



Hackensack Public Schools

Newsletter

Superintendent's Message

In the "busy-ness" of our days, many times we move from task to task, without taking time to say "thank you" to those who are there, day in and day out, to listen, teach, guide and support. This week, we celebrate National Teacher Appreciation Week in recognition of the meaningful work our dedicated teachers do every day! As a school community, this is our week to honor our teachers and recognize their accomplishments. We even had a special visit from Governor Phil Murphy yesterday! Governor Murphy paid a visit to our very own Mrs. Norma Hernandez, the 2018 Governor's Educator of the Year nominee at Hillers School. Governor Murphy surprised Mrs. Hernandez with a proclamation declaring the State's commitment to honoring her work with the second grade bilingual students at Hillers and the great work all our teachers do!



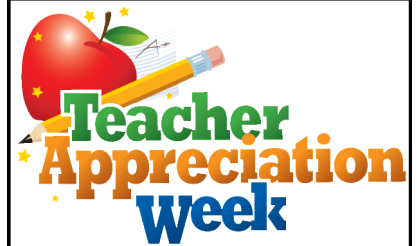
On behalf of the Hackensack Board of Education and our Hackensack Community, it is my privilege to extend a heartfelt message of appreciation and gratitude for all the work our teachers do! For helping students believe in themselves... for inspiring children... for being kind and taking time to find just the right words... for caring... Thank you!!!

Sincerely,

Rosemary Marks

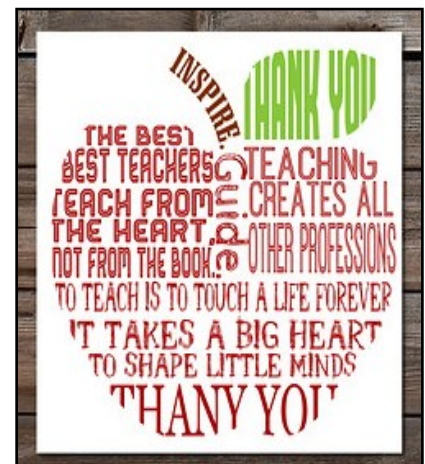
Acting Superintendent

Spring 2018
Volume 2 Issue 4



IMPORTANT DATES

- May 2—25**
Elementary & HMS PARCC Testing
- May 7—11**
Teacher Appreciation Week
- May 25**
School Spirit Day at all Elementary Schools
- June 5**
BOE—Regular Board Meeting



Governor Phil Murphy at Fanny Meyers Hillers School, May 8, 2018



Principal Joy Whiting posing with Governor Murphy



Board President Lara Rodriguez, Vice President Timothy Hoffman and Trustees Leila Amirhamzeh, Robin Coles, Johanna Calle, Frances Cogelja and Lancelot Powell, Principal Mrs. Whiting and district administration joined Governor Murphy in recognizing Mrs. Hernandez’s achievements.

Fairmount School

Fairmount School Celebrates and Hosts Workshops

When Fairmount School celebrated the 100th day of school, it was anything but ordinary here on Grand Avenue! At 9 AM, grey wigs, canes and suspenders flooded the hallways as first grade students and faculty dressed their best to imitate 100 year olds. Mr. Bennett led a parade through the school to kick off this momentous, elementary "holiday" and gave students an opportunity to show off their costumes. Once the parade was over, teachers in all grades invited students to engage in 100th Day centers, some of which included creating structures with 100 cups and blocks, completing 100 exercises, and solving 100 math problems.

Two Homework Help Workshops using ESSA funding have been held at Fairmount School. Families of 3rd and 4th grade students were invited to evenings dedicated to teach strategies and share resources to assist with homework. Families were able to enjoy dinner and had opportunities to win Barnes & Noble gift cards. The first workshop was focused on Think Central Resources and other online tools. Our second session was a more hands-on approach to help families learn math strategies. Six teachers held the workshop; 3 for third and 3 for fourth. The teachers created and delivered 3 mini math workshops. The families rotated to each room and participated in 15 minute workshops. Feedback was very positive, as families expressed the benefit of small group instruction and now feel are more confident helping their children with homework. The next workshop will be held at the end of March, with a focus on ELA strategies and resources.



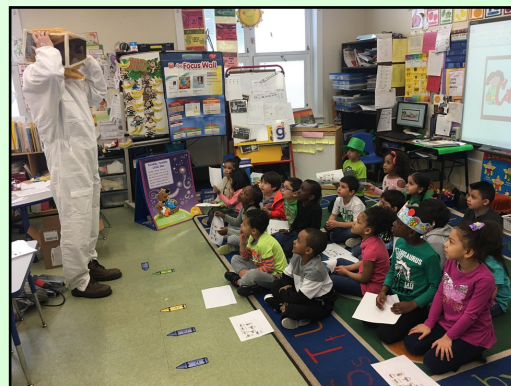
Fanny M. Hillers School

"Hillers School Walk in My Shoes Career Day"

Fanny Meyer Hillers School proudly hosted its 6th Annual Career Day called "Walk in My Shoes"! With a large turnout of over 40 participants, the hallways were bustling with various professionals. Some of our guests included an orthopedic surgeon, engineer, architect, mortgage broker, lawyer, salesperson, computer specialist, hair stylist and Hackensack's bravest firefighters and finest police officers. Our students were able to experience hands-on use of equipment and tools of different trades. Hackensack's very own mayor, John Labrosse, came to visit and share his experiences with our Hillers School STARS! It was a fantastic day of learning. Hillers School students were encouraged to "walk in the shoes" of some phenomenal professionals and dream BIG dreams!



Superintendent Marks speaking to a 4th grade class about the wonders of running Hackensack Public Schools.



A representative from ChemTec showing our kindergarten students what it looks like when he's working as an exterminator. The kindergarten students were mesmerized.

Jackson Avenue School

African American Heritage

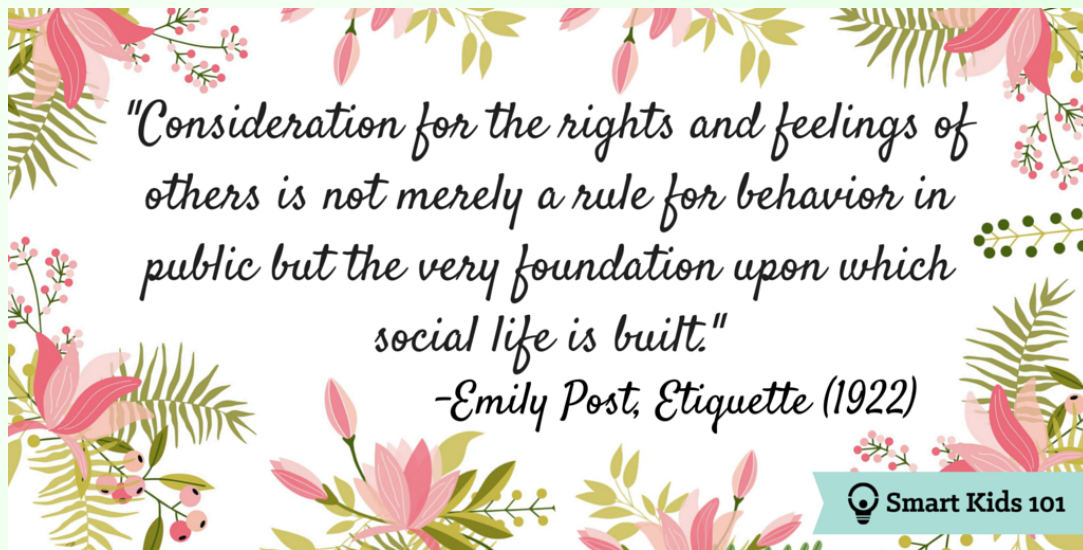
Grade 1 Assembly with Special Guest, Mrs. Andrea Oates-Parchment, Assistant Superintendent of Schools

In January, Jackson Avenue celebrated African American Heritage by highlighting the trailblazers of African-American history. Our students and parents learned about the Clinton 12, Whitney Houston, and the Apollo Theater. Special thanks to first graders for teaching us so much about history and to the teachers who prepared the students so well!

A special guest, Mrs. Andrea Oates-Parchment, was honored for being a trailblazer in our very own Hackensack Public School District. She is the first African-American woman to serve as a Board of Education Trustee, the first African-American woman to be the Principal of Jackson Avenue School, and the first African-American woman to serve as Assistant Superintendent of Hackensack Public Schools! What a trailblazer!



Nellie K. Parker School



According to Emily Post, children should be seen and not heard, but at Nellie K. Parker Elementary School children can be seen and heard at seven- thirty on Wednesday and Friday mornings as they gather together for the Nellie K. Parker Social Club.

Since its inception last year, students from kindergarten through fourth grade have gotten their parents out of bed early in order not to be late for Social Club because....it's rude to be late! This is one of the many social etiquette rules they learn and discuss during Social Club. As part of their anti-bullying and social success initiatives for their students, the NKPSC provides students with strategies in manners, etiquette, conduct, and character education that will enable them to function successfully in all social situations.

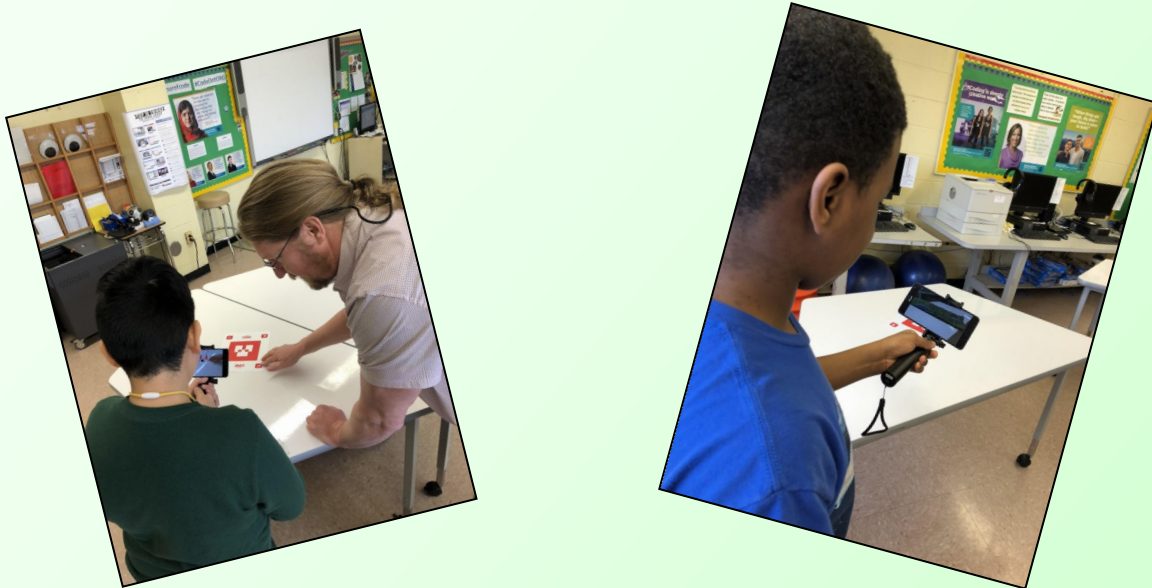
In December, students in fourth grade displayed the social skills they had learned as they attended the Broadway Musical, Disney's Newsies, at Centenary Stage Company (Centenary College) in Hackettstown, NJ. Other attendees and staff gazed with admiration as the boys, dressed in their shirts and ties, offered their elbows to the girls, dressed in their Sunday best, as they exited the bus and escorted them into the theater. The compliments and whispered oohs and ahhs could be heard all around. For the past six weeks, students in kindergarten and first grade met for breakfast as they learned about table manners, friendship, politeness, and social interaction through books, games and role play. They were excited to invite their parents to a special Parents' Breakfast to showcase what they had learned. Appreciative parents looked on as their children received certificates and accolades from Principal Lillian Whitaker. Comments such as "I wish Social Club wasn't over!" and " I can't wait for next year" was heard from plaintive little voices as parents hugged their little ones as they left for work. Well, ladies and gentlemen, this writer can't wait either!



Hackensack Middle School

HMS GETS GOOGLEY

Google Pioneer Program returned to Hackensack Middle School this month to provide students another opportunity to experience Google's Augmented Reality, a program currently in beta testing. Students were able to create their virtual reality experience using a 360-degree camera and the Google app.



Hackensack High School

Academic Decathlon Team

Hackensack High School's Academic Decathlon team, led by coach Laura Durso, placed second overall in Region I at the Academic Decathlon of New Jersey Regions I & II Competition, which took place on Saturday, January 27, 2018 at Ramapo High School. The nine-member team will now move on to the state competition on Saturday, March 3, 2018 at Ramapo High School, where they will be competing against the top four teams from each region in the state of New Jersey.



Hackensack's Academic Decathlon students earned a total of fifteen medals and eighteen honorable mentions at the regional competition. The team also placed 2nd in the super quiz portion of the competition. Additionally, senior team member Malcolm Shuler was selected by the Board to deliver his prepared speech at this year's regional awards dinner - this is an honor awarded to only one student each year.

The United States Academic Decathlon Association is a non-profit organization that aims to promote learning and academic excellence through multidisciplinary academic competitions. Students compete in ten categories of competition: science, literature, art, music, social science, economics, mathematics, essay writing, speech, and interview.

Congratulations to all of Hackensack High School's Academic Decathlon team members for their outstanding work!

Hackensack High School Academic Decathlon Team Members

Honors Level: Shane Duncan, Merna Ibrahim, Katherine Oleschuk,
Scholastic Level: Paul Del Vechio, Nasimeh Salem, Malcolm Shuler
Varsity Level: John Gahuancela, Liam McDermott, Sophia Valenzuela

Honors Awards

Katherine Oleschuk: Honorable Mentions in Music, Art, Science, Social Science, Speech and a Silver Medal in Interview

Shane Duncan: Honorable Mention in Essay, Interview, Music and Art

Merna Ibrahim: Honorable Mention in Interview and Music

Scholastic Awards

Paul Del Vechio: Silver Medal in Interview, Honorable Mentions in Music and Speech, Bronze Medal in Economics

Malcolm Shuler: Bronze medal in Essay, Honorable Mentions in Interview and Music, Bronze Medal in Speech

Nasimeh Salem: Bronze medal in Speech

Varsity Awards

Liam McDermott: Gold Medal in Essay, Silver Medal in Economics, Gold Medal in Music, Gold Medal in Art, Gold Medal in Science, Honorable Mentions in Interview and Speech

Sophia Valenzuela: Honorable Mention in Speech, Gold Medal in Interview, Gold Medal in Social Science, Silver Medal in Art

John Gahuancela: Gold Medal in Music

Overall High Scorers in their divisions:

Scholastic: Paul Del Vechio

Varsity: Liam McDermott

Early Childhood Developmental Center (ECDC)

Healthy Heart Event

ECDC celebrated its fifth annual *Healthy Heart* Event on February 23, 2018. In preparation for this big day, the students had lessons on healthy habits including making good food choices, visiting doctors for routine check-ups, and exercising both their minds and bodies.

During the *Healthy Heart* event, the students participated in various activities throughout the day that spread out to two floors of the building. The program successfully integrated the February unit of study of "Balls" into the celebration. Many of the activities included using balls in a fun heart healthy way. Students had a chance to volley beach balls, knock down pins with bowling balls, and bounce on hippity hop balls. They also had a chance to explore science principles, experimenting with various size and textured balls at water tables.

Parents were invited to join the fun with their children and see what they have been learning. They especially enjoyed participating with their youngsters in the yoga activity, and sharing healthy snacks including fruits, vegetables and smoothies generously donated by the Shop Rite of Hackensack.

The day was a great success not only because it was a fun and educational for students and attendees, but also because it was a true community effort organized and supported by the enthusiastic staff at ECDC including teachers, therapists, paraprofessionals, custodians, and office staff, as well as parents and community business.



Congratulations!

To Mrs. Mecka, an 8th Grade English Language Arts teacher at Hackensack Middle School, March was a month of recognition!

One of the most impactful things Mrs. Mecka's students experience is a chance to hear the story of, and speak with, a Holocaust survivor in person. Recently, Mrs. Mecka was selected as the recipient of the **Sister Rose Thering Holocaust Education Award**, which is given annually by the SOMA Interfaith Holocaust Committee.

Mrs. Mecka was also recently nominated and chosen as one of the NJEA'S **WDHA Teachers Who Rock 2018**, a program that recognizes outstanding teachers for their important contribution to society.



Amongst many things, Mrs. Mecka believes that children need to develop connections to the world in which they live in, and to the people with whom they share it with. One can only appreciate the diversity which makes us strong by learning about the struggles of others. Each year, Mrs. Mecka's students complete a rigorous unit of study following the theme of "Man's inhumanity to man". During this unit, students read novels and write reflections which pertain to this topic. They delve into historical accounts of The Holocaust and the Armenian genocide, and study first-person narratives of what it was like to live through atrocities such as these.

