



THE EWING PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

Michael Nitti, Superintendent Ext. 1102
mnitti@ewingboe.org

DISTRICT ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES
2099 Pennington Road, Ewing NJ 08618
Phone 609-538-9800 Fax 609-538-0041
www.ewing.k12.nj.us

For Immediate Release

The Ewing Public Schools BOE Briefs: April 29th, 2019 Meeting

The Ewing Township Board of Education held its monthly meeting in the Fisher Middle School media center on Monday, April 29th, 2019.

Ewing High School student ambassadors to the Board of Education, Steven Rodriguez and Nadlie Alexis, updated the Board and public on events and activities at Ewing High School.

For the Superintendent's Report, Chief School Administrator introduced Fisher Middle School Principal Dr. Maggy Hanna who provided the Board and public an update on Fisher Middle School's year as the calendar moves to May.

The Superintendent and Board then conducted the Public Hearing on the 2019-20 school budget.

Ewing Board of Education Approves 2019-20 Final Budget

On April 29th, at the regular Board of Education meeting, the Board conducted the mandated public hearing on the 2019-20 final school budget, then approved the budget by a vote of 7-0.

The spending plan will now go into place on July 1st, 2019.

"The 2019-20 budget was again a challenging one to put together." Superintendent Michael Nitti stated. "With the budgetary cap on our tax levy and revenues and costs increasing at a much greater percentage, our goal in building this budget was to strive to maintain our staffing, keep all the programs that our district values and look for innovative ways to address issues that are important to our school community."

Programs maintained in the preliminary budget include full-day kindergarten, middle and high school athletics, gifted and honors education, K-12 music and art, and after-school activities and programs. The preliminary budget also has funds dedicated to enhancing school security, and addressing the emotional and psychological needs of the district's students, two areas that have emerged as a focus for the Board and administration. The budget also included the initial debt service obligations as the result of the successful passage of Referendum '18.

Superintendent Nitti thanked Mr. Nettleton and the Board of Education for their work on the budget. "Each year, the Board and the administration meet in a retreat to prioritize goals and evaluate budgetary options. Each Board member makes vital contributions to this process and Mr. Nettleton is very good at explaining variables and challenges."

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The preliminary budget reflects a 2% increase on the tax levy. This sets the preliminary tax rate at \$1.82 per \$100 of assessed property value. This correlates to a total school tax bill of approximately \$3,617.78 for the average home in Ewing which is assessed at \$198,100.

All information pertaining to the 2019-20 budget can be found on our website www.ewing.k12.nj.us under the Board of Education tab (Ewing Board Docs/Library/General/Budget Docs/19-20 Budget Year).

For more information, please contact: Theresa Hullings (609) 538-9800x1102 or thullings@ewingboe.org

The Board then conducted its annual April Appointments, Approvals, and Adoptions.

The Board then moved into the **“Superintendent Recommendations”** section of the Agenda. Some items of note:

Finance and Operations

The Board released an overview of Referendum '18 Facility Projects taking place this summer. That correspondence is available on the district website and will be disseminated widely.

Curriculum and Instruction

The Board approved a revised Mentoring Plan to ensure the successful induction of new teaching staff.

Several curriculum guides were reviewed and approved by the Board.

Student Services and Technology

The Board approved an alternative educational program at Ewing High School that will have both a therapeutic and academic setting. The program is a byproduct of the work the district has done over the past couple of years focusing on students' mental and emotional health. Deemed the Endeavor Academy, the program will have a shortened day, a counseling component, and infuse distance learning. The program is set to open in September.

During the **Personnel Section**:

Covington Named New Athletic Director/Health PE Supervisor for the Ewing Schools.



Ernie Covington was approved by the Board of Education as the new Athletic Director and Health/Physical Education Supervisor of the Ewing Schools.

Covington comes to the Ewing Schools from the Bordentown Regional School District, where he was the Assistant Principal of Athletics for Bordentown Regional High School.

Prior to being promoted to that administrative role, Covington had been at Bordentown in a number of roles since 2007. He began his career as a Health and Physical Education teacher and was the head baseball coach for eight years.

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Covington also served as an assistant football coach and Assistant Principal at the middle school level during his time at the Burlington County school district.

Covington earned his Bachelor of Science in Health and Exercise Science at The College of New Jersey. He also holds a Masters of Science in Educational Administration from Drexel University.

Covington emerged as the successful candidate after a multi-tiered search process that saw over 70 applicants apply and be screened.

“We were very impressed with Mr. Covington’s candidacy,” Superintendent Michael Nitti stated. “He is an experienced administrator with expansive knowledge in athletics and progressive health and physical education. We think he will be an excellent addition to our team.”

“I am excited to join the Ewing Schools,” Covington commented. “I am well aware of the strong legacy of success of Ewing Athletics, and look forward to working with the student-athletes, coaches and parents. I am thrilled to be joining a district where emphasis is placed on student learning, growth and success.”

Allen (Benton) Moves to Director of Assessment and Counseling Services

Current Ewing High School Assistant Principal Dr. Karen Allen (Benton) will be moving from her position to take over as Director of Assessment and Counseling Services, replacing the retiring Betty Jo Prince.

In this administrative role, Allen is in charge of coordinating all district assessment requirements, supervising student support processes, and serving as District Anti-Bullying Coordinator.



Allen has a Bachelors of Science Degree in Chemical Engineering from Florida A&M, a Masters in Educational Leadership from The College of New Jersey, and recently earned her Ed.D in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of South Carolina.

Allen brings a vast array of experiences to her position, serving as a high school teacher, district supervisor of curriculum and instruction, and a building administrator during her career in education.

“Dr. Allen has proven to be a skilled and highly competent administrator,” Assistant Superintendent Dr. Danita Ishibashi commented. “We think she will do excellent work for our students in this important position.”

“I am excited to take on the new challenges this role would offer and working hard to support the emotional well-being of our students and the teaching and learning that occurs in our classrooms,” Dr. Allen commented.



Siddiqui Tabbed as New EHS Boys Basketball Coach

Amir Siddiqui was approved by the Board as the new Head Boys Basketball Coach at Ewing High School.

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Siddiqui is currently a Teacher of Special Education at Ewing High School. He has Bachelor of Arts, with Honors, in Philosophy from Rutgers University and a Masters Degree in Elementary and Special Education from Holy Family University.

Siddiqui is a graduate of Ewing High School, and the former Blue Devil student-athlete takes over a basketball program at his alma mater that has seen a lot of success over the years. In the past decade, Ewing High School Boys Basketball has won numerous divisional titles, a county title, and made four state championship finals appearances under the now retired Shelly Dearden.

Siddiqui brings a strong coaching background to his new position. Most recently, he was one of Coach Dearden's top assistants for the Blue Devils. He was also the Head Boys Basketball Coach at neighboring Hopewell Valley High Schools for four years, and has served as an assistant football coach for both high schools. He also has significant experience coaching basketball at the youth and camp levels.

"I am extremely excited and humbled by the opportunity to lead the Boys Basketball program at Ewing High School," Siddiqui stated. "I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge and thank Coach Shelly Dearden who is not only a mentor, she's my friend. Over the years I have learned a great deal working alongside her and I am forever grateful for her impact on me as a coach and educator."

"As a former student and current special education teacher at Ewing high school, I take tremendous pride in getting the chance to work with our incredible student-athletes and school community in such an impactful role," Siddiq added. "I'm looking forward to working with our administration and athletic department to continue being a steward and ambassador of our program's rich tradition and values as head coach of Ewing boy's basketball!"

"We are excited to have Mr. Siddiqui take over leadership of what is an excellent program," EHS Principal Ed Chmiel commented. "He is a proven educator and leader who is dedicated to the success of his student-athletes."

Dalessio Named New EHS Head Football Coach

The Board approved Matthew Dalessio as the new head football coach of Ewing High School.

Dalessio, who has been a Health and Physical Education teacher at EHS since 2009, brings considerable football and coaching experience to the position as he takes over leadership of the gridiron program. He has been the Assistant Head Coach of the Blue Devils since 2012 and during that time has served as Defensive Coordinator, Offensive Coordinator and Special Teams Coordinator. He has also been the Speed and Conditioning Coach of the program since 2012.

A former standout player at Cherokee High School and collegiately at The College of New Jersey, Dalessio has also been the head wrestling coach at EHS since 2012 and led resurgence in that program, with a number of Blue Devil grapplers achieving significant individual success as the team has grown in numbers. He has also served as the head coach of the EHS Boys Track team.

Dalessio takes over a Ewing High squad coming off a 5-5 season in 2018. The Blue Devils advanced to the state sectional semi-finals in 2016.



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"I am beyond excited to take over as head coach of a program that I have helped to build over the past 10 years," Dalessio commented. "I look forward to getting to work to prepare for the upcoming season and continuing to forge positive relationships with players, their families, and the alumni of the Ewing Football Program."

"Coach Dalessio has demonstrated a passion for football and a commitment to the student-athletes of Ewing High School," Principal Ed Chmiel stated. "We look forward to him leading the Blue Devils into action in 2019."

The following policies and regulations were approved by the Board as "Second Readings" and are now formal Board policy:

Regulation R2460.8 Free and Appropriate Public Education
Regulation R2464 Gifted and Talented Students (K-8)

The following policies and regulations were approved by the Board as "First Reading". After review and approval by the Board at its next meeting in May, they will become formal Board policy:

Policy P4219 Commercial Driver's License Controlled Substance and Alcohol Use Testing
Policy P7440 School District Security
Regulation R7440 School District Security
Policy P2415.06 Unsafe School Choice Option
Regulation R5530 Substance Abuse
Policy P5560 Student Discipline/Code of Conduct
Regulation P5660 Student Discipline/Code of Conduct
Policy P5611 Removal of Students for Firearms Offenses
Regulation R5611 Removal of Students for Firearms Offenses
Policy P5612 Assaults on District Board of Education Members and Employees
Regulation R5612 Assaults on District Board of Education Members and Employees
Policy R5613 Removal of Students For Assaults With Weapons Offenses
Regulation R5613 Removal of Students For Assaults With Weapons Offenses
Policy P8416 Reporting Violence, Vandalism, Harassment, Intimidation, Bullying, Alcohol, And Other Drug Abuse
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The next meeting of the Board of Education will take place on Monday, May 20th, 2019 at the Ewing High School auditorium.

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