



THE EWING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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For Immediate Release

The Ewing Public Schools BOE Board Briefs: October 29th, 2018

The Ewing Township Board of Education held its monthly meeting in the Fisher Middle School media center on Monday, October 29th, 2018.

Ewing High School student ambassadors to the Board of Education, Steven Rodriguez and Nadlie Alexis updated the Board and public on events and developments at EHS over the first month of school, including Homecoming, Spirit Week, the fall athletic season, and various charitable endeavors. Ewing High School's Open House/8th Grade Orientation takes place on Thursday, November 15th.

During his Superintendent's Report, Mr. Nitti thanked all of those who participated in Referendum '18 and the Credit Union of New Jersey for sponsoring Ewing High School's "20 Years Under the Lights!" celebration. He also shared details of the district's recently received 10K grant from Special Olympics.

Superintendent Presents on Focus on Students' Emotional and Psychological Health

At the October Board of Education meeting, Superintendent Michael Nitti presented to the Board and public on the district's initiatives and efforts to promote emotionally and psychologically healthy students.

Since September of 2017, the district's Post-Secondary Task Force has focused on the social-emotional wellness of Ewing's students. A group of stakeholders with relevance and expertise have met throughout the year to talk about issues impacting student's mental health. The task force has read scholarly and media articles devoted to the topic, and had presentations from staff members on related topics. Focus has included the impact of educational practices on student anxiety and stress, and an examination of programs that the district offers that promote emotionally healthy children.

From this group's efforts, a number of positive events and experiences have evolved. Perhaps most noteworthy, Ewing is a leader in a countywide initiative focused on teen suicide prevention and adolescent wellness. This work included a presentation on teen suicide awareness at Rider University in early 2018 attended by hundreds of community members from across Mercer County.

During his presentation, Nitti touched on a variety of educational practices and professional development endeavors that promote healthy children and reduces anxiety and stress. These included classroom approaches like Mindfulness, Yoga for Classroom, Yoga for Adolescents, Sheltered Instruction Practice for ELLs, Traumatic Sensitive Discipline and Executive Functioning as well as various professional development workshops. The district has also increased its Opioid Awareness training through seminars, its partnership with the ASSYST Program, and by bringing in the Mercer County Prosecutors to speak to students.

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Nitti also shared that the district has added new staff to address student wellness issues, including a new guidance counselors at Antheil and EHS, a new Dean of Students at the O'Brien Academy and new School Security Coordinators at EHS and Antheil.

"While we always have to navigate mandates, our main focus is always our mission, and the most important part of that mission is helping develop resilient, mentally-healthy young adults," Nitti remarked during his presentation.

In the "**Superintendent Recommendations**" section of the Agenda, the following took place:

Finance and Operations

The Board approved the School Board Election Polling Hours for next Tuesday, November 6th. The polls will be open 6:00AM to 8:00PM.

Approval of Donations

Approval of Fall 2018 School Bus Evacuation Drills

Approval of Comprehensive Maintenance Plan & M-1

Approval – Engineering Proposal

Approval – Field Turf Proposal

The Board is looking to replace the turf field at the Ewing High School Athletic Center during the summer of 2019. It should be noted that this is part of a scheduled and budgeted maintenance plan, as the turf is now ten years old. It is not at all connected to the recently passed bond referendum.

Approval – Architects Contract

Authorization – Resolution authorizing Bond Sale

This is the first step in moving forward with the facility projects that were part of Referendum '18. The district will continue to update the public on the evolution of the projects in the return of the Referendum Roundup, beginning November 2018.

Various transportation collaborative and jointures were approved.

Student Services and Technology

A series of agenda items related to the Community Transitions Program at Ewing High School were approved.

Ready to Achieve Mentoring Program (RAMP) at Ewing High School

It's All About Work Program at Ewing High School

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Life Skills Program at Ewing High School

Furthermore, the following policies and regulations were approved by the Board as “First Readings”. After review and approval by the Board at its next meeting in November, they will become formal Board policy:

Policy P1613 Disclosure and Review of Applicant’s Employment History

Regulation R1613 Disclosure and Review of Applicant’s Employment History

This policy brings the Board and school district into compliance with the recently passed legislation commonly referred to as the “Pass the Trash” law.

The next meeting of the Ewing Township Board of Education is on Monday, November 26th, 2018 in the Lore Elementary School media center.

Attachment:

Presentation: The Ewing Schools’ efforts to address students’ emotional and psychological health and well-being.