

FORT LEE DISTRICT NEWSLETTER



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"Early Detection Saves Lives" - Central Office Staff help to support the Fort Lee Fire Prevention Fundraiser. Proceeds of T-shirts go towards the fire safety program and Pink Heals of Bergen County.. Pictured L to R: Ken Rota, Maria Varela, Scott Bendul Tammi Gil, Sue Aitken, Silvia Alfaro, Jaime Murphy, Georgette Manganelli, Marilyn Alomar & Marta Ortiz.

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Autumn has arrived bringing with it a chill in the air, Halloween and my favorite, apple cider doughnuts. As we enter into the Thanksgiving season, we are reminded to reflect on the aspects of our lives that truly matter and recognize what we have to be thankful for, such as our families and friends.

I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity when schools are closed to spend time with your children. Disconnect from electronics and connect with them. Whether you take a trip, do some special activity or just be together, enjoy the time with family.



BOARD MEETING HIGHLIGHTS:**9/24/18**

Mr. Sarnoff shared that members of the Board along with Mr. Rota, Mr. DeNichilo, and Mr. Bendul visited the Lewis F. Cole Middle School Construction site, walking all four floors and discussing construction progress.

Mr. Sarnoff shared that he attended the NJ School Boards Legislative meeting where topics of discussion included various regions experiencing overcrowding due to increased land development, student substance abuse, the opioid crisis, and school funding.

Mr. DiMeglio shared that Finance Committee members met before this session and discussed fiscal year 2020 budget, the 5th and 6th grade building opening [LFCMS Addition], expenses related to that opening, and ideas to manage those expenses.

10/8/18

Mr. Kenneth Rota introduced the self-assessment for determining grades under the Anti-bullying Bill of Rights Act for 2017 – 2018.

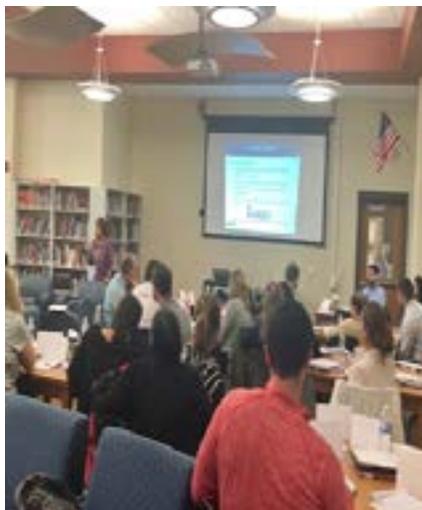
Dr. Sharon Amato and Ms. Lauren Carrubba led the discussion of the 2017 – 2018 State Assessment Report, which is available on the district website under the Administration/ Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment tab: <http://flboe.com/common/pages/DisplayFile.aspx?itemId=18222283>

SUPPORTING OUR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

We support and embrace speakers of different languages and encourage diversity by way of multicultural activities, lessons, and programs that promote the belief that our schools' diversity is its greatest strength. The ESL program supports students who are not fluent in English to develop native-like levels of proficiency. The program also addresses the development of cognitive and expressive skills required for academic success. The ESL curriculum provides both English and native language instruction to ELLs (English Language Learners) by a team of dedicated teachers that research, plan and deliver instruction that reflects research-based best practices, addressing the unique academic needs of every eligible student. Parent outreach is a critical component of the ESL program. The ESL Parents' Advisory group meets three times each year and district

administrators provide parents information about district initiatives as well as school and community resources. Parents are also given an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback about the districts' programs. This fall, the PAC meeting was held at the Fort Lee Public Library. At this event, parents had an opportunity to get information about the many services offered by the library, including adult ESL classes.

At the elementary level, K-6 students are either pulled out of regular classes for instruction, or an ESL teacher pushes in to the mainstream class, collaborating with the classroom teacher to provide support and instruction to the ESL students. At the middle school and high school levels, students generally attend one period, sometimes two, of instruction on a departmentalized basis. Bilingual instruction is provided to speakers of Korean, Japanese, and Spanish in the elementary schools. ESL and Bilingual teachers meet with the department supervisor, grade level teachers, and building principals several times during the school year to analyze WIDA and other assessment data, curriculum and teaching strategies to support student learning.



In 2015, the Fort Lee Schools embarked on a research-based, professional development initiative to address the unique academic needs of the ELLs in the district. Since that time, over 200 new and veteran teachers in the district have participated in training on the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model. This year the training was held in mid-October and more than 50 teachers from across the district attended two full-days of SIOP training. This training was provided by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). The SIOP Model is a research-based and validated instructional model that has proven effective in addressing the academic needs of English learners throughout the United States. The SIOP Model includes eight interrelated components: lesson preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice/application, lesson delivery, and review and assessment. During this training teachers were taught various strategies to make language and learning more accessible to their English Language Learners. Then they were afforded various opportunities to collaborate with their colleagues to develop a "SIOP-ized" lesson plan. After the lesson plan had been infused with various SIOP strategies, the teachers shared their lesson plans with their colleagues using a gallery walk. Teachers were provided feedback on their lesson, but more importantly, they were immersed in the experience of how to support their ELLs using effective instructional strategies.



What's Happening...



Students of School #1 and the Environmental Club Advisor, Ms. Minutolo at Sandy Hook State Park beach for their annual clean up.



School #2 student-to-student translators for 2018-19. Back row: Ahead Belkheir, Alex Buiel, Omer Sunar, Joshua Kim, Justyn Ramirez-Abreu. Front row: Tamzid Hasan, Diyora Akhmedova, Kanta Asano.



School #2 Kindergarteners showing off their class banner for the Boosterthon.



School #3 celebrates Hispanic Heritage Month with the entire student body learning how to perform Latin dances, including the meringue and macarena.



School #3 Halloween Dance.



Scenes from School #3 Halloween Dance.

OBSERVANCE OF RESPECT AND SCHOOL VIOLENCE AWARENESS:

The theme for the month of October was RESPECT. This is a time when Americans pledge to live a healthy life and stay drug free! Here are just a few of the activities that were performed throughout the school district in observance of respect and school violence awareness. Students made daily announcements that reflected respecting oneself and each other. Additionally, school administrators made daily announcements about the importance of school safety and maintaining a safe environment within school and our community. The "James Lindhan Dance Crew Assembly" was held for students in grades K-3. This assembly consisted of a 30-minute nonstop interactive showcase of intricate choreography that involves and entertains the students while also conveying a positive message, as well as a 15-minute lecture period discussing the negative effects of bullying and how children can learn how to respect each other in and outside of the classroom. The "OMEGAMAN" Anti-Bullying Program designed to reach youngsters conveying positive messages regarding respect and responsibility was held at the elementary schools. Nominations were made of the most Respectful Person to grades 4-6. School Spirit Day was celebrated as students proudly wore their school colors. The SADD Committee organized activities to recognize National Red Ribbon Week! A video was created and viewed by middle school students and staff to kick off our 700 Acts of Kindness Challenge. During October and November, students and staff will work together to spread kindness like confetti. A mural of students' & staffs' fingerprints was created. Each fingerprint represents one act of kindness they will do during our 700 Acts of Kindness Challenge. The culminating activity will be a celebration acknowledging our efforts to spread kindness like confetti. Darryl Strawberry met with both students and parents at the high school on October 15th in order to discuss the dangers of adolescent substance abuse. Mr. Strawberry shared the negative impact that substance abuse had on his life as well as provided tips to parents and students on staying drug/alcohol free.

MONTHLY CHARACTER THEME: Each month a different character theme is discussed and infused into the curriculum. Parents are encouraged to have follow-up discussions at home. This month's theme was Respect and

Acceptance. The theme is also displayed on the school's monthly calendar as well as the Marquee by the entrance of the building. The monthly theme is mentioned during morning announcements where students take turns in making announcements describing various ways in which one can be respectful.

RECITATION OF THE ANTI-BULLYING PLEDGE:
I make a COMMITMENT to take a stand against bullying. I will treat others with RESPECT and KINDNESS. I will have COMPASSION to not be a bully and COURAGE to not be a bystander. It is my RESPONSIBILITY to help others being bullied and to report bullying.

STIGMA-FREE INITIATIVE: In hopes of ending the stigma associated with mental illness, Fort Lee has become one of many towns in Bergen County that are now designated as Stigma-Free communities. The goal of the Stigma-Free initiative is to raise awareness about mental illness and to create a culture within our community in which individuals feel supported by those around them and are empowered to seek treatment.

**FIRE PREVENTION WEEK**

During the week of October 8-12, the elementary schools acknowledged the importance of "Fire Prevention Week" with several great activities. Kindergarten through grade 4 students enjoyed a Fire Prevention assembly with Firefighter Phil and the 5th and 6th grade students participated in the Fire Safety House Smoke Simulator. Thank you to the Fort Lee Fire Department for their annual involvement in these informative activities!!!

RED RIBBON WEEK 2018:

October 22nd through October 31st was National Red Ribbon Week. Red Ribbon Week is the nation's oldest and largest awareness week where millions of Americans pledge to live a healthy life and stay drug free. Students against Destructive Decisions (SADD) had a chance to help out during the week and decorated the schools with meaningful posters related to Respect, Peace, and Red Ribbon Week.



Student activities were held to promote "Red Out Day":

1. Wear All Red Day to say "Stop" to using drugs;
2. Students wear red! SADD officers will visit each class to determine which classes have students wearing the most red.
3. Winning class will receive No Homework Passes OR an extra recess!
4. Decorate the school with Red Ribbons.
5. K-6-red ribbons/red ribbon bracelets/red ribbons stickers given out to students.
6. Door Decorating Contest.
7. All week students came up with a quote for Red Ribbon Week about not using drugs. Best quotes were read over the announcements.

STEAM TANK CHALLENGE 2018

STEAM Tank is a winning combination of teaching and learning which intentionally promotes real-world problem solving, creativity and critical thinking skills. Co-created by the NJSBA and the U.S. Army, STEAM Tank is modeled after the popular television show “Shark Tank” which is a competition, pitting would-be inventors against each other in a quest to win financial support and see their ideas move toward becoming actual products. This year’s STEAM Tank had over 400 statewide submissions and 90 advanced to compete in the final challenge held in Atlantic City at the NJSBA/NJASA/NJASBO Annual Workshop in October. The STEAM Tank Challenge asks students to invent something new, modify an existing product, or identify a situation or real world problem that needs resolution. STEAM Tank emphasizes the integrative STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Mathematic) best practices. However, it is not limited to these content areas, and students have the flexibility to take their concept or design in any direction which they feel will give them the upper hand in the completion.

The leadership of NJEA is a collaborative partner serving as judges at both the regionals and at final competitions. The NJSBA, U.S. Army, NJEA, and others all have common goals for STEAM Tank...Academic Achievement and for all students to be “future ready.” This is why the organizations have collaborated to provide opportunities to increase the integration of STEAM in our NJ Schools, and provide access to subject matter experts beyond the resources of the school. The STEAM Tank finals were held at NJSBA Annual Workshop on October 23rd and 24th and the winners will be announced at the NJEA convention in the STEAM Tank Theater on November 8th. A handful of student teams who participate in the final competition will be invited to showcase their innovative ideas, prototypes, and solutions at the NJEA Convention. Please visit the NJSBA website for further information on this program: <https://www.njsba.org/services/isteam-2/steam-tank-challenge>.

Congratulations to Fort Lee High School’s participants in the STEAM Tank Challenge and to the teachers who provide leadership to enhance the ingenuity of our student entrepreneurs!

“Thank you so much for all your support in allowing our kids to attend this great event. It was amazing to see what they could accomplish when given the opportunity to stretch their limits” said Monique Kim.



2018 STEAM Tank Challengers: Pictured L to R: Joseph Choi, Joshua Pae, Giannis Rakkou, Ben Lapin, Yeju Lee, Chantal Chau, Yoonseo Choi, and Kaylyn Chun.



2018 STEAM Tank Challengers pictured with Board Members and Administrators at the New Jersey School Boards Convention.

Wellness Fair 2018

On October 16th, we hosted our 3rd Annual Employee Wellness Fair. The fair has improved every year and this year was no exception. We had over 25 participating vendors from our local communities and district services and over 100 staff members attended this year! From flu shots to massages and from healthy snacks to free giveaways, the fair offered something for everyone! The wellness fair featured a guest speaker, from Pure Edge, Gill McClean, who spoke on mindfulness and the importance of self-care. We also played wellness bingo this year and almost everyone who attended played in order to be entered into some great raffles for a Fit Bit and \$100 Amazon Gift Card. This year's winners are as follows:

- *Gift Basket (Donated by Liberty Travel) - Diana Davis, CST*
- *Travel Blanket (Donated by NJM) - Marielle Bakian, School 1*
- *\$25 Amazon Gift Card (Donated by Visions Credit Union) - Brittany West, FLHS*
- *Designer Sun Glasses (Donated by VSP) - Dimitra Kotsiotas, S3/S4 and Tammi Gil, CO*
- *\$100 Amazon Gift Card (Donated by FLPS) - Denise Beffre, S2*
- *Fit Bit (Donated by Brown & Brown) - Roberto Yan, FLHS*

This year's wellness fair was a huge success because of everyone that made it possible. Thank you to the high school custodial staff for their help with set up and to Pomptonian for the great snacks. And a special thank you to Pat and Tara from Brown & Brown Benefits Advisors for all their support and hard work helping us to put this together and, of course, to Tammi Gil for coordinating the whole fair! Great work to all involved!



Staff members gather information from the 3rd annual Employee Wellness Fair.



Tammi Gil and Jaime Murphy of the HR Dept. greeted staff members.



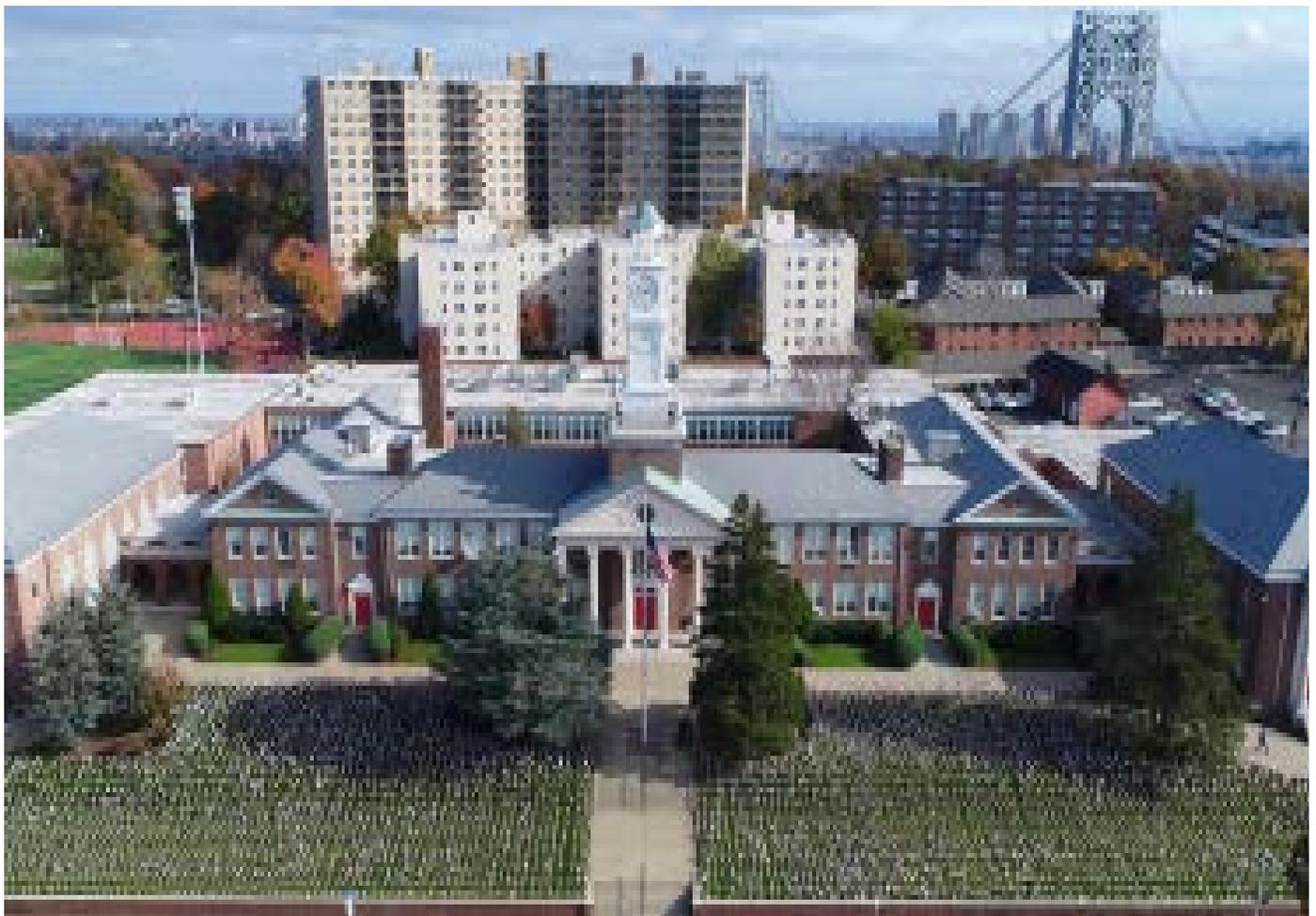
Nilsa Benitez and Marilyn Alomar of Central Office browsed the tables.



College Night 18-19 at Fort Lee High School



National Signing Day 17-18



Flags are placed on the front lawn of Fort Lee High School for the annual Field of Heroes recognition ceremony

MINDFULNESS PRACTICE OF THE MONTH

Spidey Senses

While you're on the subject of superheroes, there is a fun and easy way to introduce your kids to paying attention to the present.

Instruct your kids to turn on their "Spidey senses", the super-focused senses of smell, sight, hearing, taste, and touch that Spiderman uses to keep tabs on the world around him. This will encourage them to pause and focus their attention on the present, opening their awareness to the information their senses bring in (*Karen Young, 2017*).

This is a classic mindfulness exercise, packaged in a fun and easy to understand format that kids will find no difficulty in trying out.



Spider-Man illustrated by Artur Harant

HEALTHY ROUTINES, HEALTHY FAMILIES

Cliffside Park School District recently held a Regional SEPAG (Special Education Parent Advisory Group) parent workshop, which Fort Lee parents were invited to attend. Otise Schuk, LCSW, Clinical Program Manager for Care Plus, Inc. presented the workshop entitled Healthy Routines, Healthy Families. In addition to identifying and comparing different types of routines, Ms. Schuk emphasized the benefits of routines for both parents and kids. A portion of her presentation was focused on the importance of managing technology time. She identified and explained ESS – Electronic Screen Syndrome. ESS is the overexposure to screens via gaming systems, tablets, and smart phones leading to overstimulation and the deregulation of the nervous system. The constant interaction with artificial stimuli shifts the nervous system into stress mode, thereby decreasing a child's ability to modulate his/her mood, attention, or level of stimulation in a manner appropriate to the environment. Signs of ESS can include: irritability, oppositional-defiant behaviors, social immaturity, poor eye contact, insomnia, learning difficulties, poor memory, lack of focus, tantrums, and disorganized behaviors.

Ms. Schuk suggested establishing a family technology routine to reduce over-exposure to technology and develop healthy habits with the following recommendations:

- Limit the amount of time per day your child can spend on electronics to 2 hours of non-academic time per day
- Put the phones to bed (not take them to bed)
- Install monitoring apps to help you understand – and limit – your child's technology use

Ms. Schuk ended the presentation with three takeaways:

1. Routines help children develop healthy habits and independence, feel safe and secure, and relieve stress for the whole family.
2. Incorporating boundaries around technology as a part of the family routine can have huge benefits for children as they age.
3. No matter how detailed or general, the best family plans are consistent, predictable, and are supported by follow through.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS:

Tuesday, November 6, 2018	Election Day	District Closed	
Friday, November 16, 2018	Coffee & Conversation with BOE	9:00 am	FLHS Main Entrance
Wednesday, November 21, 2018	Thanksgiving Break	Early Dismissal	
Thurs/Fri, November 22-23, 2018	Thanksgiving Break	District Closed	
Thur-Sat, Nov 29, 30 & Dec 1, 2018	HS Production of "The Crucible"	7:00 pm	HS Auditorium
Friday, December 21, 2018	Holiday Break	Early Dismissal	
Mon, Dec 24, 2018 - Tues, Jan 1, 2019	Holiday Break	District Closed	
Monday, January 7, 2019	BOE Reorganization Meeting	6:00 pm	FLHS Media Center