

# BERGENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT DISTRICT NEWS



## FALL EDITION - DECEMBER 2020

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## FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

By Christopher M. Tully, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools



As we navigate the holiday season burdened by enormous personal and professional challenges, it gives me great joy to bring you a bit of good news. The Middle States Association Commissions on Elementary and Secondary Schools (MSA-CES) announced that the Bergenfield Public School District has earned reaccreditation, the gold standard for measuring and evaluating school performance. All seven schools were reaccredited as a system.

Bergenfield was only the second district in New Jersey to undergo the new, rigorous Systems Approach process when it first received its district-wide accreditation from

Middle States on December 1, 2013. Following the recent reaccreditation by MSA, the district will retain its accreditation until December 1, 2027.

Since Middle States accreditation is a multifaceted evaluation process that schools and school systems voluntarily use to demonstrate they are meeting a defined set of research-based performance standards, I am extremely proud of our district. None of our success could be accomplished without the outstanding partnership between our schools and parents.

In any other year, this announcement would be the most significant accomplishment for ANY school district for not just this year, but for many years. However, in December 2020, it is overshadowed by something even more significant. I am even more proud of how our Bergenfield family has adapted and cooperated to address the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

As a parent of young children, I know firsthand the stress and upheaval your family is facing. This has been exacerbated by the horrific loss of loved ones and the loss of jobs and family security. Through all of this, nothing is more impressive to me than how you as a community have pulled-together to mitigate this COVID-19 crisis.

All of us are exhausted and frustrated by the impact of this virus. Yet, as the district administrator, I beg you to continue to be vigilant with our health and safety protocols. If we hold on, perhaps the delivery of vaccinations may help us return to some semblance of normalcy.

The Middle States Association is 100% correct. Collectively, you have been a beacon and a catalyst for the inspiration of so many. You are exceptional not only because of adhering to rigorous standards but because of your unrelenting commitment to meeting the needs of our students—no matter what we face.

There are not enough superlatives to express how proud I am of you. However, let me at least say that because you have persevered and committed to doing what is best for our children, there is a good solid chance for a very Happy New Year ahead. Keep up the good fight! Don't let anything dim that brilliant light of hope that emanates from your community and school spirit. Shining daily, you give our students hope for a better tomorrow. Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

## 2020-21 FACILITY UPGRADES

The district has recently completed several projects to improve our facilities.

Such projects include a fully remodeled science lab at BHS and a drama classroom renovation at RWB. Meanwhile, the high school woodshop received a full air filtration system replacement.

At Franklin School, new lighting and a fresh coat of paint for the Franklin School multi-purpose room breathes new life into the room.



# DISTRICT NEWS

## THE 2020-21 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR ANNOUNCED



## Teachers of the Year

Mr. Adams, Mrs. McGrane, Mrs. Ortega, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Moraitis, Mrs. Titus and Mrs. Butler.

Congratulations to each of this year's honorees on being selected as Teacher of the Year of your school! The seven recipients are: Mrs. Ortega—Roy W. Brown Middle School; Mrs. Moraitis—Washington School; Mrs. McGrane—Franklin School; Mrs. Titus—Hoover School; Mrs. Johnson—Lincoln School; Mrs. Butler—Jefferson School; and Mr. Adams—Bergenfield High School.

Dr. Tully stated, "On behalf of the Bergenfield Board of Education, I would like to congratulate our 2020-21 Teachers of the Year. Each recipient is being recognized by his/her peers within our learning community for demonstrating outstanding commitment to our students. This honor is well-deserved!"

### RWB STUDENTS WIN BIG



The winners are congratulated on a Zoom call.

Three RWB students have been selected as the townwide winners in this year's Bergenfield VFW Post 6467 "Patriot Pen Essay Contest." These students have each won cash prizes, and now their essays are in contention to win again at the regional level. Congratulations to our winners: First Prize—Abigail James (8th grade); Second Prize—Leonard Mujemulta (7th grade); and Third Prize—Merinrose Jojoy (8th grade).

### PERFORMANCE SHOWCASED



A snippet from the virtual ensemble.

The BHS Music Department's Class of 2020 "Sing to Me" virtual ensemble, which was aired during last year's virtual graduation ceremony, was selected for the Arts Education Showcase at this fall's New Jersey School Board Association Workshop. The video serves as a wonderful example of the many possibilities that exist for student learning and collaborative performances in the arts during this challenging time.

## CURRICULUM CORNER

By Darlene Markman

Since Spring, I have heard many clichés to describe the *new normal* of teaching and learning in the midst of these *unprecedented times*. Much of this phraseology is symbolic of wartime, conjuring images of people *fighting uphill battles* and *navigating uncharted waters*. I, however, prefer to look at the resilience that is a trademark of Bergenfield and compare our learning community to flowers that not only *survive the storm*, but use the rain to make them grow.

And grow we have! While hard pressed to find an educator who does not long to see the hallways filled with students bustling to their next classes and hear children laughing on the blacktop, we understand that educating our students safely continues to be a priority. Yet rather than *bury our heads in the sand*, we have *tackled these challenges head-on*. Tools like Google Classroom and Screencastify help organize information and communicate it clearly to our students. Interactive programs like Boom Cards, Flipgrid, Pear Deck and EdPuzzle, engage students in the learning process within the Bitmoji classroom and ensure that our children continue to progress.

But make no mistake! Virtual and hybrid education is not built on technology alone. More impressive than the growing technological toolkit is the creativity that has emerged from beyond the crevices of the keyboard. Read-alouds set to rap songs, basements transformed into art fairs, and YouTube videos parodying the adventures of *Flat Stanley* showcase the ingenuity of our staff members and their ability to *think outside the box* and *stretch their own limits* by learning new ways to work effectively with our students. With a concoction of collaborative problem-solving, teamwork and grit, we understand not only that *the show must go on*, but the importance of *knocking it out of the park* for the benefit of the students in Bergenfield.

# DISTRICT NEWS



## STUDENT EARNS EAGLE SCOUT DISTINCTION AFTER COMPLETING HEARTFELT PROJECT



Christopher Budiman receives a Certificate of Commendation from the Board of Education and Dr. Tully.

This fall, current BHS 10th grader Christopher Budiman met all the requirements to reach the level of Eagle Scout. One of these requirements was to complete a public service project.

During the 2019-20 school year, Christopher decided to build a “buddy bench” at Washington School to honor Ms. Dorothy (Dot) Lacey, who passed in early 2019. Dot was a beloved, longtime lunch aide at Washington School since 1992.

“She had been considered one of the best lunch mothers by the children and was always very helpful to any child in need,” said Christopher in his request to the district for permission to build the bench on the property.

The tributed “buddy bench” is comprised of two back-to-back benches featuring a dedication plaque honoring Ms. Lacey and planters on both ends.



Christopher smiles after reaching Eagle Scout status.



Christopher is promoted to Eagle Scout via Zoom.

### NATIONAL AWARD WINNER



Ms. Villone proudly displays her plaque.

Congratulations to Mrs. Villone, who was honored as the National Liberty Museum celebrated its 14th Annual “Teacher as Hero Award.” The ceremony, which took place on September 24th, honored 10 inspiring teachers from across the country who make a difference in the lives of their students.

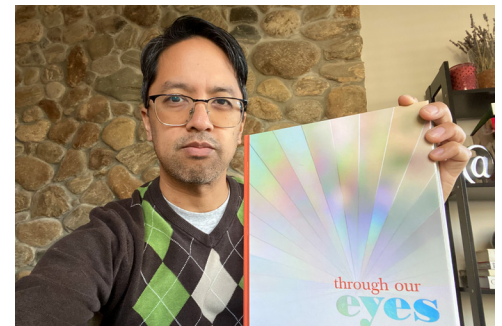
### ART TEACHER PUBLISHED



Ms. Anolik poses with a copy of her article.

Longtime art teacher Ms. Anolik’s article on her popular “STEAMed Jellyfish” lesson was published in the November 2020 issue of *School Arts Magazine*. The national magazine is committed to promoting excellence, advocacy, and professional support for the community of educators in the visual arts.

### YEARBOOK EARNS SILVER



Mr. Dapito with the Silver-rated “Crossroads.”

The 2019-20 BHS yearbook, “Crossroads,” placed second in this year’s annual yearbook contest by the Garden State Scholastic Press Association. The yearbook staff is comprised of faculty advisors Mr. Dapito and Ms. Grande as well as students who sign up annually to participate in the extracurricular club.

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## DISTRICT NEWS | DECEMBER 2020

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Darlene Markman, Asst. Superintendent of Curriculum  
Dr. Frank V. Auriemma, Interim Director of Personnel

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# DISTRICT NEWS



**A SALUTE TO SERVICE:  
THANK YOU TO ALL OUR VETERANS!**

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