

BOARD OF EDUCATION  
57 TRINITY STREET  
NEWTON, NJ 07860

973-383-7392

[www.newtonnj.org](http://www.newtonnj.org)



## INSIDE

2. Stakeholder Analysis of School Facilities
3. District Goals & Action Plan 2015-16
3. Welcome New Staff
3. Parent Academy
4. Lower Cost Services



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Jeff Waldron, Principal  
Newton High School

Kristi Greene, Principal  
Halsted Middle School

Kevin Stanton, Principal  
Merriam Avenue School



# THE BRAVE NEWS

*the Newton Public Schools Quarterly Newsletter*

September 2015

## NEWTON BOARD OF EDUCATION WANTS YOUR INPUT ON SCHOOL FACILITIES

At its public meeting on August 25th, the Board of Education took an initial step toward one of its three goals (see page 3) by completing a Stakeholder Analysis of School Facilities. The Board is now asking our staff, parents, students, and community members for your input. Please read through the analysis on page 2 inside this edition of The Brave News. We then ask you to take a 5 question survey and tell us how you feel about what needs to be done to improve our school buildings. The survey can be found in one of the following formats:

- If you are reading this as an electronic document, you can access the survey by clicking the following link <http://google/forms/D2KAYhgu37>
- You can access the same link under News on the right side of the homepage of our website at [www.newtonnj.org](http://www.newtonnj.org).
- You can also download a hard copy of the survey in the News section of our website, fill it out, and return it to the District Office at 57 Trinity Street.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Greene at the Board Office at 973-383-7392 ext. 4226.

## NEWTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS ENDORSES THE STREET SMART PEDESTRIAN SAFETY CAMPAIGN



Street Smart is a public education, awareness and behavioral change campaign that uses high visibility enforcement, education, and grassroots public awareness to address pedestrian safety issues. The Street Smart concept has had proven success in five diverse pilot communities including Hackettstown, Newark, Jersey City, Woodbridge, and Long Beach Island. Street Smart is a collaborative effort between the North Jersey Transportation Planning Authority (NJTPA), the Federal Highway Administration, NJ Department of

Transportation and NJ Division of Highway Traffic Safety. **TransOptions** is working with NJTPA to coordinate the Street Smart campaign in communities throughout northwestern New Jersey.

Why Newton? Since 2011, there have been 26 pedestrian-related crashes in Newton, including one fatal crash. Four of these crashes were a result of pedestrians jaywalking and eight crashes were a result of pedestrians being struck while crossing within a marked crosswalk. Newton is the County Seat and home to Sussex County Community College, Newton Medical Center, the Newton Theatre and is a walking school district. It is important that both drivers and pedestrians in the community understand their personal responsibilities in creating a safe environment for all road users. TransOptions, the Newton Police Department, and town officials plan to coordinate the Street Smart efforts from September 8th through October 31st, 2015.

# STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS OF SCHOOL FACILITIES

8/25/2015

	0 = inadequate for current and/or anticipated use      1 = adequate for current and/or anticipated use		
	Merriam	Halsted	High School
Number of classrooms for anticipated enrollment	1	0	1
Size of classrooms for instructional adequacy	1	0	1
Science room	1	0	1
STEM / Art rooms	1	1	1
Choral room	1	0	0
Auditorium	1	1	0
Gymnasium	1	0	1
Cafeteria	1	0	0
Library	1	0	1
Nurse's office	1	0	0
Tennis/basketball courts	1	1	0
Athletic fields	1	0	1
Locker space	1	0	1
Rest rooms	1	0	0
Storage	1	1	0
Infrastructure (pipes, wiring, masonry, etc.)	1	0	1
Heating system	1	1	0
Electrical system	1	1	0
Air conditioning	0	0	0
Windows	0	0	0
Handicapped access	1	0	1
Maintenance of buildings	1	1	1
Parking	0	0	0
Traffic flow	0	0	1
Community use of property	1	1	1
Overall footprint / functionality of property	1	0	1
SUM	22	8	14
COUNT	26	26	26
RATING	85%	31%	54%

## Next Steps

1. Identify stakeholder groups; disseminate analysis; invite public input (Sep-Oct)
2. Employ architect to assign costs to each issue marked with a zero (Nov)
3. Engage stakeholders to see what the community is willing to spend to address the issues (Jan-Mar)
4. Build the strategic plan (Apr-Jun)

## DISTRICT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN 2015-16

The Newton Board of Education adopted the following three district goals for the 2015-16 school year:

1. *Enhance teacher knowledge and skills regarding student-centered learning to increase student achievement.*
  - a. Invite staff and board members to engage in a summer reading exercise and book discussion on student-centered learning.
  - b. Discuss student-centered learning with administrators to begin planning staff development opportunities.
  - c. Develop and share a vision for instructional practice.
  - d. Engage teacher PLCs on ways to increase student-centeredness.
  - e. Provide staff with professional development opportunities on student-centered learning.
2. *Facilitate parent and community engagement through technology applications to increase student achievement.*
  - a. Continue to build the district's social media audience through existing (Facebook, Twitter) and potentially new media tools.
  - b. Transition to new website platform to enhance user experience, link social media, and facilitate real-time updating.
  - c. Provide greater public access to district information such as assessment reports, board policies, job descriptions, etc.
  - d. Implement VoIP telephone system to enhance teacher-parent contacts through voice to email capabilities.
  - e. Host application-specific technology training opportunities for parents prior to signature events in each school.

*Continued on page 4*

## Welcome New Staff - 2015-16

### NEWTON HIGH SCHOOL

Carla Brunelle	Teacher Assistant
Lisa Catarino	Teacher Assistant
Chris George	Special Ed. Teacher
Ryan Hashway	Assistant Principal
Brandy Justice	Special Ed. Teacher
Deborah Sumowski	Special Ed. Teacher
Jeff Waldron	Principal

### HALSTED MIDDLE SCHOOL

Ashley Ahearn	Teacher Assistant
Sherrie Banta	Teacher Assistant
Andrea DiFabrizio	Teacher Assistant
Angela Dunbar	Assistant Principal
Joanna Goodwin	Teacher Assistant
Mary Goudey	Teacher Assistant
Kristi Greene	Principal
Coleen Lospinuso	Teacher Assistant
Michelle Mayhood	Art Teacher

### MERRIAM AVENUE SCHOOL

Joanne Campbell	Teacher Assistant
Casey Dillard	Kindergarten Teacher
Susan King	Teacher Assistant
Niklas Lasso	3rd Grade Teacher
Kenney Lutz	Assistant Principal
Danielle Ray	Teacher Assistant
Deborah Schwartz	Teacher Assistant
Jamie Sloboda	4th Grade Teacher
Sara Swanson	Teacher Assistant
Audrey Wilson	4th Grade Teacher
Thomas Zayac	Teacher Assistant

## Merriam's Parent Academy (*La Academia para los Padres*)



The goal of the **Parent Academy** is to bring teachers and parents/guardians together to share important conversation and provide instruction about the big ideas children are learning in school. Parents will receive a host of take-away tools and resources to support their child's learning at home. Parents, your participation not only builds connections between the home and the school, but it also helps your child have the best possible school experience! The Academy is a great opportunity to learn, discuss, and ask lots of questions about what your kids are learning in school! Here is a sampling of Parent Academy content:

- *Learn about the Common Core- what it is and what it means to you and your child.*
- *Learn how to do that "new math" in order to support your child and his/her homework*
- *Learn ideas and strategies to build reading and writing skills*
- *Learn strategies to build your child's self-esteem and self-confidence while also providing guidance that will have a positive effect on behavior and school success*
- *Learn ways to use your own device, whether it is an iPad, tablet, laptop, or smartphone, to help your child's learning while they are at home or on the road*
- *And for our littlest learners, learn strategies to grow big important ideas in little ones*
- *For our Spanish-speaking parents, Senora Smith will attend select classes to translate what the teachers are sharing during their time with parents.*

*\* Para leer esto en espanol puede mirar nuestro sitio [www.newtonnj.org](http://www.newtonnj.org) \**

(Continued from page 3)

**DISTRICT GOALS AND ACTION PLAN**

- 3. *Research, discuss, and propose a future-focused strategic plan for school facilities to increase student achievement.*
  - a. Draft an analysis on the status of district facilities.
  - b. Share analysis with stakeholders for input and critique.
  - c. Employ architect to assign costs to each identified issue.
  - d. Engage stakeholders to determine what the community is willing to spend to address the issues.
  - e. Build a future-focused strategic plan for school facilities.

# RECENT PROJECTS BRING EFFECTIVE SERVICES AT LOWER COSTS

- Newton was one of 219 schools in New Jersey that increased digital bandwidth and reduced costs significantly through the state’s fully funded **DRLAP broadband access project**. The average school increased bandwidth by 2.5 times while reducing internet costs by an average of 76%.
- The Board of Education built upon the DRLAP project by funding dark fiber connections to all three schools to bring them up to 500MB of broadband access (expandable to 1GB). This is plenty of bandwidth to serve all current and anticipated instructional needs in this digital age.
- The district has taken further advantage of the new fiber network by implementing a voice-over Internet protocol (VoIP) telephone system replacing our outdated analog equipment while saving significant monthly charges on telephone service.
- The schools have procured over 250 new Chromebooks for instructional use at a fraction of the cost of iPads and laptops.
- This year we are installing emergency generators in each school to back up critical infrastructure with 40% of the funding coming from state grants.
- The Board changed prescription carriers to get lower rates for both employees and the district.

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 57 Trinity Street  
 Newton, New Jersey 07860  
 973-383-7392

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