



THE EWING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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For Immediate Release

The Ewing Public Schools BOE Board Briefs: December 19, 2016

The December 19th meeting of the Ewing Township Board of Education was held at Fisher Middle School.

To begin the meeting, Ewing High School student representative Caroline Unger updated the Board and community on a number of events taking place at the school, including the winter music concert season, as well as developments in the arts and athletics.

For his "Superintendent's Report," Chief School Administrator Michael Nitti first recognized School Business Administrator Dennis Nettleton, who reported on the mandated comprehensive audit of the school district's business office. The district received a clean, unmodified audit with no comments, which was later approved by the Board of Education.

Mr. Nettleton then shared with the Board an overview of recent awards and accomplishments of the district's business office, and presented an award check to Board President Stephanie Staub. Pictures and a media release are below.

Mr. Nitti was then joined by District Director of Special Services Harry Louth, and the duo presented to the Board and public on the exciting news of the establishment of a Structured Learning Community at Ewing High School. This transitions program for district special needs students is detailed in the media release below.

Mr. Nitti was then joined by Board President Stephanie Staub and other members of the Board and public in thanking departing Board member Scott Franks for all his work and efforts on behalf of the students and community. A picture is below.

During the approval section of the Agenda:

A new Sustainability Curriculum Supplement for Grades K-3 was approved by the Board of Education. Several Board members expressed enthusiasm and support for this effort, which will help early learning teachers promote the importance of respect for our environment to our youngest students.

The Board formally approved the new Community Transitions Program.

The following policy was approved by the Board as a "Second Reading" and is now formal Board policy:

Policy 2415.30 Title I Educational Stability for Children in Foster Care (New/Mandated)

The following policies were approved by the Board as "First Readings". After review and approval by the Board at its next meeting at the end of January, they will become formal Board policy:

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Policy P3351 Healthy Workplace Environment

Policy P4351 Healthy Workplace Environment

The meeting concluded with wishes for a wonderful holiday to all attendees and members of the school community!

The Board next meets on Monday, January 9, 2017 at 7PM for the Reorganization Meeting at Fisher Middle School. At this meeting, returning Board members Stephanie Staub and Bruce White, along with new member Kenneth Bradley, who previously served on the Board for twelve years, will be sworn into office. Board officer elections will occur, and several governance related reorganization items will be on the agenda.

Ewing Schools Established Community Transitions Program

Throughout the 2016-17 school year, the administration of the Ewing Schools has been working hard in the planning, creation and establishment of a Community Transitions Program for the neediest students of the community.

Over the past several years, the Life Skills program at the high school has expanded considerably. The program serves students with autism and other developmental disabilities. The program now has eight students, but is expected to grow to as many as twenty over the next several years.

“We have exceptional teachers, strong leadership and a wonderful curriculum,” Superintendent Michael Nitti stated. “But we realized we needed a better way to integrate our students into the workplace and the community, which was the genesis of the Community Transitions Program.”

The Ewing Public Schools have partnered with several community stakeholders to build the program, and integrate positive, relevant life experiences for the students. These groups include the ARC of Mercer, Parents of Autistic Children, Rider University, the New Jersey Travel Independence Program and Advancing Opportunities.

“We recognized the importance of transitioning our students into adult services with meaningful work and life experiences,” Director of Special Services Harry Louth stated. “The Community Transitions program allows us to provide a dynamic curriculum for our students.”

According to Mr. Nitti and Mr. Louth, the main focus of the program is to integrate the students into the community, provide opportunities to enhance and practice social skills, and to provide career exploration that will help the student transition to a job post-schooling.

The program offers functional experiences, such as using HomeFront’s state of the art kitchen to build culinary skills, and students have the opportunity to take music lessons, art courses and develop technology skills. Community based activities and structured learning experiences are centered around the results from each child’s “Person Centered Planning” (PCP) and the program’s commitment to follow each student’s interests. Students investigate a variety of employment interests, such as janitorial, culinary, supermarkets, horticultural and technology.

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Furthermore, the program is supported by the recently adopted “It’s All About Work” curriculum, which provides lessons and assessments that evaluate both independent living skills and career readiness choices.

“Active participation in our community means not only creating opportunities for our students but also encouraging engagement with local businesses and organizations through meaningful employment experiences,” Mr. Louth stated.

“We are grateful and appreciate of the support of the Board and community in this endeavor, and looking forward seeing a positive impact on our students,” Mr. Nitti concluded.

Ewing Schools Honored for Business Office Excellence

The Ewing School’s Business Office was recently honored for its achievement in the areas of financial record keeping and employee safety awareness.

The Burlington County Joint Insurance Fund recognized the district for its outstanding audit performance and for achieving the highest levels of local safety awareness as measured by the group’s Safety Incentive Program.

The district was the recipient of a \$2,500 check to support the Ewing School’s innovative employee health, fitness and safety initiatives.

School Business Administrator Dennis Nettleton presented the check to Board President Stephanie Staub during the December Board meeting.

“We are committed to the highest standards of business office excellence and promoting a safe and healthy work environment for our employees,” Mr. Nettleton stated.



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