



H a c k e t t s t o w n P u b l i c S c h o o l s N e w s l e t t e r

SUPERINTENDENT’S REPORT

David C. Mango

Spring 2019

Dear Hackettstown Community Members,

As the spring season approaches, there is much taking place between the district, our staff and community stakeholders. The district is currently embarking on an elementary school realignment. Several district realignment scenarios have been discussed throughout my tenure as Superintendent of Schools but I truly believe that grade based schools will only improve the quality of our students education. This is a major cultural shift for our students, staff and parents alike but if we partner together it will be a positive and successful change. Aside from the realignment next year, Hackettstown High School will hopefully see a completed auditorium renovation by January 2020. In addition, next year the district will no longer operate on a 90-minute delay and will instead operate on a 2-hour delay schedule when inclement weather arrives or for emergency purposes. Last, but certainly not least, Hackettstown will be on the November 5, 2019 ballot with an extension of debt-service question for the purpose of facility upgrades which include full roof replacement at Hatchery Hill School and partial roof replacements at Hackettstown Middle School and Hackettstown High School.

Below you will find a list of frequently asked questions which have been discussed and shared at our public Board of Education meetings. Going forward, I ask that as community members, you partner with our district during this transition and when possible, become active participants at our public Board of Education meetings. Please join us at our May 8, 2019 Joint Principal Forum at Willow Grove School to discuss the realignment. It will begin at 6:30 pm. We hope to see you there.

Hackettstown 2019-2020 Realignment – FAQ and Answers

Will transportation be provided?

Yes, for any student that resides outside a two mile radius from either Hatchery Hill School or Willow Grove School.

Approximately how many buses will required?

Two to three buses will be required.

Approximately how many students will require transportation?

Roughly 105 students not including next year’s eligible Kindergarten students.

What is the approximate cost of transportation?

\$40,000 per route: 2 buses=\$80,000 and 3 buses=\$120,000

Is courtesy busing, subscription busing or shuttle busing going to be offered?

Not at this time.

What will be the student enrollment at each building with the realignment?

Hatchery Hill School will have approximately 270 students while Willow Grove School will have 340 students.

What are the start and end times of each building? Currently the start and end times are listed in the table below. Please know they are subject to change based on contract negotiations currently taking place.

Building	Start Time	End Time
High School	7:50 am	2:33 pm
Hatchery Hill School	8:00 am	2:30 pm
Middle School	8:20 am	2:40 pm
Willow Grove School	8:30 am	3:00 pm



What are the highlights of this elementary realignment?

- Introduction of two inclusive Pre-School programs
- Hatchery Hill School will become an early learning childhood facility
- Willow Grove School will exemplify a primary school environment
- More efficient use of resources, time and preparation at all grade levels
New elective program offering in K-4 buildings– i.e. Mindfulness, Computer Science (expanded) and STEM
- Additional Special Education Programs

The next few months will move by very quickly so below is an update as to what you can expect at future Board of Education meetings which commence at 7 pm:

- April 17th Hackettstown Public Board of Education Meeting
General
- May 1st Hackettstown Public Board of Education Meeting
19-20 Budget Hearing
- May 15th Hackettstown Public Board of Education Meeting
Teacher of the Year recognition
Teacher Retirement Recognition
- June 19th Hackettstown Public Board of Education Meeting
2018-2019 District Goals Update
- June 25th Hackettstown Middle School 8th Grade Graduation Ceremony to begin at 7 pm.
- June 26th Last Day of School for students. The Hackettstown High School Graduation Ceremony to commence at 5:00 pm

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all community members a relaxing spring season and a safe and enjoyable summer

Sincerely,

David C. Mango

Superintendent of Schools

ADMINISTRATIVE SPOTLIGHT

One of the many benefits of moving from neighborhood schools to grade based schools is that the district will be able to create an early learning environment with Pre-K, Kindergarten and 1st grade all being in one building. Research has shown that children who attend high quality early learning programs develop competencies in: healthy eating and wellness habits, fine and gross motor development, self-help/self-regulation, creative expression through the arts, planning and reflection, eagerness/curiosity for learning, social skills with peers and adults.

Marie Griffin was chosen to be the principal of our early learning school. She embodies all the experience and qualifications to guide this program to high academic success. She has 47 years of educational experience with most of that time being spent in the elementary school setting. She began her educational career teaching first grade in 1971. Mrs. Griffin furthered her education by obtaining a Master's degree in Special Education along with certifications as an LDTC, Principal, and Superintendent. In addition, she previously created and implemented a developmental first grade class.

Mrs. Griffin believes that "it takes a Big Heart to shape little minds." That is why she promotes love, warmth, acceptance, and welcomes all in the Hatchery Hill School. Her commitment to our district and community is evident through the thirteen years she has dedicated to our students and staff. Involvement with a multitude of parent and community groups has defined Mrs. Griffin's exceptional wisdom and innovative leadership within the Hackettstown community. Without a doubt, Mrs. Griffin is the ideal leader to oversee Hackettstown School District's first early learning school which will be located at Hatchery Hill School for the 2019-2020 school year.

Like the rest of the Hackettstown community, our students and staff are excited about the approaching warm weather and all spring activities that are associated with this time of year. At Hackettstown High School the winter months may have brought some chilling cold nights but that did not stop us from performing at a high level in athletics, the arts, and throughout the community. Below are some notable accomplishments that deserve to be recognized, as well as, a few dates to remember.

Athletics:

The Boys and Girls Basketball Teams were awarded the Frank CeCala Sportsmanship Award as the Warren County representative by the NW Jersey Basketball Officials. In addition, the Girls Basketball Team won the NJAC Colonial Division Championship. Shannon Gulick was a State Medalist placing sixth in the State at the first ever NJSIAA Girls Wrestling Championship in Atlantic City, NJ. Four hockey players that represented Hackettstown High School on our tri-operative team also received individual acknowledgment. Kevin Murphy was voted Most Valuable Defensive Player and named 1st Team MCSSIHL. John Salvia received the Hobie Baker Award, Mike Veronda was awarded the Senior Scholarship, and Evan Parr was named Honorable Mention MCSSIHL.

Co-Curricular Accomplishments:

Our robotics team won the Engineering Inspiration Award at the Mount Olive District Competition for its work advancing respect and appreciation for engineering in the Hackettstown community. They also recently represented us in the Mid-Atlantic Region Championships at Lehigh for a chance at the regional award.

The members of National Honor Society, in conjunction with Miller Keystone Blood Center, successfully conducted their Spring Blood Drive. They registered 75 donors and collected 61 units of blood! National Honor Society also conducted its first ever "Sock Drop" for the homeless living in New York City. Dozens of pairs of new socks were collected from the school community during the month of February.

National Art Honor Society celebrated Youth Art Month by asking the student body and the faculty to participate in a collaborative mural. The theme of this years Y.A.M. was "Your Art, Your Story." The mural is growing larger each day and is currently on view in the Media Center. We are also proud to announce that two members received recognition in the 2019 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards, presented by Montclair Art Museum. Alyssa Rivera received an Honorable Mention for her painting entitled, "The Never Ending Feeling of Loss" and Amanda Tong received a Gold Key for her photograph entitled, "Neon Dream".

Tri-M Music Honor Society inducted eighteen new members in January. Sixteen students auditioned for and participated in the 2019 Morris Area Honor Choir. Three students participated in the North Jersey Region Choir and one student, Amanda Ackerman, traveled to Kansas City, Missouri, to perform with the 2019 National Honor Choir. Thousands tried out for nationals but only 300 students across the nation were selected.

In band, the Hackettstown Indoor Percussion Ensemble made its debut on March 9th, winning first place at their first competition. Wind Ensemble member Ian Jagnandan represented Hackettstown HS at the NJSMA Junior Region Band Concert. Two of our students, Evan Purification and Jacob Garabed, were invited to perform alongside the US Army Band Jazz Ambassadors at their performance at the Lackland Center at Centenary University. Artist, Amanda Tong, was among the 74 artworks selected for inclusion in the 2019 NAHS/NJAHS Juried Exhibition Virtual Gallery which will be showcased on the NAEA website at: <https://www.arteducators.org/opportunities/naea-studio-gallery-exhibitions/current-exhibitions>

Our Key Club recently returned home from the District Convention in Long Branch, New Jersey. They received first Place for the Kiwanis Family Relations Award in the State for our Bell Ringing Service Project. A first Place Platinum Award for a Single Service Project for the Arc Winter Carnival which the State Board will now take to the National Level. They were also recognized for being the Host Club for the Regional Training Conference in September and recognized as a Distinguished Club in the State of NJ by the International Trustee.

Special Event Recognition:

Finally, we are very proud to announce that senior Erin Nappi was selected to receive the Centenary Partnership Scholarship. This scholarship entitles her to a four-year undergraduate degree at Centenary University with free tuition. Congratulations Erin!

Dates To Remember

The Hackettstown Drama Club puts on their Spring Musical "Tuck Everlasting" at Country Gate Theater in Belvidere April 11th-14th. Email shiggins@hackettstown.org for tickets.

- April 17th we have presenter David Flood at HHS talking to students about acting with dignity and respect.
- Spring recess is scheduled for the week of April 22nd. State testing will begin immediately after spring recess on April 29th and go through May 10th.



Hackettstown Middle School Tigers are roaring into the spring season, shaking the cold winter air all the way down the back and off their tails, while preparing to bask in the sunlight. Continuing to build upon our two initiatives, Character Education and Public Speaking, students have been and will continue being provided with real-world topics and experiences to enhance the curricula.

February was the month of Kindness, collaborating with the High School, the Middle School community participated in small group activities. Shapes were created for "Acts of Kindness;" memories of past acts written on the front, with aspirations of future acts on the back. The shapes created a Spring landscape (displayed in the main hallway) with grass (hand cutouts), butterflies and leaves in hope that each past kind act can be "flipped" by the end of the school year, changing the scenery.

Our school and District is proud to join the town, in conjunction with Warren County and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) for the *StigmaFree Campaign* in the effort to end stigma and create hope for those affected by mental illness and substance use disorder. In the continued effort to link the character traits each month, Mindfulness in March flowed into being *StigmaFree* for April. As information was presented throughout the month to all stakeholders, they were asked to publicly recognize, re-educate and reduce the

stigma associated with mental illness and substance use disorders in every aspect of their lives.

May begins the month of foresight in an attempt to become proactive. The fifth graders will be honored at their D.A.R.E. graduation on May 1, 2019 as Hackettstown Police Department's Detective Sergeant Perkins and Officer Smith taught the students decision making skills for safe and healthy living. The student body will be provided the opportunity to speak to representatives of the various fields, careers, and vocations during Career Day on May 10, 2019; of course we always encourage participation to further enhance the student experience, do not hesitate to reference the information on the website.

As Hackettstown Middle School begins the transition from 2018-2019 to 2019-2020, there are several important dates, please continue to access our website (www.Hackettstown.org/HMS) for upcoming events and activities, specifically for Standardized Assessments, Concerts, Field Trips, and Promotions, while following HMS on Twitter **@HackMSTigers**. Sit back and enjoy your Spring Season, as Summer will be here before you know it!

Curriculum Corner, Debra Grigoletti - Director of Curriculum and Instruction

Leo Tolstoy said so eloquently and accurately that "spring is the time of plans and projects." Hackettstown is in the midst of making plans and working on many projects.

In March 2018, the district received notification from the Commissioner of Education that we received our second consecutive waiver from NJQSAC for the next three years because of our high performance. We will not be up for review again until the 2022-2023 school year. What is NJQSAC? The New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC) is the DOE of NJ's monitoring system for public school districts. New regulations and requirements went into effect July 1, 2018 so the staff has been spending a lot of time this year in horizontal and vertical articulation. We have our work cut out for us for the next two years.

The district administration and I will be immersed in next year's transition for the next few months. With hatchery Hill School becoming a PK-1 building and Willow Grove School a 2-4 building. With regards to curriculum and instruction, we are adding three new "specials" classes to the rotation that already includes Art, Music, Media, Technology, World Language and Physical Education. Next year, students will be exposed to a mindfulness class and a computer science class that focuses more on coding and a STEM class.

As the school year is coming to a close, please keep an eye out for letters from your building elementary and middle school principals for the Academic Support Summer Programs if your child qualifies. I am currently working with the administrative team to bring back the summer academic program.

I hope everyone has a summer filled with family, relaxation and laughter. I look forward to seeing everyone next year and continuing to strive in providing our students with an excellent educational experience grounded in high student achievement.



The signs of spring and a new beginning are all around us. As flowers start bursting out of the ground and the calls of returning birds fill the air, I am hopeful and excited for a fresh start here at Willow Grove School. We have been working hard planning and prepping for the realignment that is now only months away. We look forward to welcoming our first group of second, third and fourth grade students to the halls of Willow Grove. We will be welcoming many new staff members from Hatchery Hill as well, and wishing many others the best of luck as they begin a new journey at Hatchery Hill.

I wanted to take this opportunity to highlight some of the new opportunities that come with the decision to move to grade based schools. First, is the increased ability to align our grade level curriculum and ensure that all students are getting a common experience driven through standards and grade level collaboration. Through some adjustments to our schedule, teachers will now have the ability to participate in PLC (Professional Learning Community) time with their grade level colleagues. This will ensure the development of a common vision and create a higher level of continuity for all students.

Second, is the addition of a STEAM Lab to our cycles. All students will now participate in a hands on experience that focuses on increasing student understanding of science, technology, art, engineering, and mathematics. This will run in our specials cycle just as art and music. STEAM experiences at a young age will help develop a passion for math and science and create students who will be more likely to explore these up and coming careers as adults.

Third, is the development of a mindfulness and healthy living program. Similar again to art and music, students will learn critical lessons on how to deal with stress, manage time, prioritize responsibilities, exercise, clear the mind, eat healthy, and appreciate nature. As the world we live in becomes more and more complicated, these are essential life skills that are critical to our students' future success.

We are looking forward to working with the community to help ensure the alignment is a complete success. Please don't hesitate to reach out to me with any thoughts or concerns. Now take some time to enjoy the spring and the warmer weather.

Hatchery Hill School - Marie Griffin, Principal

Spring has arrived and what a great time to celebrate the accomplishments of our students and staff. Students are making significant growth and progress as a result of new strategies and programs that have been implemented, with great success, to meet the diverse needs of our population. This is due to the great effort and dedication of our entire staff.

We continue to promote Kindness and Respect throughout our school... a positive environment is of great importance at Hatchery Hill. We are very proud of the caring community that we have cultivated. Our High School friends visited and helped us create our "Hatchery Hill's Kindness Tree". Check it out in our front hall showcase! This was a fun and worthwhile experience for all involved.

Our partnership continues with Centenary University through the mentoring program S.M.A.R.T. (Students and Mentors Achieving Results Together). This program provides a positive experience for both our students as well as the Centenary students.

As we move forward to the end of the school year, there are many exciting upcoming events such as our Kindergarten Orientation, Talent Show, engaging and educational Field Trips, Field Day and the Fourth Grade Farewell ~ be watching for further details!

Finally, we would like to thank all of our parents for their continued support and involvement.

Business Administrator—Gail Woicekowski

The 2019-2020 preliminary budget includes a 2.74% tax levy increase for the operating budget. Due to the change in the calculation of the state aid disbursements, Hackettstown School District has received additional aid again for 2019-2020 school year. However, the district is only being funded at 56.5% of state aid instead of 100%. There is a long way to go. The district will be adding instructional positions and additional security after school hours in the High School. The total 2019-2020 budget for the district is \$33.3M. This is an increase of \$253.6K or .77% over the February 1, 2019 adjusted budget. The tax impact on the median home assessed at \$276,000 is \$1.75 or \$128.61 for the year. This computes to \$.35/day. A home assessed at \$400,000 will see an increase of \$186.40 or \$.51/day.

In addition to the operating budget, the Board of Education will have a question on the November 5, 2019 ballot to extend the debt service (referendum). There are infrastructure health and safety needs of the buildings that must be addressed. These items included but are not limited to: Roofs (Hatchery Hill Elementary School, Middle School High School), Electric upgrades (High School and Middle School), Fire Panel upgrades (all schools) and a Security Alert System. The follow building needs also need to be addressed: Bathroom upgrades, Windows, Turf/track replacement.

We are on the web!

www.hackettstown.org

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ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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Debbie Grigoletti, Director of Curriculum & Instruction
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Important Dates to Remember

May 1, 2019— Board of Education Meeting
May 27, 2019—School Closed Memorial Day
June 5, 2019— Senior Awards Ceremony
June 6, 2019— Warren County Top 10 Banquet
June 18-21, 2019— HHS Final Exams/HHS Early Dismissal
June 24, 2019-June 26th, 2019— 1/2 Day for All Schools
June 25, 2019— Middle School Promotion
June 26, 2019— Last Day of School and HHS Graduation
June 27, 2019— Last Day for Staff

*Please Check the District Calendar at www.hackettstown.org for 2019 Board Meeting Dates
Check your child's Local School Calendar for Important Dates.*