

Bordentown Regional School District

Programs for Progress

A Summary of the News & Events in Our School District

Spring 2010

Please see our website www.bordentown.k12.nj.us

Budget Message from Superintendent of Schools

The 2010-2011 school district budget has been developed with a great deal of deliberation over recent months. There have been unprecedented challenges, as our district was charged with cutting expenses by \$1,691,124, or a 4.99% cut in spending over the 2009-2010 budget. Moreover, excess surplus was required to be used to replace \$588,541 in 2009-2010 aid. While responding to these difficult economic times, the Board and administration has remained committed to guaranteeing the quality of every dollar invested in our school programs.

Having to make drastic cuts has meant confronting hard decisions, and while every reduction has come at a cost in staff, services, or programs, the focus of this process has been to promote excellence in classroom instruction, to offer quality learning opportunities for our students, and to maintain the lowest possible elementary class sizes. With these goals as the central focus, every effort has been made to keep cuts from adversely affecting our students.

Inevitably though, the amount of money that had to be cut does impact our students, as overall reductions in monies for classroom

supplies, library books, additional technology, elective programs, and extra-curricular programs have been made. Significant reductions have been made in operations areas of our budget, including maintenance projects. Fortunately, because we anticipate revenue from the high school solar project, reductions were made in energy expenses. Other cost containment factors include savings incurred among staff who have indicated retirement, as their positions will be replaced by lower salaried employees.

The reductions made in the budget affect all aspects of our district, including non-instructional areas. Our school administrators and supervisors have contributed almost \$100,000 in savings through voluntary contractual givebacks and by teaching some summer programs for which funding has been cut. Our teachers have been asked to reduce their annual spending for 2010-2011. All non-essential district spending has been frozen since December 2009. As a school community, the charge to be efficient has been taken seriously, and the budget cuts, while difficult to enact, will not compromise our district's commitment to provide the very best for our children each day.

The many community members who have attended recent Board of Education meetings have shared insights which have been important to the budget development process. As such, included in the budget is the restoration of teaching positions which were slated for reduction, as well as the maintenance of full day kindergarten and busing for all eligible children. Even with all of these reductions, the 2010-2011 budget does reflect a tax increase in each of the district's municipalities. The budget has been cut tremendously over prior year's spending, and despite this, a tax increase still results.

Because of the magnitude of the issues before voters, detailed information about the budget is being made available on our website. You may access information, budget materials, including the user friendly version, presentation handouts, and tax impact information by visiting www.bordentown.k12.nj.us. If you have questions about the budget, please contact me.

Sincerely,



First Grade Reading Night at Peter Muschal School

The first graders at Peter Muschal School participated in Reading Night on February 24th. This was an exciting night for both students and parents alike. First graders and their parents were treated to a reading of the story Rumpelstiltskin as well as various literacy stations, which were run by first grade teachers, and activities designed to enhance the students' understanding of the story. What an enjoyable night our First Graders will never forget!

Budget Highlights

Budget Includes:

- Continued funding for full day kindergarten classes, busing for students, and extra-curricular middle and high school programs
- BRHS varsity and junior varsity high school athletics
- Special area classes, such as music and art, at the elementary and middle schools
- Funding to promote positive student to teacher ratios in elementary classroom programs

Budget Reductions:

- Some retired/non-returning staff lines are not being replaced—continued emphasis is on maintaining current K-8 class sizes
- BRHS electives may be reduced

- Supervisors and administrators have provided \$80,000 in contractual give-backs, including 1.5% gross income deductions toward health care costs
- Technology replacement/upgrades
- Intramurals will be offered to all BRMS children throughout the year in lieu of interscholastic activities
- Some middle and high school extra-curricular activities will be reduced (based on student interest)
- BRMS Stokes field trip has not been funded for next year
- BRHS freshman athletics are not funded
- Professional development funding

Voting Locations and *Annual Tax Impact:

Fieldsboro

Municipal Building;
\$94.30 for a home valued at
\$180,238

Bordentown City

Clara Barton Elementary School
\$160.00 for a home valued at
\$222,994

Bordentown Township

Senior Citizen's Center
\$166.69 for a home valued at
\$281,311

*averaged assessed home values Our web includes a tax calculator so homeowners can determine the impact based on your home value

VOTE

April 20, 2010

3:00pm to 9:00pm

Connected Mathematics Arrives at the Middle School



Have you heard about “My Favorite Number” or “Brownie Pan Fractions?” Ask any sixth grade student and they will tell you all you would like to know about these mathematical investigations. The aforementioned are just two investigations included in the Connected Mathematics Program adopted in the sixth grade. Many investigations in the Connected Mathematics Program create opportunities for students to work cooperatively in small groups. This learning arrangement promotes the sharing of mathematical ideas and problem solving techniques between students. The teacher then takes on the role of facilitator rather than having students observe the teacher explaining how to solve mathematical problems.

The teachers and students have embraced the new curriculum and are learning through student-centered exploration and discovery. In September the Connected Math Program will be adopted in seventh grade and then in the eighth grade the following year.

Annual Jump Rope for Heart Event at PMES

Peter Muschal School recently took part in their annual “Jump Rope for Heart” program. This program helps raise money for the American Heart Association towards research of heart disease. We all know someone who has had a heart attack or lost their lives to a stroke. Over 400,000 deaths in the United States each year can be attributed to heart disease. This program gives the students an opportunity to help in the fight against heart disease, but also to understand the correlation between exercise and being heart healthy. The kindergarteners, first, second, and third graders came down to the gym and jumped for approximately an hour. They took part in a variety of different jumping stations from long rope, to short rope, to hoppy hops and even hopscotch. The students had a great time, got heart healthy and raised a whopping \$10,000 toward research for the heart.

CDA Community District Alliance SUMMER Programs

Register now for CDA's 2010 *Summer Program*. Please check our website at www.bordentown.k12.nj.us or contact 609-298-0674, extension 1200 for further information. Registration is limited so register early!

Preschool Announces...

The Special Olympics Young Athlete Program will be offered for the second consecutive year to our Bordentown Regional School District students between the ages of 3 to 7 years old (preschool to early elementary grades). For further information regarding this program, please contact 609-298-0025, extension 1129.

Presidential Presentation Enthralls CBS Second Graders

The second graders in Mrs. Wawrzyniak's class at Clara Barton School had a *blast* from the *past!* Bordentown resident, CBS parent, and history buff Rich Bergen visited the class to share his wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm about George Washington.

His visit brought George Washington to life in a fun and entertaining way. He told the story of Washington's Crossing of the Delaware to remove the Hessians from Trenton. The story of Washington crossing the Delaware contained locations and other topics that were familiar to the children such as *Bordentown, Trenton, Delaware River, deep snow, July 4th, Dec 25th,* and Thomas Paine which really helped pique student interest and allowed them to make real life connections.

The dramatic presentation focused on a key event which rebuilt people's faith in the cause and fight for freedom. It infused historical information with positive character



lessons such as “Never give up” and “Always try your best”.

Through casual questioning, silly antics, the use of Revolutionary War clothing and props, the children had the opportunity to volunteer to act out some of the parts of the story. The students had a blast learning while laughing and participating! **HIP, HIP, HAZZAH!!!**

MacFarland Cares!

MIS students have recently been learning about altruism and philanthropy. Upon hearing the news of the two tragedies that have affected our community, the fire in Fieldsboro that consumed the home of two CBS students and the earthquake which devastated Haiti and affected the lives of relatives of students and employees at MIS and across the district, our students wanted to act. The question became, “What can we do?” We decided to show them that MacFarland cares.

Students at MacFarland pledged to give to those who are in need. Homeroom teachers met with their classes, and together the class decided on a fundraising goal. Parents were asked to assist students in achieving their personal goal to contribute toward the class goal through the opportunity to do extra chores, earning allowance, gathering up loose change or any idea where a student could make a contribution. Students were seen doing extra chores, delivering papers, shoveling snow, cooking, caring for siblings, doing wash, taking out the trash, walking dogs and many other ways to meet their pledge.



Many children donated their allowance to the cause in addition to their extra chores. Classes also got into the act. One class had a “garage sale” where they brought in an old toy or game and another student purchased it and they donated the money, and another class had a huge “snack” sale. The staff members were creative and supportive and the students were hardworking and generous. The students contributed to an outstanding total of \$1662.75. Way to show Bordentown that MacFarland cares!



Ravenous Readers Follow The Sun

The Bordentown Regional High School Ravenous Readers didn't have to travel miles to follow the Sun. They just had to hop a bus and go a few miles down the road to the Sun Bank Center (formerly Sovereign Bank Arena). Well known in the area as an entertainment, sports, and community venue, the Sun Bank Center hosts a variety of acts such as Cher, Bruce Springsteen, the Ringling Barnum and Bailey Circus, Monster Truck Pulls, the New Jersey Devils ice hockey team, comedians, local high school and college graduations to name a few. The students were led on a behind-the-scenes tour of the mammoth facility by Robert Upshaw, Technical Services Manager. They were privy to see the control room, corporate suites, and the room where the "stars" make themselves at home while waiting for their time to perform. The students were directed to the first level where students saw the Zamboni machines used to clear the ice for skaters when the Walt Disney Show on Ice is in town. The kitchen facility was the final stop on the tour. Food for the concession stands, catering for corporate events, private parties, as well as for the entourage that follows big name acts is prepared on-site.

Following the tour, the Ravenous Readers settled in to discuss their third book this school year, Hands of My Father by Myron Uhlberg. It is a memoir about a man who grew up with parents who could not speak and how his life experiences were heartfelt, comical, resentful and enlightening.

(The Ravenous Readers books and trips are made possible by the Nelchen T. Sievers Grant.)

Bordentown History Shared with BRHS Students

On March 5, 2010, the Bordentown Regional High School hosted a documentary film screening of "A Place Out of Time: The Bordentown School." This documentary chronicled the development of the *Manual Training Industrial School for Colored Youth*, also referred to as MTIS or *The Bordentown School*. The *Manual Training Industrial School for Colored Youth* was established in 1886 and closed its doors in 1955 shortly after the landmark *Brown versus Board of Education* decision in 1954.

Current Bordentown Regional High School students had the opportunity to view an advanced screening of this film before it is scheduled to air on Public Television (PBS) on May 21, 2010. Students and faculty viewed this fifty-six minute film presentation and participated in a subsequent question and answer period in which the esteemed panelists answered questions regarding the process of creating a documentary, the social aspect of attending MTIS, and how historical events like The Great Depression affected this boarding school. Members of this panel included, Dave Davidson, the film's director, and alumni—Dr. Art Symes, Nate Hamilton, Lionel Hunter, and Betty Hunter. Also in attendance were the Lieutenant Governor of the New Jersey, Kim



Guadagno, members of the State Department, and many local governmental officials.

Students eloquently expressed their appreciation of the event while being interviewed by the New Jersey News Network. Some students conveyed feelings of pride and fascination as learning about this story will encourage them to seek additional information about the topic. Furthermore, some faculty members even communicated how this event will spark more infusion of local history and African American content into their learning environments. This curricular infusion of African American content is the primary mission of the New Jersey Amistad Commission—the department primarily responsible for making the advanced screening of this film possible.

Since the inception of MTIS, the state-funded boarding school in Bordentown, New Jersey, many students of color experienced a world-class education in a period of time when these opportunities were not available to everyone based on gender and skin color. Although it began as a segregated boarding school for male and female students of color, it was forced to close when the integration of white students into the student body proved to be unsuccessful.

It's Alive at MIS!

History came alive as fourth grade students completed their Wax Museum Project. All fourth graders researched famous personalities and wrote speeches regarding their lives, significant contributions, and historical accomplishments. They created masks of the face of their subject and dressed in elaborate costumes. Students all posed like wax figures in the gymnasium and held still as they had a sticker on their shoulder representing a button. When spectators, which included parents, relatives, teachers, and all the other students in the school, activated the button the student came to life as the person they studied. An excellent history experience!!!



Louis Armstrong, Walt Disney, George Harrison and Leonardo DaVinci share their stories. Annie Oakley and Sacajewea told of their adventures and accomplishments.

The District home page contains information on the 2010-2011 Bordentown Regional School District budget which is presented on the April 20 ballot. Please visit us at <http://www.bordentown.k12.nj.us>

Clara Barton Comes Together For Good Character!

Throughout the month of February the students at Clara Barton School participated in a challenge to extend the Unity program currently practiced at school into their homes. The Home School Connection Committee encouraged students and their families to live our 26 unity words in their homes and community. Once the students displayed one of the positive character traits, their families completed a heart telling of their good deed.

The Clara Barton students were proud to have their hearts on display in the main hallway. As the hearts were overflowing from our hallway display, it was obvious that the students understood the importance of good character. The school received an impressive 400 hearts filled with acts of responsibility, caring, forgiveness, respect, acceptance, trust and the list continues. We were pleased to see our students sharing with siblings, helping with family chores, caring for a pet, and showing love to their family!

The mission of the Home School Connection Committee is to provide an open channel of communication among the home, school, and community. Through our committee, we have brought the Unity program into our students' homes and community. Next time you walk through the halls of CBS be sure to check out our students proudly living their Unity words!

Strong Showing for High School Academic Teams

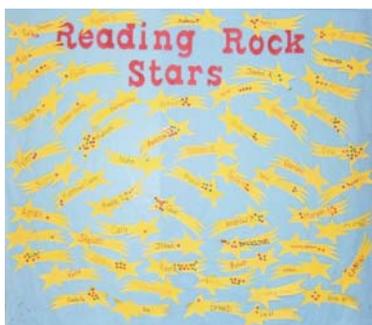
The BRHS Debate and Mock Trial academic teams recently completed very successful seasons, both teams managed to make it to the Final Four in their respective leagues. Debate finished in 2nd place in the Lincoln Division of the South Jersey Debate League with a 12 - 4 record. Each school in the league must prepare an affirmative plan to a resolution while their negative team attacks the planks of another schools' plan. The topic this year was to reduce poverty in America and next year the topic is possible military reductions abroad. For the first time in the ten year history of the program BRHS defeated traditional powerhouses Moorestown and Eastern from both sides in the same season.

The Mock Trial team competed at the Mt. Holly Courthouse with real judges deciding the outcomes of the trials. Each school throughout the state is given the same fictional case and must prepare both sides to compete. This year was an alleged kidnapping case with many flaws in the evidence so nobody would have an "open and shut" case - what fun would that be? The Scotties advanced to the semi-final round of the county contest for the second year in a row defeating Delran, Holy Cross and Cinnaminson along the way. This competition is sponsored by the New Jersey State Bar Foundation.



Debate and Mock Trial are for students who tend to be hard working, self motivated, strong orators, research oriented, results driven and can think on their feet. They must also be gracious winners and good sports in defeat. Debate has a big learning curve so younger students can figure out how things work on the Junior Varsity level while the more experienced students compete on the Varsity level. Mock Trial is losing half the team to graduation so a strong recruiting class will be needed to mesh with the returning veterans. Social Studies teacher John Tobias coaches both teams and is looking forward to new students in grades 9 - 12 joining the programs in the future. According to Mr. Tobias, "Successful students in both programs must be coachable, be willing to learn from their mistakes and be open to critique so they will sharpen their skills for the competitions and life in general."

CDA Community District Alliance Before and After School Enrichment Programs READING ROCK STARS



The "Reading Rock Stars" was implemented in September 2009 at PMES for the Before and After School CHILDcare programs.

Each child receives a card with 8 bookworms on it. Every time the child reads for 15 minutes, they color one of the bookworms. The card is worth 2 hours. The first 5 cards that the children turn in earn them a "small" prize such as a bookmark, or a tattoo that says Reading Rocks or a lollipop that says Love to Read.

Children receive "bigger" prizes for every 5th card turned in after the first 5. These prizes consist of a flashlight keychain, water bottle, or a t-shirt that says Reading Rocks. The top reader for the year will receive a Barnes and Noble gift card. All of the students receive a certificate at the end of the school year with the total number of hours read for the year.

60 students are Reading Rocks participants. Top readers by grade level are as follows:

- Angelo Montervino** in Kindergarten with 8 cards (16 hours)
- Rayna Smith** in 1st grade with 13 cards (26 hours)
- Benjamin Paz** in the 2nd grade with 8 cards (16 hours)
- Makayla Delacruz** and **Imabong Umoh** in the 3rd grade, each with 13 cards (26 hours)

Congratulations to all of the Reading Rock Stars! Keep Reading!!

Please Mark
the Date:
Voting will Occur

April 20, 2010
3-9 p.m.

Our website is a good
budget information source:
www.bordentown.k12.nj.us

Please contact us with
any questions.