

Neshaminy UPDATE

June 2015



Neshaminy School District
Langhorne, PA

Robert L. Copeland, Superintendent

www.neshaminy.org

Students, staff prepare for new programs, grade configuration

Preparing for change



Student Council members at Maple Point greet incoming students with a high-five line before a building tour in May.

With summer quickly approaching, administrators, teachers and other District staff have been busy preparing themselves and students for a number of changes that will commence with the 2015-2016 school year. The goal is to ensure as smooth a transition as possible that will allow students to hit the ground running once classes resume in late August. These preparations have been under way for several months, and include staff adjustments, student orientation, professional development, building changes and more.

5-8 Grade Transition

During May, each middle school hosted tours for 4th and 5th-grade students who will be attending middle school next year. The tours were led by staff and students, and the incoming students were encouraged to ask questions.

Materials and supplies have been ordered and will be available in time for the new school year.

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50 years of service to Neshaminy

The year was 1965 - Lyndon B. Johnson was in the White House, the Beatles were still a new music sensation and Wynona Weber was just starting her career with Neshaminy School District.

50 years later, Wynona is set to retire after all those years of service to the district. For about 35 of those years, she has been the secretary for the Guidance Department of Poquessing Middle School. She will be joining her husband Richard, a former NHS teacher, in retirement.

Wynona graduated from Lower Moreland High School after growing up in Philadelphia, Cleveland, and finally in Feasterville, where she has lived ever since. She met her husband at a square dance in Philadelphia. Both had studied at East Stroudsburg State College.

One of her first jobs with the district was as a secretary for a district school that opened on a temporary basis as Oliver Heckman Elementary School was still being completed.

"I had the distinction of opening a school and closing it in one year. I was the secretary of Northern Neshaminy Elementary School - we had an entire wing >> *Continued on page 2*



UPCOMING MEETINGS

Tuesday June 2

School Board
Public Work Session, 7 pm

Monday June 8

Neshaminy Education Foundation
C&I Conference Room, 4 pm

Tuesday June 9

Board Educational Development
Committee, 6:30 pm

Tuesday June 16

School Board
Public Board Meeting, 7 pm

All meetings held at the Maple Point
District Board Room unless otherwise indicated.

BOARD OF SCHOOL DIRECTORS

	Region
Mr. Scott Congdon, <i>President</i>	1
Ms. Irene Boyle, <i>Vice-President</i>	3
Mr. John Allen	2
Mrs. Susan Cummings	1
Mr. Mike Morris	2
Mr. Stephen Pirritano	1
Mr. Ron Rudy	3
Mr. Mark Shubin	3
Mr. Anthony Sposato	2

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Superintendent

Mr. Anthony Devlin
Director of Pupil Services

Dr. Gloria Hancock
*Assistant Superintendent for
Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment and
Federal Programs Coordinator*

Mr. Don Harm
*Assistant to the Superintendent for
Administration*

Mrs. Theresa Hinterberger
Director of Human Resources

Mrs. Barbara Markowitz
Business Administrator

Wynona

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at Neshaminy Middle School. We had a library, we had kindergarten, the whole works. We opened in December, and we closed in June," she said.

"The new Oliver Heckman opened up, and they had a secretary, so I was out of a job until an elementary guidance secretary retired and I got the job. I worked for three wonderful gentlemen at the administration building."

When guidance counselors moved to the schools in 1968, Wynona moved with them and started working at Poquessing.

She has worked for ten principals there, including one who had been a 5th-grade student when she was at Northern Neshaminy Elementary. She started as the main office

secretary, then moved to the guidance office about 1970.

"I've had wonderful people to work with - the guidance counselors were tremendous."

Students visiting her office at Poquessing have been greeted with classical music playing from a boom-box for years.

"I think a lot of the kids like the classical music when they come in here."

Wynona pursues a love of music outside her work day as well. She is a member of the Centennial Singers choral group, and a cabaret group called CMG (Contemporary

Music Group) in Southampton. That group performs at various locations including nursing homes.

"I used to sing with my mother. I'm not a soloist - I'm a chorus girl...I enjoy it."

Her other interests are square dancing, tennis, skiing, hiking, and travel. In the 1970's, she traveled with her husband Richard, a social studies and English teacher, to India and Morocco as part of a summer educational program for teachers. The couple also later toured Great Britain and Russia on their own.

After retirement, Wynona plans to continue her musical pursuits and spend more time with Richard.



Wynona Weber shows off her collection of locker locks. One of her responsibilities has been to deal with forgotten combinations, broken locks, and other issues.

Prepare

(continued from page 1)

Between June 15 and June 18, professional development classes will be held for teachers. This includes training in Habits of Mind, Reading Fundamentals, the FLES SymTalk world language program and changes to the science curriculum for grades 6-8. Habits of Mind is a program that helps teachers emphasize core skills needed by students to be successful in the classroom and beyond.

School bus drivers have completed their training and will get a refresher course prior to the start of the new school year. The training involved the management of student behavior, reporting requirements and overall school bus safety. Buses have been equipped with surveillance cameras to enhance safety.

1:1 Technology Initiative

The approval process is complete and iPads have been ordered for each 5th and 6th grade student. The 1:1 Strategic Planning Team has been busy formulating roll-out plans, which includes an extensive web site, upcoming live information sessions for both parents and students, and the creation of written rules and guidelines that will make the responsibilities and policies of using this technology clear.

Teachers are also receiving training in the educational applications that will be included with each iPad, as well as the integration of this technology into other parts of the curriculum.

The target dates for this roll-out are October 2015 for 6th-grade students and December 2015 for 5th-graders.

School Consolidation

Construction crews have already begun prep work for Phase I renovation projects at Hoover, Schweitzer and Sandburg. The work will commence in full as soon as school lets out, and will be completed in time for the start of the new school year in August.

Site work on the new Tawanka Elementary School has commenced, and construction demolition will begin in July.

Everitt Elementary School will close as scheduled at the end of the school year and the building will be leased to the Bucks County Intermediate Unit. Everitt students have attended tours and welcoming parties at their new schools. Feeder patterns for the middle schools will not change in 2015-2016.

For more information and updates on all projects, please visit the District web site at www.neshaminy.org.



NSD Teachers recognized

A group of Neshaminy teachers was recognized at the School Board meeting Wednesday May 20 as part of the annual Teacher Recognition Program in the district.

The program recognizes excellence in teaching and learning practices in grades K-12 in four key areas: Leadership, Innovation, Community Partnerships and Spirit of Neshaminy. Teachers were nominated for the award by their colleagues in both the teaching staff and administration, and the selection process included classroom visits, a written review and a review of the nominees record of success. The selection committee included principals and District instructional administrators.

Winners were granted a classroom stipend of \$1500 to enhance their classroom instruction, as well as receiving an individual plaque and having their name placed on a perpetual Excellence in Teaching and Learning plaque in the District board room at Maple Point.

The winners for 2015 are:

Leadership Award

Linda Curley, Maple Point Middle School teacher
Linda Hyjurick, Walter Miller Elementary School teacher
Sharon Marte, Poquessing Middle School teacher

Innovation Award

Brian McPeake, Neshaminy High School teacher

Community Partnership Award

Carrie Lenahan, Pearl S. Buck Elementary School guidance counselor

Spirit of Neshaminy Award

Richard Kain, Neshaminy High School teacher
Judy Oswald, Pearl S. Buck Elementary School teacher
Steve Simons, Carl Sandburg Elementary School teacher



School schedule changes for 2015-16

As part of an effort to bring the reality of bus scheduling and local traffic in line with school schedules, NSD will alter the school days for students in some elementary schools and all the middle schools beginning in August. The current two start times for elementary schools will be reduced to one, the middle school times will shift by ten minutes, but the high school schedule will not be affected.

According to Facilities Director Paul Minotti, the change was made in response to increasing traffic throughout the district over the past few years, which was making it harder for buses to complete two elementary school runs as they do now. Simplifying the schedule will also make it easier to accommodate the transportation of special needs students and make it easier to schedule before and after-school activities.

The new schedule will be as follows:

- ▶ High School: 7:16 AM - 2:14 PM
- ▶ Middle schools: 7:55 AM - 2:55 PM
- ▶ Elementary schools: 9:10 AM - 3:35 PM

Late activity buses will depart at 4:15 PM from the middle schools (Mon - Thurs) and 5:15 PM from both the middle schools and high school (Mon - Fri). Questions about the new schedule should be directed to the school offices.

NEF awards over \$8K in grants

The Neshaminy Education Foundation recently awarded over \$8,000.00 in grants to 11 teachers throughout the district as part of their annual grant program. The grants ranged from \$239.00 for a classroom organizational system for Ferderbar Elementary School to \$1499.55 for a team of art teachers from Walter Miller Elementary School and Albert Schweitzer Elementary School who wanted to implement 'The Watercolor Monotype - Working with Artistic Styles.' Business teachers at the high school purchased virtual restaurant business simulation software for \$1095.00, and four teachers at Heckman ES were able to purchase Notice and Note Mentor Texts for \$1497.30, to help with reading literacy for third-graders at the school.

A complete listing of the grants is available on the District web site, www.neshaminy.org.

The non-profit NEF was founded in 1993 to represent the Neshaminy community's pride, commitment, and enthusiasm for its schools. Funds are raised through NSD staff payroll deductions, gifts, donations and fund-raisers.

NEWS FROM OUR SCHOOLS

District

STEM Expo a high-tech hit

The hallways and lab rooms at Neshaminy High School were alive with the sights and sounds of science experiments, robots, computers, and all things technological during the first-ever STEM Expo May 28. The event allowed hundreds of students in grades K-6 and their families to explore the expanding opportunities related to Science, Technology,



Engineering and Math (STEM) in the district, and also showcased those programs to the community. The emphasis of STEM education is on problem-solving across subject areas, which also includes the art program.

NHS teachers and students demonstrated chemistry and physics experiments, environmental science, robotics, computer programming, screen printing, digital animation, television production, cheese-making, computerized embroidery and much more as the younger students moved from room to room. Members of the Poquessing Computer Club showed off their programming and design projects. Sixth-graders participated in a 'Mars Rover Challenge' in the gymnasium which involved planning, modeling and testing an automated rover.

Community involvement is an important aspect of the STEM program at Neshaminy, and visitors to the Expo were treated to demonstrations from Bucks County Community College, the Silver Lake Nature Center, the NASTAR Center in Feasterville, as well as Mad Science.

A gallery of photos, videos and social media posts about the

Expo can be found at the district web site, www.neshaminy.org.

Creativity on display at annual Art Show

Gym 1 at Neshaminy High School transformed into one of the largest art galleries in Bucks County on May 20 and 21. Works from each elementary and middle school, as well as selected works from the high school were on display for the community to see. Senior projects from NHS were also on display in a separate show just down the hall by the art rooms at the high school.



The show coincides with the Spring Music Festival at the Theodore Kloos Auditorium, which featured performances by the NHS Symphonic Band and Concert Choir, the Freshman Choir, the Select Choir, Middle School Honors Choir and the NHS Wind Ensemble.

Pearl S. Buck ES

Students Jump Rope for Heart



Recess was more than some outdoor fun on Friday, May 15 as students in all grades participated in the school's first annual Jump Rope for Heart event. The students gathered pledges from family and friends, and spent their recess moving around eight stations on the playground 'earning' the donations to the American Heart Association with such activities as trampoline

jumping, hula hoops, hopscotch and of course, jump roping. AHA representative Margaret DeGennaro, who attended the event, said it is both a fund raiser and a chance to educate children about heart health. Sky Zone of Levittown also attended and gave out free passes to participants.

Once the last rope was jumped and the hoops put away, the final tally was \$3,892 in donations raised by the students for the American Heart Association.

Samuel Everitt ES

Everitt hosts farewell events

Everitt families began the process of saying good-bye to their school, which is scheduled to close at the end of this school year, on Saturday May 30 with an outdoor festival. The party featured food trucks, an inflatable moon bounce and obstacle course, sports activities, games and popcorn, snow cones and pretzels provided by the Everitt PTO. Principal Andre Modica said the mood was festive, with many staff members also attending to spend time with current and past students and their families. Modica credited the PTO with their help organizing and sponsoring the event.



A final community open house is scheduled for Wednesday, June 3 from 7-9 PM. Staff members will be present to interact with current or former students, community members and staff that want to take a final look around and reminisce. The building has been leased to the Bucks County Intermediate Unit, which will begin moving in on July 1, 2015 and operate several student programs there.

Joseph Ferderbar ES



Science on Display

The first annual Science Fair at Ferderbar was held on the evening of May 27 for families with an encore presentation on May 28 during the school day for classmates. Students in grades 3-5 who wanted to create a project have been working with representatives from Mad Science, who assisted them with preparing their projects over the past few months.

Oliver Heckman ES

'Amelia Bedelia' author visits Heckman

Herman Parish, current author of the beloved 'Amelia Bedelia' book series, visited students at Oliver Heckman Elementary School Tuesday, May 12.



Parish spent the day in workshops and giving a presentation at which he talked about the history of the series, his aunt Peggy Parish who created the Amelia Bedelia character and authored the first books, and the art of writing. Students prepared for the visit by decorating the school with drawings and posters, as well as completing writing assignments that emphasized the unique play on words found in the books.

History comes to life at 'Wax Museum'



Third-grade students not only researched various important historical figures in history, sports, and entertainment, but also dressed like them and gave short presentations about their lives for parents and classmates in mid-May. On May 11, the students lined the edges of the playground and their classmates from other grades made their way around the circle, stopping and learning about each character as they did so. The third-grade 'celebrities' repeated their performance for parents the following evening.

Herbert Hoover ES

PB&J Day nets a food pantry donation

You may not know that April 2 is National Peanut Butter and Jelly Day (it is) but PTO President Jen Rickards does and students at Hoover turned that fact into a sizable donation to the Pennel Food Pantry in May.

The PTO organized the drive, and students started bringing in jars of the lunchtime staple and leaving them at a collection point in the lobby of the school. On May 19, the jars were collected and brought to the Pennel Food Pantry, which is one of three pantries operated by the Bucks County Housing Group (BCHG). According to a letter from BCHG Food

Pantry Coordinator, they were completely out of peanut butter and jelly, so the total donation of 284 pounds filled an empty shelf and a community need.

In January the PTO collected cans of soup for National Soup Month. Rickards said she plans to hold a cereal drive next March, which just happens to be when National Cereal Day is celebrated (March 7). Now you know.

Lower Southampton ES

LoSo community welcomes soldier Dad home

Lower Southampton welcomed Leonard Cassidy home from a one-year tour of duty with the Army in a very special way May 18.

Students at the school participated in a normal fire drill, something they do on a regular basis at the school. But this time the fire company actually arrived, along with several police cars. Aboard the fire truck was Mr. Cassidy, who had



just returned from Afghanistan and was seeing his children, who are students at Lower South, for the first time since he got back. All three were reunited with their father in front of cheering

classmates and staff.

His wife and a younger child were also present, and the entire family was taken to their home in the fire truck with a police escort courtesy of the Lower Southampton Fire Department and Police.

Walter Miller ES

Reading celebrated with activities

Children's Book Week has been celebrated annually since 1919. Miller celebrated with a smattering of literacy activities - each day the boys and girls partook in a fun reading activity. To kick-off the big event they held a Poetry Celebration. Each class came together to share delightful poems with each other.

Following that, they held "Read Me Day" during which students, faculty, and staff wore something that could be read. The teachers took it up a notch by wearing college or university apparel to promote higher education. Many

colleges were represented from private to state, and even a couple of Ivy League schools!

A 'Book Buffet' was next on the agenda. Each child brought in a favorite book to share with their classmates. Students were encouraged to whet their reading appetite by reading a variety of different genres.



Another fun experience for all was the 'Book-nic.' The boys and girls packed a snack, a blanket, and a book and settled in a scenic spot for a few pleasurable moments of reading in the great outdoors. Students had the opportunity to read books independently and/or listen to a story read aloud.

Albert Schweitzer ES

Positive Support efforts lauded

On May 27 and 28, a group of Albert Schweitzer staff members traveled to the Pennsylvania Positive Behavior and Interventions and Supports Implementers' forum in Hershey where the school was recognized for "Implementation with Fidelity at the Tier I level." The school received a banner for display. The school team was also asked to create a poster display as part of the implementer's forum.

Student talent on display

On May 26, Albert Schweitzer Elementary School held its' annual Talent Show. The students were very excited to perform a number of dance, singing and acrobatic routines for their parents and friends.

Maple Point MS

MP earns No Place for Hate designation

The No Place for Hate (NPFH) Club at MP has been busy over the past year, and as a result of that hard work the school has been officially designated a No Place for Hate School, and was awarded a banner during a ceremony on May 28. The award was presented by NPFH Assistant Project Director Lindsay Shafer.

The program was developed by the Anti-Defamation League as a way to challenge bigotry and intolerance. 220 schools in the Philadelphia region participate in the program, which was endorsed by then Governor Ed Rendell in 2006.

To earn the designation, members of the No Place for Hate Club had to complete five projects and adopt a resolution

pledging to create a more inclusive school. The projects included a ‘Power Team’ assembly during which students learned about the effects of bullying and how to respond to bullying. Another project involved collecting gently used books to be sent to an elementary school in the Olney section of Philadelphia, and participated in a video chat with students at the school.

Another highlight was a ‘Diversity Doors’ Contest where students decorated doors throughout the building with



themes that encouraged community, acceptance and awareness of discrimination and bullying.

Student in the NPFH Club accepted the banner along with advisers Tedri Paris-Powell, Gail Gallagher, Tracey Taylor and Principal Andy Sokol at the ceremony.

Poquessing MS

Middle schools rock #girlSTEM

On May 21, 71 girls from all three middle schools attended the third annual #girlSTEM conference at Delaware Valley University, hosted by the Bucks County Intermediate Unit. Each girl was able to choose attending three of 32 sessions in subjects that included:

- Using and Understanding Mathematics
- Game Creation with Touch Develop
- Tissue Engineering and Regenerative Engineering
- Arduino (programming language)

The purpose of the conference is to engage girls interested in STEM fields, equip them with critical thinking, problem-solving and collaborative skills, and connect school, workplace, community and the global economy.



Poquessing Middle School Computer Science Club member Mallory McCarthy said, “#girlSTEM was a great experience for me. This program was hands-on and I was happy to have this opportunity.

Zoe Van Winkle said, “It demonstrated many different options I have in my future.”

Carl Sandburg MS

Walkathon helps CSMS student, community

With a warm breeze blowing across the fields outside of Sandburg on Friday, May 29, students walked outside for nearly two hours as a fundraising benefit for both their community and one of their own classmates.



When the walking was complete, \$3606 was raised. Half was donated to the Bucks County Community Foundation, which directly helps families in financial need in the area and throughout the county. Board representatives George Hyjurick and Robin Kemmerer were on hand to accept the donation.

The other half was donated to Aces for Ashley, a foundation set up to benefit the family of Sandburg 8th-grader Ashley Costelow, who has been recovering from brain cancer for three years.

Neshaminy HS

Football teams honors veterans



For the third consecutive year, the Neshaminy Football team was invited by the Langhorne American Legion to put flags on veterans’ graves at the Our Lady of Grace Cemetery. These flags represent a “thank you” to all the veterans buried there that served our country. The players met at the cemetery on

May 16, which is Armed Forces Day, to carry out their mission. This service project is a positive reflection on the football team, the Neshaminy High School, and all of the families that the players are representing.

Playwickian editors accept ethics award

Playwickian editors Maddie Buffardi and Jack Haines, accepted the Ancil Payne Ethics in Journalism award Tuesday May 21 in Oregon. The Playwickian is the first high school newspaper to receive this honor.

"The resolve these young journalists and their adviser showed, despite having a divided staff and adult and peer pressure in a high school environment, is extraordinary," says Therese Bottomly, Payne Award judge and managing editor and director of state and enterprise for The Oregonian.

Seniors honored at Awards Ceremony

With graduation day quickly approaching, Neshaminy High School honored its outgoing seniors in the Class of 2015 who are leaders in academics, music, sports, art,



community involvement and more on Wednesday May 27 in the Theodore Kloos Auditorium at NHS.

The class valedictorian, Jacob Meadows, and three Salutatorians - Allison Kaufman, Anthony Murray, Jenny Pan were all recognized by Superintendent Robert Copeland.

Also recognized were Student Council Officers, Senior Class Officers, National Merit Honor Society Officers and award winners, Business Education Certificate of Achievement award winners, as well as winners of over 65 community and school awards, scholarships and recognition programs.



Senior Matt Cruz, who was severely injured in a 2013 bus accident in Boston, was the recipient of the 2015 Neshaminy High School Pride and Perseverance Award. He received the award on stage to a standing ovation from the crowd at the ceremony.

A complete list of award winners along with descriptions of all of the individual, school, district, and community scholarship programs is available on the District web site, www.neshaminy.org.



Marrington takes gold at PIAA championship

NHS senior David Marrington earned a gold medal at the PIAA Class AAA Track & Field Championship on Saturday May 23 for his performance in the 300-meter hurdles. David was the number one seed going into the event held in Shippensburg, and won with a time of 37.99 seconds. He also competed in the 4x400 race at the meet.

David will be attending Penn State in the fall and will be running for their team.



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