

Superintendent's Report
Orange Board of Education
December 14, 2010

The following is a report of the Superintendent of Schools for the December 14, 2010 Board of Education meeting:

Curriculum and Instruction

A walk-through is an organized visit through schools learning areas to collect evidence about academic rigor, educational practice, and most importantly student learning. The Orange district personnel has just completed a full round of "Learning Walk-throughs". At least eight classes were visited per school site since September. Each Walk-Through team consisted of cabinet members, principals, and coaches. There were two teams per visit. During the walk-through members of the team utilized the CAPA adopted protocol and looked for evidence in the following areas: **Learning goals evident and clearly defined; student engagement; wall walk (looking for evidence of student work); student engagement interviews (checking for learning and understanding); and effective communication and questioning.**

The walk through protocol has provided limited "practice-based research" data in areas i.e. program implementation, methodology, student response, student work etc...The process has also facilitated conversation, best practices, and next steps in the journey of facilitating learning in Orange. The protocol has resulted in learning for all those engaged in the process. There are two additional rounds scheduled for the year. There will be an expansion of the evidence to be observed and reflected upon for the second round. The third round will be built upon data gathered from the second round.

Curriculum & Testing

Curriculum is complete for Language Arts, Grades K-12; Mathematics, Grades K-8; and The Arts. There are 14 more curricula being presented at the Curriculum Committee Meeting on December 15, 2010. Curriculum Guides have been completely revised to include alignment with the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards, as well as the Common Core Standards where applicable.

A Professional Development program will be tracking the conferences and workshops that are available to district staff. Some of the purposes will be to track the Professional Development 100 hour requirement mandated by the State of New Jersey; to track appropriate levels of Professional Development for certificated staff; and to manage the activities as well as the Professional Development activities that are available for the staff.

A PowerPoint has been added to the curriculum website that explains the function of the new Report Card format in addition to a parent handbook. Parents and staff members are encouraged to review the PowerPoint for information. Both are accessible on the Curriculum Department website.

Special Programs

Montclair State University (MSU) partnered with the district to provide a fulltime Americore volunteer to work with the English department specifically with writing. A part time Americore volunteer continues to work with the OHS students in the area of tutoring writing.

Montclair State University (MSU) partnered with the district to provide a fulltime Americore volunteer to help run the newly launched Career center for students grades 8-12.

The district also collaborated with an upper level class at MSU of Digital Media and Communications required at the university for graduation. This class explores current issues in the digital media arena. They will consult with the students on pertinent issues in media (i.e. Cyber bullying). The OHS and MSU students will develop 5 mini workshops which they will bring to all the OHS media and graphic arts classes during class hours. Each OHS class will then choose a topic and do a final project jointly with MSU students (campaign, psa, etc)

The Harvard Club of New Jersey is working with OPA to provide guidance for students and families regarding practical steps needed to prepare for entrance in colleges for students. They will launch the initiative with a Saturday family workshop in April sponsored by the Harvard Club. Experts in the field will work with families of 8th grade students to begin the college acceptance process.

Human Resource Department

- Completed the Certificated Fall Report for all certificated and non-certificated staff members; inclusive of salaries, separations, transfers, vacancies, languages spoken in the home 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.
- Met with principals to log in first cycle observations.
- Reviewed and corrected the combined Orange Education Association contract; inclusive of teachers, secretaries, and paraprofessional and security units.

Special Services

The Orange Public Schools, in conjunction with the PTA/PTO/PTSO District Council, hosted the 10th Annual Parent conference on Saturday November 13, 2010. The conference was titled, Parents, Students and Teachers Raising the Academic Bar.

Parents and guests were welcomed to the conference by the district PTA/PTO/PTSO District Council President: Ms. Tency Eason. Ms. Eason thanked the approximate crowd of 200 parents for coming to the event and reinforced the "Call For Increased Parental Involvement." This was followed by a student dance presentation conducted by the Lincoln Ave School Swagga Steppers. Nine girls that attend Lincoln Ave School performed an energetic and creative arts activity for the enjoyment of the audience.

Mr. Ronald C. Lee, Superintendent of Schools, followed Ms. Eason and the Swagger Steppers by providing an extensive overview of the vision, goals and objectives of the Orange Public Schools. The presentation highlighted the major concerns as well as upcoming initiatives that are planned to improve student performance.

Children ages 5-12 (Approximately 150) were provided a full service child care activity in the gym which included interactive play stations such as video games, face painting, story telling, balloon art, arts and crafts, and light recreation activities. The activity was coordinated by the Residential After School Program.

After the keynote address, parents and teachers proceeded to a series of concurrent sessions that addressed the following topic areas:

1. Preparing for life after high school
2. Understanding the new report card
3. Using the parent portal
4. Mastering the interactive SMART Board
5. Advocating for children with special needs
6. Using Mega Parent Skills

Lunch was served by the Sodexo Food Service Company and paid for through a sponsorship of the Orange Education Association OEA, and New Jersey Education Association (NJEA). The OEA/NJEA also conducted the Mega Parent Skills Workshop, which was well received by the parents.

The conference offered a repeat of the workshops for an afternoon session. The closing session was used to raffle off a number of laptop computers that were donated to the PTA/PTO/PTSO. Evaluation reports indicate an on or above satisfactory level for 90% of the workshop participants.

An overview of the conference indicated the following

Largest number of parent attendance in recent history

- 1 On or above satisfaction with workshop presenters
- 2 Above satisfactory rating from children and parents regarding child care activities
- 3 Sponsorship, donated food services, and in kind workshop presenter services allowed the program to spend only half of what it spend in 2009

RASP Consultants provided professional services, which included

- 1 Assistance in designing marketing material
- 2 Participating in planning sessions
- 3 Securing and managing professional services to include Audio and visual (sound and projector), Photography, Video, Child Care

A report was issued of findings based upon a targeted review of the City of Orange School District's compliance with state and federal regulations regarding transition from school to adult life on June 16, 2010. A sample of records was reviewed. Our district demonstrated 100 percent compliance in the files reviewed according to the findings letter issued by Barbara Gantwerk, Assistant Commissioner, Division of Student Services Kudor to the hard work and efforts of Special Services staff. - *(see attached)*

Facilities:

The district Facilities Committee met yesterday, December 13, 2010 at 2:30 pm.

Lincoln Avenue School

The completion of outstanding punch list items are still ongoing, Mr. James is coordinating with New Jersey Schools Development Authority (NJSDA) to finalizing the outstanding punch list items. At the facilities meeting, it was unanimously agreed that the district should send a delegation to the next NJSDA public Board meeting (January 5, 2011 at 9:00 am) to inquire about the status of the district' outstanding facility upgrades, renovations, additions and Health & Safety projects.

Orange High School (OHS) Air Handling Unit (HVAC) system upgrade and replacement:

The district is still waiting on the New Jersey Schools Development Authority (NJSDA) to finalize their review and approval to ward the bid this project. The district architect has provided copies of the correspondences to SDA, inquiring of the project approval status.

Old Police Station Building 539 Lincoln Avenue:

At the November 13, Facilities Committee Meeting, the City representative was scheduled to provide an update on the status of above-mentioned facility, but unfortunately, he could not be available to present. He has promised to provide an update at the next meeting.

Orange High School (OHS) Parking Lots Potholes Repairs:

This project has been completed.

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 for approval.

Finance: The district' fiscal year ended June 30, 2010 audit has been completed and submitted to the New Jersey Department of Education.

Upcoming Activities:

District

- Artwork by our students has been selected to be on display at the Winter Art Educators held at NJPAC Saturday, December 18, 2010 in the Victoria Theater at the 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. (see attached flyer)
- Annual Christmas Luncheon at the Administration Building Monday December 20, 2010 at 12:00 – 2:00 p.m. (see flyer attached)

Cleveland Street School

Winter Concert Monday, December 20, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. Multipurpose Room

Park Avenue School

- January 6, 2011 - Class Parent Meeting held by PTO, 6:00PM
- January 13, 2011 - Family Literature Night sponsored by PTO, 6:00PM
- January 14, 2011 - Smile Mobile Dentist at 10:00AM
- January 25, 2011 - Grandparents' Day, 8:30AM
- January 27, 2011 - Winter Dance Concert at OPA, 7:00PM

Heywood Avenue School

- NJPAC Art Educators of NJ Art Display featuring two of our artists, Dazhir Barnes, 2nd grader and Ednal Mathurin, 1st grader, at 11 am on Sat, Dec. 18th at NJPAC
- Holiday Breakfast, Sat, Dec. 18th, 9 - 12pm
- Heywood Avenue Winter Concert, Dec. 21st at 6:30 pm