

Superintendent's Report  
Orange Board of Education  
November 9, 2010

The following is a report of the Superintendent of Schools for the November 9, 2010 Board of Education meeting:

**Curriculum & Instruction**

- We have come to the end of the first marking 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, its critical to remember that students should be reading at least 20 minutes to an hour every night over and above their homework assignments.
- As we support our young people it 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 meet with academic success.
- Parents can join us November 13<sup>th</sup> to learn more about new instructional initiatives to support their students.

**Curriculum & Testing**

- From September to November, curriculum has been written for Language Arts, Grades K-2, 3-5, 6, 7, 8 and 9; Mathematics, Grades K-2, 3-5; and Painting I and II. Several curricula are also in the process of being written, including World Languages, Social Studies, Career Education, Computer Literacy, Dance and Science. The new Curriculum Guides are aligned not only with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards, but also in some cases with the new national set of Common Core Standards. Taking the initiative to design curriculum around this new set of national standards places the Orange School District in front of the curve, and on the cutting edge of instructional design. The New Jersey Department of Education has adopted these standards and has created a timeline for districts to redesign curriculum around them. We will be one of the first districts in the state to have accomplished this task.
- More about the new national standards can be read in the ***Orange Concentrate*** which is the **newsletter** developed by the department to keep parents and staff members informed about important issues relating to curriculum and instruction. The newsletter's initial publication was October, 2010 and will be followed by a winter, spring, and summer edition. It is posted on the Curriculum Department's website at [www.orange.k12.nj.us/curriculum](http://www.orange.k12.nj.us/curriculum).

- A new **report card** has been formatted for Grades 1-2, 3-4, and 5-7. It is a *standards based* report card. It includes the numerical averages that students have earned for work in each subject area, which is based on the district's new grading policy. In addition, there are descriptive performance statements under the core subject areas that further describe the performance of the student in relation to the Common Core Standards. The Performance Grade is based on a scale of proficiency, and does not affect the numerical average the student will receive. It is merely a source of a more detailed description of the student's level of proficiency in several key areas for the core subject areas. For the first marking period, students will only receive the numerical Achievement Grade. During the second marking period there will be several opportunities for parents to attend informational workshops to better understand the new format. Please check the Curriculum Department website for more information.
- The Department continues to provide professional development opportunities for staff members. We are currently designing a set of video podcasts, and webinar scenarios to address the professional needs of staff. We are also acquiring professional development libraries that address topics specific to every content area. In this way we will be able to better address the need of our staff.
- Director, Candace Wallace, has also been named to an advisory board of the Hope Foundation which is a non-profit organization that provides professional development videos to educators. The videos include contributions from many of the current great names in education such as Robert Marzano and Carol Tomlinson. By being named to the panel, Ms. Wallace will be reviewing educational materials prior to their publication. In addition to the honor of being on the advisory panel, the Hope Foundation will also be supplying several of its video productions to Orange School District for use in our Professional Development Library.

### **Special Programs**

- **Career and College Pathways:** Career Center: Run by Mrs. Siddiq, Structured Learning Coordinator, a part of room 113 at OHS is designated as the Career Center. Students will use this area to explore higher education, sign up for community service, management of internships, career counseling, job opportunities, etc. The pathways will also include every grade 8 student at OPA completing the Naviance career interest inventory coupled with career counseling. The results will be passed to the appropriate guidance counselor. In the near future the portfolio will connect the OHS course catalog with appropriate classes for the chosen career pathway, clubs, community service and internships.
- **NJSEEDS:** Currently 45 students are participating in the program (15 per class grades 9-12). The students are involved in intensive college prep. This includes:
  - academic classes with instructors from NJSEEDS every Saturday at Rutgers
  - 3 weeks every summer at Hobart University attending classes and experiencing college life
  - Individual mentors from college alumni interviewers starting in their Jr. year
  - College tours
  - On site (OHS) college admission forums including Clark, Occidental, University of Colorado, Wesley and more. Standing room only for SEEDS and non-SEEDS students and families

- **NJ SEEDS Grade 5-** The same SEEDS working in OHS is planning to work with a select group of grade 5 students to prepare them to enter the prestigious *Johns Hopkins Summer Program for the Gifted*. They will work with the students on Saturdays and on some occasions during the week.
- **Service Learning Students:** Twenty-Seven (27) students from Montclair State attending the School of Education and Social Services come every Wednesday to participate in the expanded learning opportunity at the Community School. Next semester this will be expanded to working as tutors in a writing center at OHS. Graduate students are working on a parent involvement project.
- **Community Interns:** Several local organizations are excited about providing supervised internships for our students, particularly in alternative education. This is under development.
- **Sustainable Communities:**
  - **Urban Gardens:** Working with the Garden State Urban Gardens located on Tompkins Street in Orange, each school will receive 5 grow boxes, a complete program packet, professional development for the science teachers and ongoing on-site support from the organization. Additionally we are in the process of obtaining funding to build and maintain a hydroponic greenhouse at OHS. Students would run and create a business associated with the greenhouse.
  - **Bookmobile/Book Pantry:** This summer the Book Mobile in partnership with TD Bank distributed over 1,500 books to add to home libraries for students. Currently the book pantry is located in a closet at the YWCA. However, we are looking for a new home. It is well used and appreciated.
- **Expanded Learning:**
  - **District wide Expanded Learning:** The plans are being developed to create a district wide expanded learning opportunity for all K-7 grade students for the hours of 3:00-6:00. The program would be fee based at a nominal rate with a possibility for scholarships. Programs will be developed in collaboration with schools, community, city recreation and non-profits and a Lead Agency. A committee will be formed to plan and create the program.
  - **Saturday Arts Academy:** Beginning January 8 the district and Art Incubator will offer an exciting arts program for the city. Eight-week sessions on Saturday mornings in performing and visual arts will be offered, primarily housed at Lincoln. This will be a nominal fee based program.
  - **Citizen Schools:** This is in the exploration stage. This a highly successful organization that works with middle grade students to provide academic appropriate and rigorous expanded learning for the 3:00 to 6:00 time. They are unique in that they bring in community experts to work with students under the supervision of educators in their area of expertise (i.e. Engineers: robotics, etc)

• **Community Schools:**

- Using the Children's Aid model, we are in the second year of implementation of the full-service community school at Rosa Parks and Central (Central Campus Community School). This year the school offers:
  - Expanded day for 220 students: In depth study projects connected to the curriculum, homework help, yoga, Ultimate Frisbee, dance, residencies from NJPAC and Morris Museum, and more.
  - Family Support through the strengthening Families Grant and Family Connections
  - Parent leadership training through EPIC (Every Person Influences Children)
  - Variety of parent workshops
  - GED training through Acela
  - Job Place readiness ESL provided by Jewish Vocational Services
  - Special Events such as a visit to the ballet and folkloric presentation

This year Family Connections moved into the role of Lead Agency. We are currently aggressively working to provide onsite medical services. This is starting with vision screening for all kindergarten and first grade students through Prevent Blindness.

• **District wide Initiatives:**

- PreK- 3: Although the Foundation for Child Development pulled out of New Jersey, the district did establish funding to move this important initiative through JPMorgan Chase and ACNJ. The two year goals are to:
  - Create a model Early Learning Center at Central
  - Implement the Work Sampling System of authentic assessment district wide grades K-2
  - Provide intensive professional development for administrators on best instructional practices for the early grades
  - Provide for systemic programmatic assessment through the use of APEEC
- Turnaround: As an organization Turnaround goals are:
  - act against adversity' as it manifests in student needs;
  - create a safe and orderly environment;
  - support positive adult-student relationships;
  - develop a strong and professional teaching staff who take responsibility for student achievement and can effectively support the learning needs of high-poverty students;
  - establish leadership that is creative in addressing problems.

They support this by working with and in the schools as a support for the leadership in creating or enhancing systems of delivering behavioral support for students. They work with outside resources to bring accessibility to high need schools.

Turnaround in Orange is funded by a local philanthropist and is currently working in three schools: Oakwood, Forest, and OPA. Plans for expansion are in the works.

- Rising Tide: This program supports women, minorities, immigrants and other traditionally marginalized populations to start and grow successful businesses. By investing in the entrepreneurial spirit that *already exists* in distressed communities, they can make a lasting difference. The district is developing a partnership with Rising Tide to bring this valuable service to our families.
- Educational Competitions, Specialized Instruction: The following opportunities are also available for the students:
- Academic Decathlon- Team is forming at OHS. This year will be the preparation year to work toward next year in competition of intellect with other schools in the areas of arts, economics, essay, interview, math, music, science, social studies and speech.
- First Legos- The best way to summarize *FIRST* LEGO League is to say that it is a robotics program for 9 to 16 year olds (9 to 14 in the US and Canada), which is designed to get children excited about science and technology -- and teach them valuable employment and life skills. Lego kits were provided to every school in the district. Many schools are beginning to form a team. OHS took the lead and went to some of the competitions to better understand the process.
- Project Citizen- *We the People: Project Citizen* is a curricular program for middle, secondary, and post-secondary students, youth organizations, and adult groups that promote competent and responsible participation in local and state government. The program helps participants learn how to monitor and influence public policy. In the process, they develop support for democratic values and principles, tolerance, and feelings of political efficacy
- NJ Shakespeare- The NJ Shakespeare Company will do their second year of residency at Forest. They work with the fifth grade class to explore the Bard and put on a production of a Shakespearean play.

### Special Services

- The Special Services Department has developed a newsletter to keep parents and the community informed of important events and accomplishments by students and departmental staff. Featured in the first edition is Jani Rimpici, a school psychologist at Orange High School who has achieved national certification as a school psychologist by the National Association of School Psychologists. This association supports school psychology through leadership to enhance the mental health and educational competence of all children.

A detailed description of the course requirements needed to become a school psychologist and the role and function of the school psychologist in helping and assisting students is outlined to help parents become familiar with their responsibilities and how they can access their services.

The district is very proud that one of our school psychologist was bestowed this prestigious award by the National School Psychology Certification Board (NSPCB). Special thanks to our outstanding editor, Alexandra Protopapas, special education teacher at Orange High School.

- The community is invited to attend our **Parent, Teacher and Student Conference**, a new fall conference that will be conducted annually. This conference is sponsored in conjunction with the Orange Education Association (OEA) and the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA). Many workshops and entertainment are planned for parents, teachers and students. There will be fun activities for students and child care services with face painting and story telling. Students can earn community services for bringing a parent. Please plan to come out to find out about the new initiatives in the district presented by our Superintendent of Schools. Our fall conference will be held on Saturday, November 13, 2010, 10:00am - 2:00pm at Lincoln Avenue School.
- All parents are reminded that the Re-Registration deadline was October 29th. In order to avoid a notice of ineligibility for your child to attend the Orange Public Schools, please comply with this mandatory process immediately. Proof of residency only is required. Documents such as a Lease, Tax Bill, Purchase of Sale, or Property Deed should be taken to the school that your child attends. Please call Barbara L. Clark, Director of Special Services, at 973 677-4027 if you have questions. Thanks for your cooperation.

### **Human Resources**

- The following reports and/or issues were addressed in the Operations/Human Resources Department during the month of October 2010.
  - Completed a Summary of Teacher and Principal Evaluations for the 2009-10 School Year which will be posted on the District website.
  - Commenced the Certificated Fall Report for all certificated and non-certificated staff members; inclusive of salaries, separations, transfers and new staff data.
  - Met with various employees and substitutes regarding employment issues and payroll matters.
  - Reviewed and prepared court documents for employee tenure proceedings.
  - Completed various reports for the District Auditors inclusive of the calculation of compensated absences and terminal pay paid to retirees who retired on June 30, 2010.
  - Compiled Orange High School student post graduation data for 2010 graduates.

## Facilities:

- **Lincoln Avenue School**  
The renovation and addition project for Lincoln Av. School outstanding punch list items is ongoing; Mr. James is coordinating with New Jersey Schools Development Authority (NJSDA) to finalizing the outstanding punch list items.
- **Old Police Station Building 539 Lincoln Avenue**  
At the October 5, 2010 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 station, a former school building. Mr. Lee, Ms. Patricia Arthur, Board President, and Mr. Randall, Board Attorney presented the district intention and need for the 539 Lincoln Avenue former school building. The Council Vice President requested the identification of the attorney that drafted the deed and agreement of 1973 between the Board and City of Orange. Mr. Randall has researched, obtained and provided the Mayor and City Council Vice Chairman with the information. The district awaits a response from City Council and or the Mayors' office.
- **Orange High School (OHS) Parking Lots Potholes Repairs**  
Last week, the district scheduled to have the OHS parking lot repaired during the two day break, however the project was postponed due the rain and wet grounds. A tentative date will be during the upcoming Thanksgiving recess, if weather permits.
- **Orange Prep Academy (former Orange Middle School) Gym Light Replacement Project**  
The district has received a letter of approval to bid the Gym Light replacement project. The bid advert has been delivered to the Orange Transcript and the Star Ledger. The bid opening date is Tuesday, December 7, 2010 at 3:00 PM.

## Finance

The district's annual audit report for fiscal year ended June 30, 2010 is ongoing with a projected completion date of is November 15, 2010.

## Future Meetings and Upcoming Events:

### District

- The Orange Municipal Alliance will be providing certificates and pencil packs to those elementary students who have made the honor roll within the Orange School District. For the first marking period, Orange Municipal Alliance will be providing certificates to those fifth, sixth and seventh graders who have made the honor roll.
- First Marking Period Ends on Friday, November 12, 2010
- Schools will have their Parent Teacher Conferences on November 29 & 30, 2010
- District-wide Parent Workshop on Saturday, November 13, 2010 at Lincoln Avenue School
- OEA Pre-Holiday Party November 19, 2010, held at the Appian Way 619 Langdon Street - Admission: \$15 for members, \$35 for non-members and guests
- Hosted by the Essex County Executive Superintendent of Schools – Second Green Expo” conference on December 1, 2010 at our their new office complex in Newark
- The Visual & Performing Arts Master Calendar – *attached*.

Park Avenue School

- Art Gallery Show held Board Office on Wednesday, December 8, 2010
- Class Parent Meeting - November 11, 2010
- Parent Workshops - November 13, 2010
- Pasta Potluck Dinner - November 11, 2010
- Sunshine Club Bake sale - November 12, 2010
- Fashion Show - November 13, 2010
- Uniform Drive - November 1-30, 2010
- Thanksgiving Drive - October 28-November 22, 2010
- After-school Academic Programs - November 2, 3, 9, 10, 11, 16, 17, 18, 23
- After-school Clubs - November 12, 19

Heywood Avenue School

- Food Drives November 8 – 19, 2010

Lincoln Avenue School

- PTO Meeting November 9 - 6PM
- Mix It Up Diversity Day - November 16 - 9AM-12:30PM
- Parent Teacher Conferences - November 30 - 12:30PM