

District Takes Proactive Stance On Bullying

Major kick-off rally scheduled for February 8, 2011

In the wake of tragedies across the country resulting from bullying and harassment, the district has decided to take a proactive stand against bullying by creating a District Bullying Taskforce comprised of administrators, teachers, students, parents, and staff charged with the task of developing and launching a new perennial anti-bullying campaign called "Be Bold Ban Bullying." The central responsibility of this taskforce, created and headed by Superintendent Dr. Charles T. Epps, Jr., is to implement and create the district's "Be Bold Ban Bullying" campaign through a high-energy, anti-bullying, kick-off rally and create year-long initiatives, programs, and resources for parents, students, and staff directed at eliminating bullying in schools.

The District Bullying Task Force has scheduled the kick-off rally for February 8, 2011 at St. Peter's College in Jersey City. Children from every school in the district will be transported to the rally, which is expected to run about two hours and include music, student performances, and more.

The rally will launch the district's new public service announcement inviting students, parents, and staff to be bold by taking the District's Bullying Prevention Pledge. Pre-taped public service announcements will also be

aired on large LCD screens. Students, via text message, may also sign up for the district's on-line petition against bullying or take the Bullying Prevention Pledge during the event.



FERRIS HIGH SCHOOL students are prepared to join forces with all schools in our district to put an end to bullying.

Through the taskforce, the district is trying to educate students who will lead efforts in the fight against bullying and inform parents of the resources available.

Accordingly, the anti-bullying initiatives developed for implementation during the school year are just some of the many ways the district is making sure students remain safe and ready to learn.

The district's hope is to broaden the alternatives for dealing with what has become a crisis in schools and neighborhoods and provide resources for dealing with this crisis. Dr. Epps stated, "Our response to bullying must surpass the State requirement of merely implementing an anti-bullying policy and continuing to treat bullying simply as a disciplinary issue. Our response must be unequivocal and all-encompassing. Anything less ignores the larger issue and puts our students and staff at risk. For the sake of our youth, it's time for all of us – educators, youth, parents, and community members – to be bold and ban bullying."

For more information on the District's Bullying Task Force, "Be Bold Ban Bullying" Campaign, and the kick-off rally, contact jcpsbullyingtaskforce@jcboe.org.

“Our response to bullying must be unequivocal and all-encompassing.” —

Dr. Charles T. Epps, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

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AFFIRMATIVE ACTION THE INFORMER

BULLYING TASK FORCE UPDATE ... by Ms. Cynthia L. Jones, District Affirmative Action Officer/Special Assistant



BULLYING TASK FORCE MEMBERS, (from left), Supervisor of Arts Ann Marley, Business Administrator Melissa Simmons, Affirmative Action Officer/Special Assistant Cynthia L. Jones, General Counsel Paula Hak, Graphic Artist/Public Information Officer David R. Lopez, and Associate Superintendent Jenaro Rivas, take part in judging over 800 poster submissions from the district's 39 elementary, middle and high schools.

Posters, posters, and more posters were created and submitted (800 in all) by kindergarten through grade 12 students to be judged, then displayed, as part of the District's Anti-Bullying Campaign. The level of creativity, skill, and, more importantly, the message illustrated, truly spoke to the heart of the matter.

"Students recognize a need to stop bullying in our schools," stated project organizer and Visual Arts Supervisor Ann Marley.

All of the posters will be touring the community in the coming months. Dr. Charles T. Epps, Jr., will announce the winners during the Anti-Bullying kick-off rally on Tuesday, February 8, 2011 (story on cover page).

Congratulations to all participants for a fantastic job!

Special thanks to the judges (see photo left) for their time spent in critiquing and selecting our winners.

Chinese Educators Visit District High Schools

Twenty-two delegates from Nantong, China, spend two days touring our high schools and offer exchange program.

The Jersey City Public School District recently hosted a delegation of 22 educators from Nantong, Jiangsu, China. This visit followed an initial visit by Nantong business and government officials to the City of Jersey City in Spring 2010 as part of a "sister city" relationship initiated by Jersey City officials.

Twenty-two educators split into teams of two and three, and traveled to the district's seven high schools: Dickinson, Ferris, Infinity, Liberty, Lincoln, McNair, and Snyder.

The district is eager to advance its "sister district" partnership with these educators from Nantong since the district's diversity represents a tapestry of nations, and our students must develop a more authentic understanding of worldwide educational opportunities, global interconnections, and their future lives.

The district always continues to explore new pathways to further global education in authentic ways that are meaningful to students. This visit from the Nantong educators is a great step in broadening our students' worldwide educational possibilities, and the district looks forward to continuing to expand this association and alliance with Nantong, China by planning future collaborations and events.



SNYDER HIGH SCHOOL students engage in a discussion with two representatives from Nantong, China in the school library.

A Historic Run for the Lincoln Lion's Football Team



Abraham Lincoln High School's football season was truly magical. The Lions became the first Jersey City public high school to reach the NJ State Football Finals in twenty-nine years. The offense averaged 40-points per game and was led by quarterback Ronald Butler, running back Tyron Stevens, wide receivers Anthony Jackson, Deshawn Goodwin, David Rivers, and Kashawn Fuller. Edwin Celestin, Terrel Rogers, Cary Donowa, Harun Bethea, Deshawn Jackson, and Paris Williams led the defense. Although the Lions lost in the title game to New Providence, 21-8, the estimated crowd of 10,000 fans at Giant Stadium witnessed a determined, well-disciplined, and focused Lincoln team that refused to quit.

Congratulations to Robert Hampton, head football coach; Tom Ferriero, John Fannan, Ray Marshall, Mario Santana, Wentford Gaines, and Paul Giorgio, assistant coaches ; Artie Williams, athletic supervisor; and Jeannette McRae-Braswell, principal, for leading the Lions on this historic run.

PS 29 Sends Holiday Greetings to the U.S. Troops



The students of Gladys Cannon Nursery School, PS 29, had the honor and pleasure of spreading holiday cheer to the men and women serving in the U.S. Military in Afghanistan. The students were able to correspond with Nico Jones and his naval unit. Nico is especially important to the staff and students of PS 29 because his sister, Daria Jones, is a well-respected member of the #29 school family. The students created cards and letters, as well as a very personal CD composed by the school choir. Nico responded with appreciation and joy. He flattered the students by playing the CD over the speaker system so that the entire naval installation had the pleasure of hearing the students' festive vocals during their duty day. It was clear through Nico's letters and pictures that all of the military members were elated with gratitude and relished in the comfort that they were truly supported during the holiday season. In the words of Nico Jones, "receiving the Christmas cards help and let us know that we are not alone."

Did You? Know!

SCHOOL NEWS

Conti School celebrated "National Make a Difference Day" by participating in a peer reading activity and listening to

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community members who visited the school and shared their experiences of how they make a difference in their daily lives. Special guests, a board member, former County Sheriff **Juan Perez**, Officer **Moises Mendoza**, District Affirmative Action Officer **Cynthia L. Jones**, and Mayor **Jerramiah T. Healy**, spoke about how they all give to the community in different ways, but with the common goal of helping others and making a difference in schools and communities. Their personal stories increased personal awareness and inspired students to find small, but meaningful ways to make a difference in their school and in communities — not only today, but everyday of their lives. Principal **Wendy Perez** gave special thanks to PS 5 teacher and artist **Michael Markman** for his work on the event mural, and CARE coordinator and teacher **Susan Most**, who organized the peer reading activity.



DR. MICHAEL CONTI SCHOOL #5 STUDENTS PARTICIPATE IN THE "NATIONAL MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY" PEER READING ACTIVITY.

Sullivan School has instituted a positive behavior reward program, which is motivating students to not only follow school rules, but also be respectful, responsible, and safe. This incentive-driven program periodically recognizes students for continuing to exhibit positive behaviors. Recognition and activities have included a PTA-sponsored carnival day, announcing students' names on the public speaker, extra time spent in the computer lab, extra recess time, homework passes, dances, and other student-oriented rewards.

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Congratulations to **Watters School** on their winning submission called, *My Robot*, in the **Annual Snowflake Awards Contest** sponsored by Liberty

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House Restaurant. The \$250 grand prize check was presented to the school. Congratulations to the faculty and staff involved, especially **Ms. Jimenez's** 4th grade class and Art Specialist **Laura Compen**.

King, Jr. School recently held a **Character Education Assembly**. Sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students welcomed a visit from **Joe Dwyer** his pitbull-mix, **Shelby**. Mr. Dwyer was able to break the stereotype of the pitbull as an aggressive, fighting dog, as long as they are treated with care, kindness, respect, and compassion. He used **Shelby's** life as a way to discuss how vital it is not to judge or bully animals or people based upon their appearance or past actions. Students were able to identify with **Shelby's** story and make connections to their own lives and experiences.

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DISTRICT NEWS

District Systems Analyst **Craig Garner** attended the 2010 NJEA convention and participated in their **Authors Alley program** since he's published six books of poetry. At the convention he met many educators from various districts, including Jersey City, and was able to sell many of his books. (See photo below, left)

Join the district's "**Be Bold Ban Bullying**" campaign on the web and find out more up-to-the-minute info by "liking" our facebook page and following us on Twitter! In the search bar on facebook, just type in "be bold ban bullying". On Twitter, type in "jcpsbanbullying".

Is there anything you'd like to share with the district? If so, please submit information for consideration to The Office of the Superintendent at Central Office.



Child Find

Do you have a child between the ages of 3 & 21 whom you believe may be experiencing difficulties in school or at home? Do you feel that your child may have a problem with learning or another disabling condition? If the answer is yes...

Assistance is available!

Please contact **Carol Starpoli, Pre-K Intake CST**, with your concerns at (201) 369-2833 or estarpoli@jcboe.org.

PS 23 Student Wins PATH Holiday Poster Contest

Over 150 entries were submitted from all of the Jersey City Public elementary and middle schools (31 schools total) to PATH's annual holiday poster contest. The winning poster by Wadalla Abogabl, a sixth grader at Mahatma K. Gandhi Public School 23, was displayed in every single PATH train car throughout the month of December. Standing from left are, PS 23 Art teacher Maria Francisco, 3rd place winner Joseph Monton, 2nd place winner Hilda Nguyen, 1st place winner Wadalla Abogabl, PS 23 Principal Anna Rivas, and PATH Director and General Manager Michael DiPallo.



"GIANT" Visit at PS 25



TRAVIS BECKUM, #47 Tight End for the NY Giants, visited PS 25 to speak to the students about the importance of eating healthy. Afterwards, students were able to participate in a pop quiz with prizes including autographed footballs, t-shirts, and more.

24's Winter Wonderland



PS 24 held their first winter wonderland in December. Led by their teachers, Ms. Lyden and Ms. Moss, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders worked together and hosted various holiday activities for the lower grades.

Student Leadership Forum Info



A SCENE from last year's Student Leadership Forum. The next Forum is scheduled for February 4, 2011, at Snyder HS. Approximately 1,200 students in grades 6 through 12 will attend. The day's events will include informative and recreational student workshops, free lunch, student performances, prizes, and entertainment. Despite being officially off from school, a select group of students will be chosen by their teachers/counselors based on their academic performance, character, and motivation, to participate in the forum.

Staying Healthy at PS 23



PARENTS and community members came out to PS 23 for their 1st annual Health Fair. Over 40 community providers participated in the event. In the above photo, a representative from Parkside Medical Center and Khaleidoscope Health Care checks the blood pressure of a fair attendee.

VOLUNTEERS DETERMINED TO HAVE FUN ARE DESPERATELY NEEDED!

Can you jump rope, eat a slice of pizza, play video games, shoot hoops?

If so, your skills are urgently needed as a...

Big Brother/Big Sister

You choose your availability:

- 1 hr per week
- 2 hrs every other week
- one afternoon per month

Contact: Big Brothers Big Sisters of Essex, Hudson & Union Counties

494 Broad Street, Suite 103, Newark, NJ 07102
 T: 973-642-BIGS (2447)
 F: 973-242-0945
www.BigsAndKids.org



Everybody can be great because anybody can serve. You only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love.

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

IMPORTANT DATES

JANUARY

- 17 MON MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY, DIST. CLOSED
- 20 THUR BOARD OF ED. MEETING, PS #11, 6 P.M.
- 31 MON ES & MS 2ND M.P. QUARTERLY ASSESSMENTS, EXTENDS TO 2/3
- 31 MON HS MIDTERM/FINAL EXAMS, EXTENDS TO 2/2

FEBRUARY

- 4 FRI STUDENT FORUM, SCHOOLS CLOSED
- 8 TUE BULLYING KICK-OFF RALLY, SPC, 9:30AM
- 15 TUE HIGH SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE, 1:30-3PM
4-HOUR SESSION FOR HS ONLY
- 16 WED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE, 1:30-3PM
4-HOUR SESSION FOR ES ONLY
- 17 THUR MIDDLE SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE, 1:30-3PM
4-HOUR SESSION FOR MS ONLY
- 17 THUR BOARD OF ED. MEETING, PS #11, 6 P.M.
- 18 FRI 4-HOUR SESSION FOR SCHOOLS
- 21 MON PRESIDENTS' DAY, DISTRICT CLOSED
- 23 WED JC ARTS HS OPEN HOUSE, 1:30-3PM

MARCH

- 1 TUE HSPA, EXTENDS TO 3/3, MAKE-UP 3/8-3/10
- 5 SAT AEP ENTRANCE EXAM, PS 17, 8AM
- 17 THUR BOARD OF ED. MEETING, PS #11, 6 P.M.
- 22 TUE CITYWIDE PARENT MEETING, CO, 6-8PM
- 23 WED SCHOOLS CLOSED, TEACHERS REPORT

Board Meeting Highlight



JOHN DIAZ introduces bilingual students from Ezra L. Nolan Middle School 40 who made a presentation at the October Board Meeting in recognition of Hispanic Heritage Month.

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN SPEAKING AT A BOARD OF EDUCATION MEETING?

If so, please call the Board Secretary at (201) 915-6074, or visit us on the web at: www.jcboe.org.

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Dr. Charles T. Epps, Jr., Superintendent of Schools

