers in supporting career pathways that enhance academic skills related to success on the HSPA and SAT. The district is exploring partnerships with higher education, specifically, technical schools to connect our students to career advancement after graduation.

## **Special Services**

### ***Parent, Teacher and Student Fall Conference***

The District PTA/PTO/PTSO Council is planning a fall conference for parents, teachers and students. The conference is co-sponsored by the Orange Education Association (OEA) and the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA). Workshops to support our parents and to increase parental involvement will include the following: Superintendent's overview (including district goals and objectives, new grading guidelines and promotion policies), District Initiatives at the Elementary and Secondary Levels. Guidance Workshops, Student Performances and Presentations will be conducted for teachers and students. **The conference is planned for Saturday, November 13, 2010 at Lincoln Avenue School from 10:00am to 2:00pm.** We hope everyone will come out to support this event.

### ***New Special Education Transition Initiatives and Classes***

The district warmly welcomes students from out of district private school placements who are primarily attending their neighborhood schools for the first time. A new class was created at Oakwood Avenue School for students with multiple disabilities. Specialized equipment was provided to accommodate student needs and to continue the occupational and physical therapy required. Additionally, students are fully mainstreamed in the specials at the school. Five students, formerly placed out-of-district, have been transitioned back to the district into various programs.

One of the greatest benefits of attending school in the district is the opportunity to interact with general education peers. Severity of disability does not preclude inclusion when appropriate supports are provided. The parents, students and all stakeholders of the district have contributed to the success of the district's regular education initiative. Cost savings of approximately one million dollars can be reallocated to enhance programs in the district for all children.

## **Orange High School**

### ***The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History***

Thanks to the efforts of Mr. Oliverto Agosto, Assistant Principal, Orange High School has been accepted into The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History's Affiliate Schools Program. The Affiliate Schools Program, funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), is a growing network of schools across the country, dedicated to improving the teaching of American history in K-12 schools.

As an Affiliate School, OHS will be assigned a regional coordinator, who is a master teacher at the Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History. Our regional coordinator will review the Affiliate Schools Program with OHS and be our point of contact at Gilder Lehrman.

Affiliate Schools receive:

- Access to an affiliates section of the Gilder Lehrman website with resources for teachers divided into eight historical eras. Each era includes scholarly articles, lesson plans, document-based questions including the original articles, podcasts, and how-to's.
- Free classroom materials three times a year.
- Personalized consulting services from GLI education coordinators including templates and technical assistance for Saturday history programs, guidance and materials for history clubs, and advice on grant opportunities.
- Priority access to professional development opportunities, including summer seminars and invitations to forums and events in your area.
- A discount on all Gilder Lehrman publications including posters, books, and resource boxes.
- Themed sets of documents and high resolution PDFs from the Gilder Lehrman Collection, an archive of more than 60,000 rare historical manuscripts located in New York City.
- Traveling exhibitions on major historical topics
- Participation in the Civil War Essay Contest, an annual essay contest for Gilder Lehrman Affiliate School students, with prizes up to \$1,000 for winners.

### ***PSAT-***

All 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will take the PSAT on Wednesday, October 13 during the school day. This practice test will provide students with an idea of what to expect on the SAT.

The PSAT stands for the Preliminary SAT and coincides with the NMSQT, which stands for the National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test. This exam is sponsored by both the College Board and the National Merit Scholarship Corporation. By taking this test, students not only get practice for the SAT but also have the chance to win a National Merit Scholarship.

The PSAT is formatted just like the actual SAT. It contains the standard reading, mathematics and writing sections that are also on the SAT, but the number of questions required and the amount of time needed to finish the exam is considerably less. However, the level of difficulty parallels the SAT and can give students an accurate depiction of how they would score on the real test if they were to take it at this moment.

How students do on the PSAT is a direct reflection of how well they are predicted to perform on the actual exam. Besides immediate benefits, the PSAT can also help students prepare for college in general. The scores will identify specific areas of strength and weaknesses. Additionally, students' scores can tell them where they stand in comparison to other college applicants.

Lastly, if students answer "yes" to a question on the test called "Student Search Service" then students will receive informational packages from various colleges.

### ***College Visits-***

A variety of college visits have been planned for interested seniors. The tours include private, public, and Ivy League schools. One of the first major decisions of a young person's life is selecting a college, and it should not be made solely on information such as the school's reputation, a guidebook, or a website. A campus tour allows students to get a feel for the college and to imagine themselves as a student on the actual campus.

The scheduled tours are:

- October 14- Rutgers Newark, NJIT, Essex County College
- October 22- NYU, John Jay, Columbia University
- October 26- Rutgers New Brunswick, Rider University, Princeton University

Plans are being made to develop a trip to Philadelphia schools including Temple, Drexel, University of Pennsylvania, and The University of the Arts.

***College on-site information sessions-***

College on-site information sessions have been scheduled. College representatives are scheduled to visit Orange High School to speak to students about the college and the various programs they offer. Many of the schools offer fee waivers for the students who attend the sessions. The visits are as follows:

- Lincoln University- September 21
- University of New England- September 28
- Wesleyan University- October 5
- Post University- October 14
- Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania- October 22
- Dover Business School- November 1
- Bloomfield College- November 11

***College Fairs-***

On November 2, students will attend the Performing and Visual Arts College Fair at Riverside Church in NYC. Students will speak to representatives from various visual and performing arts schools about their unique application process, which often includes portfolios and/or auditions.

***November 16- Malcolm Bernard HBCU College Fair at Passaic County Community College***

The Malcolm Bernard HBCU College Fair of New Jersey is a non-profit, volunteer organization that partners with community and state agencies to introduce a multitude of students, eager to learn about higher education opportunities, to college admissions representatives from the campuses of Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). Throughout New Jersey, New York and Philadelphia, The Malcolm Bernard HBCU College Fair of New Jersey strives to be recognized by students, parents, legislatures, community leaders and educators as one of the premier events of its nature.

***NJSEEDs***

7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade parents are invited to attend a NJSEEDs information session by current students, parents, and NJSEEDS staff. The SEEDS College Preparatory Program prepares academically motivated, financially limited students for admission to selective four-year colleges. The Program includes weekend and summer Honors Classes, cultural enrichment and assistance with the college admissions and financial aid process

## **Facilities:**

### ***Lincoln Avenue School***

The renovation and addition project for Lincoln Av. School is at its final completion of outstanding punch list items, which includes but not limited to some additional district concerns, like consistency of airflow in all areas of the building, stabilizing power supply, and drainage system. Mr. James is coordinating with NJSDA to finalizing the outstanding punch list items.

### ***Old Police Station Building 539 Lincoln Avenue:***

At the October 5, 2010 Orange City Council meeting, members of the Orange Board, Administrative Staff and Mr. Lee, were invited to present the district's intention and need for the old police building at 593 Lincoln Avenue. Mr. Lee, spoke on behalf of the district, supported by Ms. Patricia Arthur, Board President, Mr. Randall, Board attorney. They all expressed the district's emergent need for the building as an additional instructional space. Mr. Lee expressed that the Board has made several request in writing to the City but did not receive any response.

### ***Orange High School (OHS) Parking Lots Potholes Repairs:***

Last week, the district received a response from the City regarding our request for assistance to patch the potholes in the parking lots at the Orange High School. The City provided a quote and asked that the Board share in the cost of material needed for the project.

### ***Orange Prep Academy Gym Light Replacement Project:***

The district has received a letter of approval from the State Department of Education to bid the Gym Light replacement project. Ms. Karen Nichols, of KNTM Architects, who is overseeing the project for the district, has been notified of the approval to proceed with preparing the necessary bid documents.

## **Finance**

The district is currently going through its fiscal audit process for the school year ended June 30, 2010.

## **Human Resources**

The following reports and/or issues were addressed in the Operations/Human Resources Department in September 2010.

- ✓ Due to student redistricting and budget reductions, continue to revise transfers and reassignments of staff.
- ✓ Coordinated and submitted the District Report Data for 2009-2010, which included statistics on students and staff.
- ✓ Completed and submitted the Annual Paraprofessional Report to the County for SY 2010-2011.

- ✓ Worked with the Orange Education Association in reviewing and revising the entire OEA unit contracts to develop one contract.
- ✓ Researched personnel agenda items for the October personnel agenda.
- ✓ Registered provisional teachers with the New Jersey Department of Education.
- ✓ Sent 651 revised attendance calendars to all employees in order to provide additional sick or vacation days according to contract.
- ✓ Sent an email to all employees informing them to register with the Substitute Service so absences may be recorded on-line.

### **Future Meetings and Upcoming Events:**

#### ***Central Elementary School***

- Hispanic Heritage Celebration on October 22, 2010, at 9:30 a.m.

#### ***Cleveland Street School***

- **October 13, 2010 @ 9:30**, Ronald McDonald will visit Cleveland Street School to kick-off the Pop Tab Collection for Ronald McDonald House. The Ronald McDonald House serves families whose children require extended care at an area hospital by offering them a homelike atmosphere where they can rest overnight or for an extended amount of time. Pop rings have a significant value in the recycling industry so by saving the Pop Tabs our students not only help the environment they help families in need. Our goal is to collect one million Pop Tabs this year. to become a member of the Ronald McDonald House "Collect-A-Million Club".
- **October 20, 2010** The Cleveland Street School PTO will have their First Annual School based walk-a-thon to raise money for field trips and student activities.

#### ***Forest Street School***

- Oct 14- Fire Prevention Assembly in collaboration with Orange Fire Department 9:15
- Oct 15- Latin Heritage Assembly Program 12:30 & 1:30
- Oct 21- Parent Appreciation Social & PTO Meeting 6:00
- Oct 23- Family Holiday Portrait Day Saturday, Oct. 23<sup>rd</sup> 10am-2pm
- Oct 27- Parent/Principal's Chat 8:45am
- Oct 29- Student Government Induction Ceremony 9:30

#### ***Lincoln Avenue School***

- October 12 – PTO meeting - 6PM
- October 15 - Hispanic Heritage Celebration - 6pm
- October 28- Bring your Parent to School - 9am
- October 28 -Halloween Parade - 12:30pm

### ***Orange High School***

- **October 20, 2010- Senior Parent Night –**  
Parents will meet with high school counselors to learn about the college application process including completing applications, writing personal statements, the Common Application, utilizing Naviance, letters of recommendation, etc.
- ***Homecoming***  
Orange High School will hold its annual Homecoming Parade on Saturday, October 23, 2010, along Main Street, from 12:00 noon to approximately 2:00 p.m. This year's Homecoming game features the Orange High School Tornadoes against the Verona High School Hillbillies at Bell Stadium in Orange. The game kicks-off at 3:00 p.m.

Homecoming is an event for the entire community and we invite all businesses and citizens of Orange to participate. The route for the Homecoming Parade will be from 105 Main Street (Church of the Epiphany) to the grandstand at the Elks Lodge located at 475 Main Street. The line up for the parade will begin at 10:30 a.m. prompt. We hope to see you all there.

- ***OHS PTSO Flea Market***  
The Orange High School PTSO will hold its First Annual Fall Flea Market on Saturday, November 6, 2010 at Orange High School's Gymnasium, from 1 – 7 p.m. Tables for vendors are available for \$20 by contacting Mrs. Fisher at 973 277-7898 or Mrs. King at 973 652-0105. The event is free and there will be door prizes and uniform/coat exchange tables. Please come out and support the PTSO.