



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

Winter 2018

Dear Hackettstown and Great Meadows Regional School community members,

There have been many happenings throughout the State of New Jersey that have directly impacted our districts. For the past several years, my office has publicly discussed how Hackettstown was severely underfunded in state aid, while Great Meadows was overfunded. In light of the recent changes to the S2 bill, Hackettstown will see a dramatic increase to state aid, while Great Meadows will suffer a dramatic decrease. Each district will now face its own set of both positive and negative financial impact and challenges.

In Hackettstown, the district has used some of the already provided state aid by way of hiring staff and the HVAC inspection at the Willow Grove School. The early estimate for HVAC completion prior to installation at Willow Grove School was one million dollars. Unfortunately, Central Office has found that early estimate to be only a preliminary estimate with other costs being added in for a more accurate final estimate. Moreover, going into the 2019-2020 budget development cycle, district administration will create a personnel/program prioritization list to be supplemented with future state aid.

In addition to gaining financial assistance from the state department, the Hackettstown Board of Education has determined the timing is appropriate to advocate for a ballot question to extend the district's debt service. In the future, Ms. Woickowski, our district's Business Administrator, will engage the municipality and community, by hosting special meetings for cost analysis, and discussions that explore the strong need to renovate and upgrade district facilities, as this is where the appropriated funds will be utilized.

Unfortunately in Great Meadows, the drastic proposed cut of near 3.7 million dollars could potentially cause closure of one of our facilities. At the August 28th public Board of Education meeting, conversations began about this concern and potential of future loss. The Board of Education, along with Central Office, has begun the discovery process in looking to either "MOTHBALL" Central School or to "MOTHBALL" Liberty School.

If you recall, Liberty School was part of last year's Feasibility Study as a potential option due to the drastic decline in enrollment. Should the Board of Education determine a Liberty School closure is in the best interest of the district, then Central School would become a PK-3 facility and GMMS a 4-8 facility, which will include a separate wing for the 4th and 5th grades. If it's determined a Central School closure is in the best interest of the district, then Liberty School will become a PK-4 facility and Great Meadows Middle School a 5-8 facility. As of today, no decision has been made, but rest assured more information will come forward following the New Year and the Governor's future State Aid allocations. This will not be an easy decision, nor an easy feat. We will be looking closely at options that will be the most beneficial to our district and students as a whole.

I am pleased to inform you that the Hackettstown School District will be implementing its first ever inclusive Pre-School program which will be located at the Hatchery Hill School. Please go to our district website to view Mrs. Gesumaria's November 14th presentation to the Board of Education and public and contact Mrs. Gesumaria's office directly should you have any questions or concerns. I also encourage you to schedule a site visit in the Great Meadows Central School with Principal, Mr. Mai, to observe the daily happenings of the Pre-School program which was created and implemented at the start of the 2016-2017 school year.

Wishing you all health and happiness for the upcoming Holiday Season and New Year.

Sincerely,

David C. Mango
Superintendent of Schools
Great Meadows Regional and Hackettstown Public Schools

Hatchery Hill is a busy place and time is passing by so quickly. The students are working hard and having fun learning. It is wonderful to see the children's smiling faces each day as they learn and grow. Our Hatchery Hill staff continues to reflect on the importance of providing our students with a positive and encouraging atmosphere so that each will work toward their potential.

The culture and climate at HH is very important to our school community. Displaying Acts of Kindness and showing each other respect is a focus each and every day. Once again this year we will participate in the Great Kindness Challenge in January. We help others by participating in various fundraising events such as helping our friends in Nepal, Making Change for the Leukemia Fund, and Smiles for Margaret.

Our staff has been working on our joint building goal with Willow Grove. The staff has met to share and plan as we move ahead to prepare for the realignment. A committee was also formed to meet with an organization called "Safe Routes to School" so we can continue to work on ways to keep our students safe.

STEM/STEAM activities continue throughout the school for "all" students. This type of learning allows students to develop problem solving and critical thinking skills as well as covering the Common Core Standards. It is an engaging and fun way to learn! STEM activities are also provided in our Academic Support Program. We look forward to having our annual STEM/STEAM Day for parents in January.



With winter quickly approaching and the holiday season just around the corner, we are off to a great start here at Willow Grove. One thing that I have noticed in my first few months here as principal is how supportive and caring the staff and community are toward the common goal of giving our students an excellent education. Hard work and dedication is a clear mantra that resonates through the halls of this building. Willow Grove students take great pride in working toward goals like Student of the Month, receiving Pawsome prizes, winning Sumdog math competitions, and earning Pizza with the Principal. This is a truly special building that understands the importance of respecting each other and working as a community to reach our group and individual potential.

I would like to give a special thanks to a few local organizations that have donated their time and effort to Willow Grove School. First, Trinity Church had their middle school youth group helped clean up our courtyard and turn it into a gorgeous bird sanctuary. It has created such a peaceful environment and we are all very appreciative. Second, the Elks Club and the Women of the Moose Club donated fresh holiday dinners to families in need. Last but not least, St. James Episcopal Church has also offered significant support to families during this winter and holiday season. As the saying goes, it takes a village to raise a child, and I know that couldn't be truer than in the little town of Hacketts-town. I wish everyone a special holiday season with their families and look forward to a great rest of the year.

Greetings from Hackettstown High School

Students and staff at Hackettstown High School have a lot to be “Thankful for” this past fall. Over the last several weeks we have honored eighty-four new inductees in our Art, Math, Music, Science, Spanish Honor Societies. In addition, twenty-four new members were inducted into the National Honor Society. Our Marching Band was recognized as North Jersey Region Champions for the first time in school history. They also placed third in state competition and once again won the Best Percussion title at NJ State Champion. In October, we inducted the second HHS Athletic Hall of Fame class. This years class of superior athletes and coaches join other Hall of Fame members and will forever be remembered in the Hall of Fame Trophy case outside of the new gymnasium. And in sports, our fall athletic season did not disappoint. We had nineteen fall student/athletes earned 1st-team All NJAC Conference honors, thirteen 2nd-team NJAC All-Conference, and seven Honorable Mention. Team accolades included: the Boys Cross Country team who won the NJAC Colonial Division Sportsmanship Award, our Competitive Cheer squad won several divisional competition championships and qualified for Nationals, our Girls Volleyball team had a final record of 20-8 and captured the NJAC Colonial Division Championship, our Field Hockey team yet again demonstrated their dominance with their 4th straight NJAC Freedom Division Championship and also won the Hunterdon /Warren/ Sussex County Championship for the first time in schools history, and finally, our Boys Soccer program had an amazing end of the season run as they won the first ever Hunterdon /Warren/ Sussex County Championship and followed it up by beating state power Harrison High School to win the North 2 Group 2 NJSIAA State Championship!

As we look toward the winter we are optimistic that the successes demonstrated in the fall will continue. We wish everyone an enjoyable holiday season and encourage you to check our school website and Twitter handle @HHSTIGERS for information and news pertaining to upcoming events.



**Curriculum Corner
Director of Curriculum and Instruction
Debra Grigoletti**

I would like to take this opportunity to extend many thanks to the parents, teachers and administrators who attended the Title I Parent Involvement Meeting in October. The Parent Involvement meeting is an important part of the grant process and it also provides an opportunity to hear direct feedback on the programs that we are able to offer with our Federal Grant funding.

Hatchery Hill School and Willow Grove School have begun work to prepare for the realignment next year. The staff from both schools will spend the remainder of the year articulating together by grade and as a whole to ensure the smoothest transition possible. As change always brings about nerves and anxiety, please know that this move is truly in the best educational interest of our students.

Hatchery Hill School implemented a much needed Bilingual Program this year in Kindergarten and 1st grade. The students will be receiving the appropriate and necessary support they need as they acclimate to the English language. This is a fantastic addition to our educational program and I look for the program to continue to grow.

The High School has begun developing semester-based classes to afford our students a larger variety of course offerings from which to choose. The course proposals were reviewed by the Hackettstown Board of Education Curriculum Committee in November and will be brought to the full Board for approval in December. If all goes as planned, please look for the course offerings in the 2019-2020 Course Catalog.

I would like to wish everyone a safe and happy holiday and to remember that the true meaning of the holiday season is about health and happiness, being kind and thinking of those who we hold dear. I wish that for all.



Summer quickly turned to autumn, tank-tops and flip flops were exchanged for long-sleeved shirts and sneakers, and as students and staff started the 2018-2019 school year, there were two initiatives that were developed to enhance the curriculums: Character Education and Public Speaking.

Just as quickly, the falling of the leaves and the chill in the air were the signs of autumn turning to winter, though there are still a few holdouts on the sandals, the two initiatives have come to life at Hackettstown Middle School:

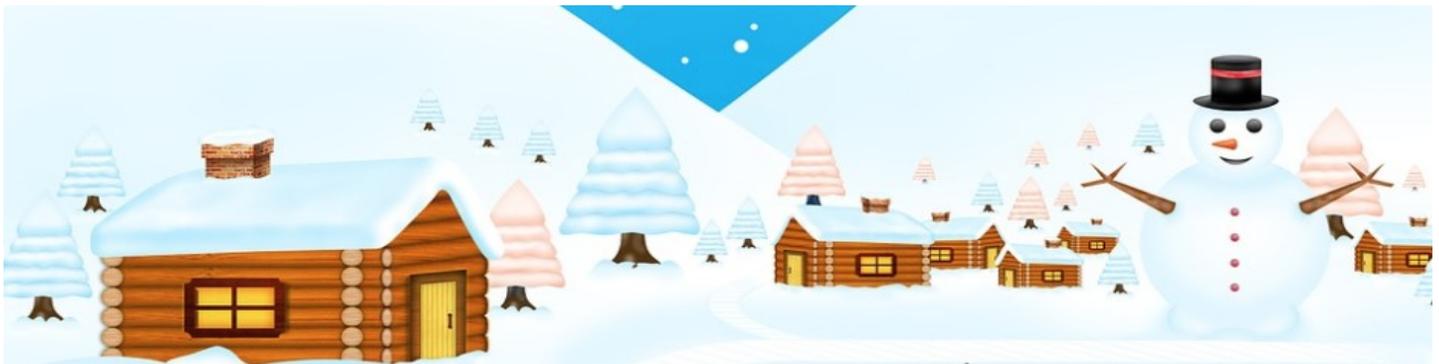
The development of a Character Education program includes and complements a broad range of educational approaches such as whole child education, service learning, social-emotional learning, and civic education. All the approaches share a commitment to helping young people become responsible, caring, and contributing citizens. To assist in the successful implementation of the Character Education traits, Hackettstown Middle School opened its doors to welcome several presenters: Mr. John Halligan for *Ryan's Story* addressing bullying, Mr. Brian Williams for his presentation on *Choose Kindness* addressing how one small, positive action can change a person's day, and Mr. Steve Speirs and Mrs. Jennifer Spuckes to address social media/cyberbullying and school violence preventative measures. Staff has incorporated public speaking into their curriculums to assist students in communicating clearly and effectively with reason as part of the New Jersey State Learning Standard for Career Readiness and furthers the development of the Character Education program. The students have been practicing to communicate thoughts, ideas, and action plans throughout the school day with clarity, whether using written, verbal, and/or visual methods in small and large groups or even captivating a full audience, all the while, learning to interact with others as active listeners.

Several of the events and activities that our students and staff have had the opportunity to participate in throughout the

autumn season encompassed both the Character Education and Public Speaking initiatives while aligning to the curriculums and continuing to build a positive relationship with the community: the two-day *Community Clean-up* for Grade 8 students, *We're Not Buying It!* program for bullying prevention, honoring veterans during the *Veteran's Luncheon and Forum*, the *Can Castle Challenge* to donate food to the local food banks prior the winter season and the *Sneaker Drive* to donate "gently" used sneakers to those in need.

As the winter season is upon us, Hackettstown Middle School will continue to build upon the initiatives for the 2018-2019 school year to develop students who are well-rounded and have the foundational skills to be more productive in today's society. Please access our website (www.Hackettstown.org/HMS) for upcoming events and activities and follow us on Twitter @HackMSTigers.

Enjoy your Winter Season!



Hackettstown Public Schools Mission Statement

Building on tradition and success, the mission of the Hackettstown School District is to educate and inspire students through school, family and community partnerships so that all become positive, contributing members of a global society, with life-long commitment to learning.

Strategic Plan Vision 2018

Goal # 1 Student Achievement

Provide opportunities for all learners, through a variety of all programs as supported by technology and measured through the administration of benchmarks assessments.

Goal # 2 Finance/Facilities

Facilities

Maximize resources of the district to ensure safe, secure, technologically advanced schools.

Finance

Maximize savings through shared services and securing grants by hiring a professional grant writer.

Goal # 3 Communication

Embrace, expand, and utilize all technological advancements of our global societal shift as a means of communication from school to home and community are actively and positively involved.

Goal # 4 Culture and Climate

Develop a multi-cultural climate where all participants of our home and school community are actively and positively involved.

"Determination, Dream, and Destiny by Design"

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www.hackettstown.org

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Important Dates to Remember

December 4, 2018:	MS Winter Chorus Concert
December 7, 2018:	Early Dismissal
	WG Winter Concert
	HH Winter Concert
December 11, 2018 :	MS Winter Band Concert
December 13, 2018:	HHS Winter Band Concert @ North Warren Regional HS
December 18, 2018:	HHS Winter Chorus Concert @ 1st Presbyterian Church
December 21, 2018:	Early Dismissal All Schools
December 24 - January 1, 2019:	Holiday Break - All Schools Closed
January 2, 2019:	All Schools Re-Open
January 21, 2019:	All Schools Closed - Martin Luther King Day - Teacher In-Service
January 28-31, 2019:	HHS Mid-Term Exams
February 15-18, 2019:	All Schools Closed - President's Day Holiday
March 14, 2019	Mid-Winter Band Concert / MS Drama Performance
March 21, 2019:	HS Choral Mid Winter Concert @ Trinity Church
April 11-14, 2019:	HS Spring Musical @ Country Gate, Belvidere
April 18, 2019:	Early Dismissal All Schools
April 19-26, 2019:	All School Closed - Spring Recess

**Please Check the District Calendar at www.hackettstown.org for 2018-19 Board Meeting Dates
Check your child's Local School Calendar for Important Dates.**