

Newton Public Schools

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Dr. G. Kennedy Greene
Superintendent

Dr. Alfred Savio
Business Administrator

Principals' Reports

Merriam Avenue School - Kevin Stanton

Foster social and emotional well-being and an academically engaged classroom environment through integration of research based character education and social / emotional interventions.

- Week of Respect activities took place during the first week of October. Samantha Castro helped to ensure activities were coordinated at all three buildings.
- Our first Guest Reader will be Fred Savio on October 17 reading *Kindness is Cooler, Mrs. Ruler*.
- Classroom teachers have completed the Behavioral Emotional Screening System for each of their students. Tier 2 & 3 Social / Emotional intervention groups will begin once the data is analyzed.

Close achievement gaps through research based, student centered assessment and instructional practices for all students.

- Classroom teachers have completed Math Running Records with students. This is an observational assessment tool used to indicate what strategies and thinking processes students are using when doing math.
- Classroom teachers have completed Reading Running Records with a miscue analysis. This is another observational assessment tool used to indicate the specific strategies and reading quing systems a students in using when reading text.
- Kevin Stanton met with each grade level classroom teacher to review classroom assessment data. Tier 2 & Tier 3 interventions groups will begin this month.
- The October 8th In-Service will give faculty the opportunity to plan goals for guided reading and math groups based on the assessment data collected in September.

Increase family and community involvement in school programs.

- The PTO Book Fair was held from October 2-4.
- The PTO Family Fun Night was held on October 3.

Halsted Middle School - Kristi Greene

Increase student achievement in English Language Arts and Math as shown by lexile/quantile growth.

- Specific Targets:
 - Students with disabilities and students who meet the requirements to receive ELA support/ intervention, and students at risk of failure.
- Progress:
 - Universal Screening for ELA and Math Support classes is complete. Information is now being used with PARCC and teacher recommendation to provide 5th grade students with appropriate support classes.
 - October 4 - Met with Sharon Lohrmann to further develop Tier II and Tier III academic intervention criteria. Universal Screening data is being utilized to provide root cause analysis for future professional development
 - Generation Ready has been hired to provide six days of professional development on differentiated and small group instruction on the following dates: October 16; November 20; December 18; January 5; February 12; and March 5.

- ELL Training was provided by Susanna Zwarych on October 3rd. Mrs. Zwarych explained the appropriate expectations teachers should have for English language learners, and how to best meet their needs.
- Attendance at Back to School Night was 52-57%. The staff is looking into planning a less traditional night next year such as a family picnic with a classroom walkthrough in the hope of engaging more families that evening.

Implement research based behavioral and social emotional multi-tiered interventions to improve climate and culture and increase academic achievement.

- Specific Targets:
 - Implement Tier II and Tier III behavioral interventions
- Progress:
 - The Assistant Principal, Guidance Counselor, LDTC, Instructional Coach, and School Psychologist attended the PBSIS (Positive Behavior Support In Schools) training on Secondary Tier Systems on October 1.
 - Halsted 5 (Respect, Responsible, Prepared, Pride and Listening) area [expectation posters](#) are visible throughout the building to reinforce our schools climate and culture pillars.
 - [SASS](#) group counseling for girls in grades 7 and 8 will begin the week of October 10th.
 - September 26 - Damian Petino (Learning Resource Center, Special Education Consultant and Behavior Specialist) conducted a follow up 3:1 Praise Ratio professional development session during Unite meetings with classroom teachers and provided teachers with specific strategies based on their individual needs.

Other School News:

- Dream Girls - We hosted a very successful Dream Girls Day on September 29th at Newton High School. Close to 100 girls from Green, Andover, Newton, and Sparta participated. A big thank you to our staff and students who volunteered. [Photos](#)
- Another very successful 8th Grade Tricky Tray took place on September 22. Approximately \$15,000 was raised to offset the cost of the 8th grade class trip and promotion dance for all students.

Newton High School - Jeff Waldron

Provide regular opportunities for all teachers to participate in professional learning communities to examine instructional practice

- Specific Targets:
 - Develop a schedule that allows all teachers to participate in regularly scheduled professional learning communities to discuss instructional practice.
- Rationale:
 - We do not currently have a means to sustain teacher collaboration to examine instructional practice. We have implemented a couple of short term options over the past two years such as building common planning time into the schedule for all math teachers and for specific ELA teachers. However, these options have inherent shortcomings that limit our ability to maximize flexibility in our master schedule.
- Progress:
 - BC's have completed our school inventory and identified the lack of consistent PLC time as a primary area of concern.
 - Our plan includes the development of an investigation committee that will review options.

Implement a research based academic intervention system to support at risk students

- Specific Targets
 - Research began with the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports in search of a systematic approach that fits our overall needs.
 - Modify the system to fit our specific needs.
 - Identify Level II interventions for ELA and Math to be implemented in 2019-20.
- Rationale:

- Currently we employ several aspects of a comprehensive support system; however, those aspects function independently which reduces the efficiency and effectiveness of the overall program.
- Three years ago we implemented a systemic approach to supporting struggling learners with their organization and motivation. Past principal reports have outline the positive impact of this systemic approach.
- Progress:
 - BC's have completed our school inventory and identified the lack of systematic approach to support struggling learners as a primary area of concern.
 - We have identified the New Jersey Tiered System of Supports as a strategic starting point.

Other School News

- I attended Andover's 8th Grade Parent Night Tuesday, October 2nd. The event was designed for parents to learn about the upcoming 8th grade class trip and also to learn about five local (somewhat) high schools as NHS, Sussex Tech, Pope John, Blair, and Morris Catholic were represented. About a half dozen parents with students currently attending NHS or with students who recently graduated from us went out of their way to share with me the appreciation they have for NHS. Academic preparation, sports participation, elective programs, and relationships with teachers and coaches were mentioned as the reasons their children loved the NHS experience and the reasons they were looking forward to sending another child here.
- Ken and I attended the Newton Pride Foundation Induction Dinner on October 23rd at Perona Farms. As you may be aware, the Foundation inducted 6 new members into our Hall of Fame this year. Roughly 150 attended the induction dinner and, as usual, the evening was a huge success. It is always a source of joy and inspiration for me to spend an evening listening to stories about the impact NHS has had on the inductees.
- On September 8th, Sam Castro and I had the pleasure of providing a tour to the Class of 1968 as part of their 50th reunion activities. About 35 members of that class toured the school recalling old memories, asking questions about how schools have changed, and even singing the school fight song of their day. We enjoyed listening to their stories and hearing the fond memories they have of their time here.

Directors' Reports

Curriculum - Angela Dunbar

Goal: Develop curriculum that strengthens student-centered learning to increase student achievement.

- Merriam
 - Trained new CLT members on the use of Atlas and curriculum requirements.
 - CLT members identified for grades 1-4 in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies.
 - Current CLT members worked on Phase II during the October 8th In-Service Day.
- Halsted
 - CLT members met with their content area and created deadline dates for components of Phase II.
 - All teachers were provided time during the October 8th In-Service Day to work on Phase II of the curriculum
- High School
 - October 8th In-Service Day work:
 - Math, Business, Agriculture, World Language: Phase II
 - Health and Physical Education: Updated health lessons
 - Art: identifying materials and resources for art classes
 - Science: Correlating honors AP biology and to eliminate overlap
 - English: Creating a schedule for shared resources (novels) and modifying common assessments
 - Math: revise the Algebra II scope and sequence
 - The Social Studies Department is currently working with Generation Ready to revise their curriculum and increase student centered learning.

- The first session occurred on October 8th and the agenda was:
 - Analysis of the present Social Studies program - Goals, priorities, instructional programs, methods, material(resources), assessments and decision making.
 - Unpacking Social Studies Standards
 - Create Newton Social Studies Learning Objectives
 - Synthesis & Closing

* Phase II - adding assessments, instructional strategies, resources, and at-risk modifications to the teacher-implemented curriculum

Facilities - Joe Van Kirk

- We tested the air quality in High School Room C7 (choral room) and a surface sample in the storage room at the end of C level hall. The air test came back normal and the surface test came back positive for mold. We sealed off the storage room and I am meeting with two companies this week to get cleaning quotes for the storage room.
- Met with Hartford Steam for the district boiler inspections. All boilers passed and are ready for the heating season.
- Got multiple quotes on trimming and removing one tree along Ryerson Avenue along with raising the canopy of the other trees along the sidewalk. We are scheduling the work to be done on November 8-9.
- Met with E.I. Associates to review the Halsted nurse's office project drawings. Most of the work will be done in-house, so there will be no bids required. We will contract with a plumber for the bathroom and sink work, and another for the flooring.

Character Education - Samantha Castro

The Week of Respect was a success across the district (agendas: [NHS](#), [HMS](#), & [MAS](#)). Moving forward in this busy Character Education month, Violence Awareness/Prevention Week takes off October 15-19 (agendas: [NHS](#) and [MAS](#) & [HMS](#) [Violence Prevention Week](#)). Red Ribbon Week (October 23-31) will be acknowledged throughout with morning announcements, classroom lessons, and varies assemblies at all 3-levels with anti-drug and alcohol messages.

High School

- The First Responders annual dinner (October 1st) was well attended and appreciated by the Pass It Along Club, student volunteers, and the community. This event is put on by the PIA club with food created by the foods classes and centerpieces made by the floral classes to recognize the volunteer first responders in Newton.
- Anti-vaping posters were hung up through the bathrooms to educate and assist students to make good choices.
- The School Safety/Climate Team has continued its initiative to identify students who eat alone and offer safe lunch alternative spaces.
- The School Safety/Climate Team invited Mr. Bennington's Graphic Design courses to participate in an anti-foul language poster contest. The end result is to help improve the language of students in the hallways, at sports games and other NHS events.
- Ms. Bechtel attended a HIB seminar on October 9th entitled "The ABCs of HIB: New Rules, Evolving Challenges, and Next Steps". At the next monthly ABS meeting, she will turnkey for the rest of the district ABS members.
- Dr. Castro will launch the StopIt Free Application during Violence Prevention Week to the entire study body. StopIt is a 100% anonymous and mobile reporting program. Texting appears to be a more comfortable and growing form of communication among young adults, so this tool has implications to increase reporting, climate/culture, and students' level of belonging. It is also noteworthy, that the program is used in 6 countries, 2200 schools, and reaches 1.3 million students.

Halsted

- On October 1st members of the Child Study Team along with administration and guidance attended a PBSIS Training Workshop in Morris Plains.

- Select members of the seventh-grade class will be attending the annual Anti-Bullying Summit which will be held on October 19th at Sparta HS.
- Staff and students participated in the month long project/campaign, "What's Your Anti-Drug" contest.
- We have partnered up again this year with the Center for Prevention in offering 6th-grade students the WNBI 2.0 (We're Not Buying It) program which has a focus on "Media Literacy in the Digital Age".
- The Strong and Smart Students (SASS) program for 7th/8th-grade girls will begin on October 9th and run weekly for 13 sessions.

Merriam

- October 1st – The Ned Show assembly to kick start Week of Respect
- October 2nd – 4th – PTO Book Fair. October 3rd – Book Fair/Family Fun Night
- Students in all grades have been screened for social/emotional growth and development using the Behavioral Emotional Screening System (BESS). Groups are currently being organized and will begin at the end of October
- Cosmic Kids Yoga kick-started on October 9th and will occur every Tuesday and Thursday.
- W.A.T.C.H Dogs Kick off Event kicked off on October 10th.

Special Services - Jennifer Pasquali

- Total CST students
 - PSD: 28
 - MAS: 81
 - HMS: 71
 - NHS: 102
 - OOD: 11
- Students currently being evaluated
 - PSD: 2
 - MAS: 4
 - HMS: 0
 - NHS: 0
- Special education students moved into or out of the district:
 - MAS: 1 In, 1 Out
 - HMS: 0 In, 0 Out
 - NHS: 0 In, 0 Out
 - OOD: 0 In, 1 Out
- Homeless
 - There are a total of 21 homeless students; 6 of the homeless students are Newton residents; 1 student is at Carrier Clinic and all the rest are attending Newton Schools.
- ELL
 - MAS: 23
 - HMS: 7
 - NHS: 27
- *Preschool*: Registration for the 2018-19 school year is ongoing. To date 27 general education preschoolers are on the roster. Students went on a pumpkin picking trip on October 5 to Ideal Farms. ([Picking Pumpkins](#)) ([Hay Ride](#)) These trips are part of the preschool unit on farms and farm animals. Pre-school expansion plans are being developed with interviews for new staff beginning this Friday. Teachers and other interested staff took a tour of Camp Auxilium.
- *MAS BD*: Students participate in a weekly mindfulness sessions with Mrs. Langeveld and Ms. Ferrise ([Mindfulness Group](#)). The students also worked on building a functional dam and a well for rescue purposes ([Well Rescue](#)). Thanks to a PTO grant, the classroom has several STEM kits.
- *NHS MD*: A second student participating in Structured Work Experience was offered a paid work experience at Thorlabs.
- *HMS Best Buds*: There are a large number of volunteer candidates this year. Lunch Bunch is going to Friendly's and Shoprite next Wednesday.

- *DLM*: 2019 Spring Window: 4/03 - 5/24
- *PARCC*: First PARCC planning meeting was held on September 27th. On October 8th all special education teachers, CST, 504 Coordinators, and ESL teachers met to review PARCC accessibility features and accommodations preparation procedures.
- *ACCESS 2.0*: Test Window 2/14 - 4/12.
- *ELL*: In order to address the increasing needs of our ELL population, a bilingual teacher assistant is being recommended for hire. We are also creating two new sections of Environmental Science and Algebra 1-A for our ELLs where they can receive a modified curriculum utilizing coursework and language-appropriate features in Apex Online along with the support of a bilingual teacher assistant. The TA will also assist in our very large ELL classes and other classes as appropriate.

Assessment & Professional Development - Kenney Lutz

Professional Development

- The October 8th in-service day was a success for all three buildings. Each principal designed a thorough plan based on the needs of the staff within their schools. There were a few activities that required staff from across the district to meet and collaborate on topics as well. A few staff members went off site to independent professional development opportunities that they wanted to learn more about and use in their individual classrooms. Overall, the day was successful and the staff members enjoyed all that was planned for them.

Assessment

- Our first PARCC Committee meeting was held on September 27th. We discussed dates for the tests, accommodations, and a timeline for all of our checkpoints going forward. We are situated as far as all of that information goes. We are receiving notice from the State on some potential changes with the assessment plan going forward into this spring. Those changes include a name change for the assessment and a reduction in the length and time of the tests. There will be more to come on this topic monthly and updates will be provided.

Information Services - Mary Decker

- Data Collections:
 - NJSMART – SID management due October 15.
 - NJSMART – SMID management due October 15.
 - Third round of direct certification due October 31.
 - Family Care health insurance submission due October 31.
- Jennifer Pasquali met with the CST, 504 and special education teams to go over the procedure for updating accommodations for PARCC testing.
- Carolyn McKnight, Erin Marmara, Megan O'Mara, Kara Miletic, Enrica Spronz and Nik Lasso have completed proposals for presentations for both the Techspo and NJECC conferences in January.
- The ELL teachers along with Karen Mazur, Mary Decker and Erin Marmara have been evaluating our current tech tools to aid our increasing ELL population. Among the tools are Apex, SNAP&READ, and Nearpod.
- A highly successful DreamGirls Day was held for grade 5-8 students at the High School. The event included female engineers from companies such as Azelis America, Loreal, Thorlabs, AT&T, Johnson & Johnson, and B&G Foods. Girls did hands-on activities while learning about STEM jobs in nontraditional areas. We will continue the partnership with DreamGirls through the C2C program.
- The Technology subcommittees are in full swing now:
 - Social Media has published a calendar of suggested posts by day along with some interesting facts
 - Blended Learning, Tech Skills and Tech Integration have developed action plans for 2018-19.

Athletics - Ryan Hashway

- The NJAC is in the process of planning its annual sportsmanship summit. The High School will send about twelve athletes to this event in early December.

- The NJAC is discussing the possibility of adding ski racing as a recognized sport in the conference. This would add opportunities for recognition for our athletes.
- The HWS is in the process of developing a girls bowling tournament.
- The NJSIAA approved a state tournament for girls wrestling to begin this school year.
- Newton and Hopatcong football received an immense compliment from the officiating staff on September 28. They stated it was the best game they ever officiated in terms of sportsmanship.
- Members from the athletic teams as well as the co-curricular clubs will help set up for the PRIDE Foundation 5K.
- On October 11, Newton boys and girls cross country teams competed in the HWS championship
- On October 8, the Newton boys soccer program hosted a youth night. This was a well-attended event.
- Fall sports
 - Field Hockey 8-4-1
 - Boys Soccer 11-1
 - Girls Soccer 6-6
 - Football 5-0
 - Girls Tennis 2-9
 - Boys XC 9-2
 - Girls XC 1-11

Building Coordinators Reports

Newton High School - Brian Bennington, Michael Grifone, Ana Maniago, Karen Mazur, Jake Mull, Brendan Scullin, Karen Seely-Nelson, Leesha Torppey

Career & Technical Education

Student Accomplishments

- Business
 - Sports & Entertainment Management class is planning a trip to Metlife Stadium in November for Business in Sports Day
 - Sports & Entertainment Management class is forming a relationship with Centenary University in order to work together to run a live event sometime in the spring which will be used as the students' final exam grade.
- Floral
 - The floral program completed Think Outside day when they partnered with NJ Fish and Wildlife.
 - The FFA will be taking five teams to nationals next week in Indianapolis, IN.
 - The students are getting ready for their cornucopia and poinsettia fundraisers.
- Foods
 - Students are prepared different snack foods for the college fair on October 16th.
 - Classes are preparing food and promoting the Foods program during the homecoming game. This will be a nice way to showcase the department throughout our community.
- Technology
 - Our students have just started the Hydrogen Fuel Car State Challenge. The competition is in early December at New Providence HS.

Other News

- Technology
 - The Department has just been asked to work with the Town of Newton to create the holiday backdrop. They will work in conjunction with the Town and Home Depot to complete this project. Our Architecture students are beginning the design element of the project.
 - The Department is in the preliminary stages of organizing an open house breakfast for the community.
 - TSA has engaged the student body with a volleyball tournament, in an effort to be more visible, recruit for the club, and build the program from within the school.

English

Professional Development

- Columbus Day In-service - analyzed data from the SAT and found areas of weakness on which the English department will focus.
 - Will share this information with the other departments so those teachers can help strengthen these weaknesses.
 - Also found a weakness in reading graphs/charts that needs to be addressed.
- Met with teacher(s) teaching similar classes to coordinate texts and improve assessments.

Other News

- Continue to work on improving texts and teaching strategies.

Guidance

Student Accomplishments

- Senior Michael Rizzo has been named as a Commended Student by the National Merit Scholarship Program.

Professional Development

- Ms. Bechtel attended the Sussex County SAC meeting on October 12th.
- The Guidance staff attended the In-Service Day at Sussex County Community College, sponsored by The Center For Prevention and Counseling.
- Ms. Casamassina and Ms. Herring attended the HESAA Financial Aid forum at SCCC on October 5th.
- Ms. Casamassina attend a presentation on the Tiered Systems of Support (RTI), presented by Rutgers University at Lenape Valley HS.

Other News

- The annual College Fair was held on October 16, in the NHS Gymnasium. There were more than 60 colleges, universities, technical programs, and military branches represented at the fair. Mrs. Augello, Administrative Assistant to Guidance, planned, organized, and ran this event, which was very well attended by NHS juniors and seniors. Special thanks to Foods Teacher Ms. Gilmore and her students who prepared all of the refreshments for this event.
- The department successfully administered the PSAT to 182 students on October 10th.
- The ASVAB was administered to seniors who need to meet their graduation requirement for testing proficiency on October 17th.
- Our annual Financial Aid Night presentation, presented by Principia NP, was held on October 11 in the Cafeteria. Students and parents were presented with important information for understanding the financial aid process for post-high school education, including completion of the FAFSA.

Health & Physical Education

Student Accomplishments

- A new student of the unit was nominated for Unit 1.

Staff Accomplishments

- Staff SGOs and PDPs are complete.

Professional Development

- Mr. Muller and Ms. Steele attended a curriculum professional development day at Frankford.
- Mr. Parzero, Mrs. Rimassa, Mrs. Jacobellis and Mr. Pakutka attended a faculty meeting and then worked on updating health lessons for the upcoming units.

Other

- Bulletin boards have been updated in health rooms and the hallways are in progress.

Mathematics

Professional Development

- Members of the math department continue to work on the Algebra 2 curriculum and scope and sequence.
- Members of the math department continue to work on Phase 2 of the Curriculum Plan.

Other News

- On October 9th a representative from Berkeley College came in to talk to Mr. Illiff's Consumer Mathematics classes about money management.

Science

Staff accomplishments

- Mr. Clark has been successfully implementing two lab periods to the new AP Environmental Science course.
- Mr. Clark and Mrs. LaForge have been successfully implementing the new Anatomy & Physiology course.
- Mr. Wannemacher has been successfully implementing the new Astrophysics course.

Professional development

- A PLC meeting was held on October 10.
- Collaboration between Mr. Clark, Mrs. Rivera and Mrs. LaForge was done to help implement the new Anatomy and Physiology course
- Collaboration between Mrs. Perez and Mrs. Yetter was done to eliminate redundancies in Honors Biology and AP Biology.

Other news

- Chemical storage and cleanout was conducted.
- Supervisors for the Science League teams were finalized.

Social Studies / Visual & Performing Arts

Staff accomplishments

- Mrs. Cuozzo and Mrs. Krol are in the planning stages of a redesign for the courtyard outside the art room, Tech Lab, and weight room.

Professional Development

- The Social Studies department conducted their first session of work with Generation Ready in order to refine our curriculum and better align our course work to the NJ Learning standards.
- Mrs. Cuozzo & Mrs. Krol attended the Countywide Professional Development at Frankford School on October 8th.
- Honors and AP teachers remediated a writing rubric to more appropriately identify the AP criteria as published in Fall 2017 to integrate into the World Honors classes.

Other News

- Mr. Filan invited Tom Laird from the Sussex County Prosecutor's Office and a professor at SCCC to come into his class and discuss cyber crime and technology. He will be having Bill McGovern, the head of the Criminal Justice Department at SCCC and former police officer, come in on 10/22 to talk about the use of force for police officers.
- Mrs. Moretz's World History CP and ACP students completed Library orientation with Mrs. Marmara and are currently completing research for their School of Athens presentation project. They completed lessons, activities, and assessments on the Renaissance and are currently studying the Reformation.

World Languages

Student Accomplishments

- All Spanish classes celebrated the Hispanic Heritage Month with different projects, Hispanic games, music and songs.
- Class of 2021 students and Mrs. Adam are planning their Spirit Week Skit. Mrs. Leone has worked extensively with the class of 2022 on their class skits.
- Spanish 1 CP students demonstrated introductory conversation skills through their first oral presentation.
- French 2 students created and presented their Café Skit as a culminating activity for their Food Unit.
- German 1 students made posters of famous German-Americans on the occasion of German-American Friendship Month.
- All German sections celebrated National Teach German Week from October 1-5 with various events and quizzes provided through the American Association of Teachers of German.
- SUPA Spanish students have started reading "La Casa en Mango Street" in Spanish. Once they finish reading it, they will compare the life of the main character to the life of the author, Sandra Cisneros.
- English Language Learners drew and painted images of their native homeland in their Social Studies class.

Staff Accomplishments

- Mrs. Adam is coordinating with Class of 2021 parents to plan a purse bingo fundraiser for February. The class is also starting a Gertrude Hawk Fundraiser with all other classes and a Perona Farms Brunch Fundraiser.
- Mrs. Leone started a Class of 2022 snack fundraiser.
- Mrs. Hannig-Eisenberger and Mrs. Leone are working on promoting their languages (German and French) through presentations and with the help of their students to the middle schools.
- Mrs. Leone was September's Staff Member of the Month.
- Mrs. Leone helped connect Freshman students sitting alone in the cafeteria .
- Mr. Rueda organized the art exposition Hispanics in Sussex County. On October 11th he lead a roundtable in the Library with 26 attendees and three of the 4 showcased artists.

Professional Development

- Mrs. Maniago attended the Syracuse seminar on October 12th in New York City. The topic of this Fall seminar was "A Crash Course in Hispanic Cinema".

Halsted Middle School - Sue Desautels, Megan O'Mara, Joanne Nieman, Jean Perrier

Student Programming

- Our math students have worked diligently to implement the new Eureka Math Curriculum. This curriculum involves rigorous, multi-step word problems with a deep understanding of the content. Students have done well showing their work using a variety of new diagrams and model sare looking forward to a challenging year!
- Mrs. Del Vecchio and her small "lunch bunch" started a weekly art class during 6th period on Thursdays. During this time, Mrs. Del Vecchio and her students go to Mrs. Cooper's room and teach her students an art lesson that focuses on the student's goals, ability levels, and interests.
- Mr. Nasatka and the 8th grade ELA teachers collaborated on a Veterans Day essay contest where their shared eighth graders wrote compositions on the topic, "Why do we salute Sussex County Military veterans?" This interdisciplinary venture began in Social Studies with students learning about the specific wars and the risks that soldiers took to serve in them as well as writing their rough drafts. The undertaking then moved into Language Arts where students revised and edited their essays after creating a word bank with terms and phrases such as dedication, recognition, champions of democracy, and freedom protectors. Mr. Nasatka is hoping that the \$200 prize will come home to Halsted and have planned a similar cooperative effort for the Daughters of the American Revolution essay contest dealing with the 19th Amendment (women's suffrage) coming up in November.
- Throughout the month of October, we are focusing on respectful behaviors that see beyond differences. Students will be reminded of the importance of encouraging everyone. All staff members will be given 4 Brave Tickets to be distributed in October. These special tickets will be earned when students go above and beyond our established norms of respect and exhibit what it means to be a Brave in relation to encouraging others, showing support and understanding empathy. Students who earn Brave Tickets will submit their signed tickets to the special ticket box. Their names will be displayed on our "Be A Brave" bulletin board and a certificate identifying the exemplar behavior that they exhibited will be sent home!
- We have officially started having Student Council meetings. We are excited that our new council has over 50 members. Currently, we are holding our first fundraiser to raise money for school events and trips we will take this year.
- We have six 7th & 8th grade students who will be auditioning this week to participate in the Sussex County Junior Honors Band. Additionally, four more of our students will be auditioning for the Sussex County Junior Honors Chorus. Both ensembles are made up of middle school students from schools throughout the county. Students are recommended for audition by their teachers. Once accepted, the students work together over five rehearsals to prepare a concert, which will be presented to the public in mid-November.

Student Achievement;

Students of the Month - 5th Grade: Leilani Ascencio; 6th Grade: Tiziana Guevara; 7th Grade: Jennifer Ellsworth; 8th Grade: Angelina Urbina

Professional Development

- Kate Del Vecchio participated in the NJ County Teachers of the Year Professional Development Retreat on September 28-29. She was able to converse with past and present NJ County Teachers during this two day event. Additionally, she was honored at the Rutgers Football game on September 29 as a 2019 NJ County Teacher of the Year. Kate also participated in and presented at the Art Educators of NJ annual conference in Long Branch from September 29-October 2.
- On October 16, Harriet from Generation Ready, spent the day at meetings with every unit offering a mini lesson on the four variations of small group instruction. She also spent time in various classrooms observing for climate and room organization. Harriett, where appropriate, offered on the spot implementation tips and strategies for small group application and differentiation. She will be with our staff periodically during the course of the year for specific trainings.

Merriam Avenue School - Rose Lange, Nik Lasso, Scott Zymet

Goal #1: Foster social and emotional well-being and an academically engaged classroom environment through integration of research based character education and social/emotional interventions within the Rtl framework

- Physical Education - Students are working together to create strategies in a number of games in the gym. There is a clear focus on developing teamwork in our classes and having students take on leadership roles in the games that we play.
- Music - Students are learning about the different instruments in the school band and the role that each instrument plays in the band.

Goal #2: Close academic achievement gaps through implementing Rtl practices and promote inclusionary educational practices for all students school-wide

- Physical Education - 3rd and 4th grade students often have physical education together and are having opportunities to be blended together during activities. Students are encouraged to get to know students from another grade level by working together during Walk and Talk.
- Art and Music classes are beginning to work on their year long theme of weather that will be on display at each grade level concert.
- World Language class students are learning vocabulary and how to communicate in Spanish. We talk about schools in different Spanish speaking countries, including how similar and different they are, their location, subjects, clothes they wear and also their cultural traditions.

Goal #3: Integrate digital learning and literacy into classroom instruction in order to enhance and individualize student learning

- Physical Education - Students are learning to exercise with music during their PE classes and follow commands and moving throughout the gym with different gross motor skills to music.
- Spanish students are using Google Earth to learn geography, weather, famous places like the Amazon rainforest, the pyramids of Chichen Itza in Mexico, Machu Pichu in Peru, Iguazu Falls in Argentina, and the amazing architectural work of Antonio Gaudi, such as La Sagrada Familia and Park Güell in Barcelona, Spain

Goal # 4: Increase family and community involvement in school programs

- Specials teachers took part in the Week of Respect as well as being present during the Watch Dogs kick off event.
- Art Club sign ups were at an all time high and meets every Tuesday.
- Spanish classes are celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month.
- The 3rd and 4th grade chorus was recently booked to be on the radio in December during the holidays.