

Superintendent's Report
Orange Board of Education
January 11, 2011

The following is a report of the Superintendent of Schools for the January 11, 2011 Board of Education meeting:

The following programs are on the agenda for the board's consideration and approval:

Orange Center of Excellence (OCE)

The Orange Board of Education is partnering with New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT) to create a Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs infused with project based learning for high and middle school students. NJIT has developed and proposed a pilot program specifically for the Orange Public Schools called the Orange Center of Excellence (OCE). OCE will include a multi-track Project Based Learning program that will provide middle and high school students with opportunities to learn in small teams, by doing a series of multi-disciplinary *real-world* IT projects from business to engineering to humanities to art over a multi-year period. Each project team will be led by a project manager (a middle or high school student who will receive appropriate training). During each project, each student team will receive ongoing coaching in project tasks (by a NJIT graduate student or undergraduate senior), as well as the inputs of an SME (provided by the project sponsor) on the technical and/or business aspects of the project.

The proposed OCE program will start at 3PM on Wednesday Feb 9th, 2010 and end at 7PM on Wednesday May 18th. The program will be for 12 weeks (generally 4 days/week) except for the first and last week. The program will be in Orange on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 3-5:30PM and in Orange and NJIT on Saturdays from 12-3:30PM. This will accommodate the schedules of all track leaders, maintain NJIT as a partial location (on Saturdays), expose Orange students to advanced peers from everywhere in the state, allow the program to use NJIT resources and facilities and provide more time for advanced students interested in multiple tracks and extra work.

The cost of the pilot program, approximately \$60,000, will be underwritten by a grant from the Nicholson Foundation.

Progressive Science Initiative

Research has shown that when high schools re-sequence physics before chemistry and biology, student's skills in algebra are strengthened while in the ninth grade and that the foundations of physics and chemistry is necessary for students to better learn biology. The Orange Public School district is proposing, starting in the 2011-12 school year, to re-sequence the science course for students to Physics, Chemistry, and Biology from Biology, Chemistry, and Physics.

To effectively implement the sequenced course of study teachers must be properly trained. The State of New Jersey Department of Education has endorsed the Progressive Science Initiative (PSI), through Kean University and the New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning, as a program to prepare teachers to teach physics first. PSI is a comprehensive science program that addresses both curriculum and instruction which has a track record of improving Advanced Placement (AP) course development, participation and success. PSI Physics is a 30-credit sequence of graduate courses that prepares

teachers for a New Jersey endorsement to teach physics. PSI is open to experienced current teachers with any teaching certificate. Proven success in teaching, intellectual curiosity, facility with classroom technology, and knowledge of basic algebra are the key requirements.

The district has identified four (4) teachers that it is recommending to participate and be trained in the PSI program. The cost to be trained in the PSI program is based on the Kean University tuition rates. Teachers trained in the PSI program will be required to provide a minimum of 3 years of service upon completing the program or be required to reimburse the district for the cost of their training on a prorated basis for any time less than 3 years served.

Student Recognition

Orange High School's **National Honor Society** held a *Turkey Give-Away* on December 21, in time to contribute to the holiday celebration of over 100 families. The students held fundraisers including a dress-down day at the high school to raise funds for this thoughtful community event, recognizing the spirit of giving to those in need for the holidays. Parents and community members gathered and received tickets to redeem in this first come first served event. The students who participated in acquiring and distributing the turkeys were national honor society students: Rachel Chatterpaul, Diborah Yimer, Glendy Soriano, Brianna Beaumont, Kyrsten Fowlkes, Damilolo Odunowo, Merline Guillaume along with other assisting students: Daniel Lawrence, Nana Osei, Tashawna Barrett. These students gave back to the community in the spirit of the holidays and are recognized for their efforts. Congratulations students!

Orange High School's senior class held a "Breakfast with Santa" fundraiser on December 18, 2010. Parents from around the district brought their children to meet and have their pictures taken with Santa Claus. The families were also served a hearty breakfast and the high school students also provided activities for the children. The members of the senior class are to be commended for providing this valuable service to our community and special thanks to our Santa, Mr. Oliverto Agosto.

Curriculum and Instruction

"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character – that is the goal of true education." Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

The Orange School District in collaboration with the City of Orange will celebrate Dr. Martin Luther King's Birthday from a different perspective this year. We will reflect on Dr. King's work(s) and contributions not only from a historical perspective but also the impact that his work has had in 2011. We will be focusing on "**Tolerance**" (the capacity for or the practice of recognizing the beliefs or practices of others) and "**Kindness**" (generosity, sympathy, considering others, and charitable warm-hearted nature). These virtues support not only the legacy of Dr. King but cause our students to think intensively and critically.

The students will join the national efforts of engaging in Random Acts of Kindness. They will focus on doing extraordinary things for family, friends, school and community. Reflecting on others tends to build character and allows one to grow. It supports emotional intelligence, which we sometimes neglect. The students who have manifested the most Random Act of Kindness and can report on them and their impact will be recognized.

In this day and age, defining and implementing the aspects of tolerance is critical. Schools will be making videos of students and staff reacting to the statement, *Dr. King once said, "Life's most urgent question is "What are you doing for others" my answer to him is..."* These video clips will be aired on Channel 35 and will be presented at the culminating program on February 17th. Although we will not forgo the march we will march with a different kind of conviction. A conviction to thought-provoking respect for differences and diversity as well as respect for tolerance and kindness the necessary pillars of strength for a strong global society.

Curriculum & Testing

A Podcast explaining the function of the new Standards-based report cards is presently being circulated to Principals and will be presented at upcoming faculty meetings to staff members. It outlines the district's movement to a standards-based environment that includes a more detailed look at student progress based on the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and the Common Core State Standards which are the newly adopted national standards for Mathematics and Language Arts. The Podcast will be available on the Curriculum Department Website soon.

Preparation for the upcoming State Assessments is presently underway. The Guidance Department will be the school-based testing coordination team for both the HSPA in March, and the NJ ASK beginning in May, 2011. Training has already begun on the district level, and the new coordinators will also be trained by the state beginning at the end of January, 2011.

The motivational video "Pass This Test" that was produced last year by the Curriculum Department, and created by Orange High School Students will be made available to all district schools once again this year. It is also being presented to the Essex County Curriculum Roundtable in February.

37 Curricula have been completed since September, 2010.

Special Programs

Social Studies: The Social Studies curriculum-grades K through 9- has been written and is being considered for adoption. It is a comprehensive curriculum that reflects the new state standards and includes benchmarks as well a scope and sequence framework. Woven into the instruction are study projects investigating civics, geography, Amistad and connections to local and state initiatives.

Americore: OHS is currently working with two Americore volunteers- one full-time and one part-time. The Americore workers have the qualifications to tutor in the area of writing. They are working under the tutelage of staff at OHS with individual students and small groups to help improve writing skills.

Luna Stage: Luna Stage is professional theater on Valley Street in the Arts District. They have been identified by the Star Ledger as one of the top 5 cultural centers in New Jersey. The school system is beginning a collaboration to bring this valuable resource to our students. The first step is to meet with the Drama and Dance teachers this January to produce a collaboration plan.

Saturday Arts Academy

The Saturday Arts Academy delayed opening because of inclement weather until January 22. This gives you more time to register for this exciting opportunity! Classes in dance, music, art and photography are offered. Highly qualified instructors bring their skills for a nominal fee. The Saturday Arts Academy is now open for grades 1-12 on a limited basis. Registration is available at each school sight. As this is a partnership with NJ Arts Incubator, all children are eligible for classes.

Special Services

Annual Athletics Pre-Participation Physical Examinations are required for student athletes to participate in school sponsored sports. School sponsored athletics such as varsity sports at Orange High School or intramural sports in the elementary schools and Orange Preparatory Academy should be accompanied by a completed physical examination form available in your child's school. In addition to the physicals provided in the schools, a very comprehensive physical examination can be provided by our district physician, Dr. Rosario Zambrano at a minimal fee. Please speak with your principal or school nurse to schedule a physical. It is very important for the safety and well being of our student body that your child is healthy and physically able to participate in sports.

District wide Notifications of Ineligibility to continue attending the Orange Public Schools will be sent to the homes of students who have not reregistered during the month of January. The Orange Board of Education will conduct hearings to dis-enroll children deemed to be ineligible from enrollment in the schools. We urge you to reregister your child to avoid disruption of his or her school program or exclusion from school. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Human Resource Department

- Reviewed and revised the Orange Administrators and Supervisors Contract
- Reviewed and prepared court documents for former employee grievance proceedings.
- Continued to meet with principals to log in first cycle non-tenured observations and half of the tenured staff observations.
- Reviewed and corrected the combined Orange Education Association contract; inclusive of teachers, secretaries, paraprofessional and security units.
- Prepared a Professional Development Report to NJDOE reporting the staff members who did not meet the 100 or adjusted hourly requirement.
- Certified interrogatories for a staff member on leave of absence who is taking legal action against the Board of Education.

Facilities:

Facility Committee Meeting was held 1/11/2010 @ 3: 00 PM

Orange Middle School (OMS)

The replacement of heat circulation and water sump pumps at OMS were completed during the Christmas break. Other problems became eminent after the installations were completed, the problem include a busted steam return pipe under the gym floor, malfunctioned heat supply control valves and busted heating tubes in boiler #1. Emergency repairs were done over a two day period (January 5th and 6th) to restore adequate heat supply in the building.

Lincoln Avenue School

At the Facilities Meeting held yesterday, NJSDA notified the district that the completion timeline for Lincoln School will be further deferred **from March 2010 to May 2010** because of additional technical problems relating to inadequate head room for the installation of a HVAC system in the existing building .

Orange High School (OHS)

The State Department of Education (DOE) and the New Jersey Schools Development Authority (NJSDA), held a teleconference call on the HVAC renovation project at OHS. The district architect (Yezzi Associates) represented the district to review the current status of the project. The NJSDA presented certain concerns related to the extent and questioned the estimated cost of the project. A revision will be made to the drawings by the architect; this may cause a delay to the projected completion timeline of the project.

Administration Building (451 Lincoln Avenue.)

The roof replacement project at the Administration Building is near completion, delay was caused by the persistent frigid weather.

Green Energy Conference

The district was represented by the Business Administrator and the Assistant Business Administrator at the Friday, January 8, 2010 Green Energy Conference that was conducted by the Essex County Executive Superintendent at the East Orange County Office.

Security Cameras Update

OHS need additional DVR to improve the recording quality and capability; quotes are being obtained from vendors.

Forest Street, Oakwood Schools and the Administration Building need minor service call which has been scheduled.

Heywood Av School, need one additional camera in the rear of the building, all other cameras are in good operating condition.

Finance:

The preparation of the 2010 – 2011 school year budget is ongoing, while we await updates from the State Department of Education.

Upcoming Activities:

District

- District-wide Professional Development Day January 27, 28, 2011
- District Closed on January 17, 2011 - recognizing the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- February 6, 2011 - Art Administrators of NJ is sponsoring an Art Show and will Honor Mr. Ronald C. Lee at Kean University College 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Orange Preparatory Academy

- January 20, 2011 – Winter Dance Concert at OPA, 7:00 p.m.

Orange High School/Rosa Parks

- January 14, 2011 - Winter Dance Concert

Cleveland Street School

- February 2, 2011 - Art Show at Board Office

Forest Street School

- January 18, 2011 – Forest Street School will host Anti – Bullying Assembly

Park Avenue School

- January 13, 2011 - Family Literature Night sponsored by PTO, 6:00 p.m.
- January 14, 2011 - Smile Mobile Dentist at 10:00 a.m.
- January 25, 2011 - Grandparents' Day, 8:30 a.m.
- January 27, 2011 - Winter Dance Concert at OPA, 7:00 p.m.

Heywood Avenue School

- January 27, 2011 - Winter Dance Concert at OPA, 7:00 p.m.