



WEST DEPTFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT

Board Highlights - March 2023



The following information is intended to inform staff and community members of recent action taken by the Board. The information included in this brief is not intended to be complete and does not replace official Board minutes. Please see the Board agenda on the District Website for the complete action of the Board.

ENROLLMENT: 2,810 as of March 2023

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF EDUCATION PRESIDENT, DR. DREW RICCHIUTI:

As you can see from our monthly Board Highlights, students across our district have certainly been busy this past month! Our elementary students have been involved in various activities from Read Across America to Service-Learning Projects. Students are also looking forward to their upcoming spring field trips. The Middle School held their annual People's Choice Awards, which was an incredible night celebrating and honoring some very special students. The High School performance of "SpongeBob the Musical" was a huge hit – the Board commends the cast, crew, and production team for putting on such a fantastic show. Spring sports have started at the MS and HS, and we encourage you that if you have time, please come out and support our athletes.

We hope you enjoy some quality time with your family over Spring Break.

Dr. Drew Ricchiuti
West Deptford Board of Education President



STUDENT RECOGNITION:

SOARING EAGLES

The West Deptford Board of Education recognized the following individuals at their March Meeting. These students have been selected by their teachers for demonstrating outstanding character and for their commitment to their schools.



Red Bank Elementary School

- Liam Donahue
- Jasper Dalton

Oakview Elementary School

- Kiesha Villegas
- Elias Caceres

Green-Fields Elementary School

- Kayla Keilyk
- Hector Ocasio

West Deptford Middle School

- Matthew Christy
- Jumanna Abd El-Hamid

West Deptford High School

- Jordyn Dreger
- Colwyn Moser



WDHS DECA



Congratulations to Lauren Newman and the WDHS DECA chapter for a top finish in this year's State DECA conference down in Atlantic City. Three seniors, Colwyn Moser, Jake Hartman, and Yusuf Abouelsaadate all qualified for this year's State Competition, and TWO finished strong, qualifying for this year's National Competition in Orlando in April.

A special congratulations to Jake Hartman and Yusuf Abouelsaadate for their top placement in Sports and Entertainment Marketing. These gentlemen defeated over 40 teams throughout the State in a highly coveted, competitive area. Once again, West Deptford DECA has shown quality in our numbers. A very special feat and we are very proud!

WDHS FEBRUARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



WDMS FEBRUARY STUDENTS OF THE MONTH



VFW PATRIOT'S PEN ESSAY WINNERS

Each year, Middle School Students in grades 6-8 are encouraged to enter the nationwide VFW-sponsored Patriot's Pen youth essay competition, which encourages young minds to examine America's history, along with their own experiences in modern American society, by drafting a 300- to 400-word essay expressing their views on an annual patriotic theme. Congratulations to the 2022-2023 VFW Patriot's Pen Essay winners and thank you to all who participated!



7th & 8th GRADE GIFTED & TALENTED NATIONAL HISTORY DAY COMPETITION

Congratulations to the WDMS 7th and 8th grade Gifted & Talented students who competed in the National History Day at Rutgers, Camden at the end of February. Everyone performed very well, and 5 groups advanced to the State Level Competition!



OAKVIEW HARD HAT WORKERS



RED BANK HONOR GUARD



RED BANK BUCKET FILLERS



PERSONNEL

- Appointments:
 - District Bus Aide
 - Substitute Teacher, Custodian, Instructional Aide & Substitute Non-Instructional Aide, and YEP Care Provider
 - WDHS Teacher of Communications & TV Production
 - WDHS LTR Special Education Teacher
 - WDHS Evening Alternative Program Substitute
 - WDHS Volunteer Assistant Boys Tennis Coach
 - WDMS Non-Instructional LPC Aide
 - OVES LTR Special Education Teacher

- OVES Volunteer
- RBES Special Education Instructional Aide
- Resignations/Retirements:
 - Retirement District Bus Driver
 - Retirement WDMS Non-Instructional LPC Aide
 - Resignation Business Administrator/Board Secretary
 - Resignation WDMS Special Education Instructional Aide
 - Resignation OVES Special Education Instructional Aide

THE BOARD APPROVED THE FOLLOWING:

- School Business Days
- NFL Play 60: Race to the Super Bowl Grant
- Facilities Use
- Vehicle Purchases
- School Bus Emergency Evacuation Drills
- Amend Fund 20 Allocations
- PEA Allocation Approval
- RF Design & Integration Payment
- IXL Sales Agreement
- Audit Approval & Auditor Peer Review Statement
- LDTC Practicum Student
- WDHS Field Trips
- Early Childhood Philosophy Workshop
- Numerous Policies and Regulations
- Job Descriptions - revised
- The Eagle Flight Forward - revised
- GFES & RBES 2022-2023 Student & Family Handbook - revised
- HIB Summary Report (SSDS) - Period 1
- Amend Start Dates
- Leaves of Absence & Amended Leaves of Absence

BUSINESS, FACILITIES, & FINANCE:

- The Board approved the Board Secretary's and Treasurer's Reports, Transfers, Payroll, and Bills Lists.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Numerous other requests for approval for workshop attendance, student activities, and education items were approved by the Board of Education. These approvals will be reflected in the formal minutes of the meeting, which are available in the office of the Board of Education Secretary, as well as posted online after Board approval. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board is a Special Meeting for the Final Budget Hearing and Adoption at 6pm, followed by an Action Meeting on Monday, April 24, 2023 at 7pm in the West Deptford Middle School Library. The date and time are subject to change.

NOTES FROM THE NURSES

Seasonal Allergy Information from the School Nurses

The arrival of spring means flower buds and blooming trees, and if you're one of the millions of people who have seasonal allergies, it also means bothersome symptoms. Seasonal allergies, also called hay fever and allergic rhinitis, can make you miserable.

Climate changes can potentially affect both higher pollen concentrations and longer pollen seasons, causing more individuals to suffer increased health effects from pollen and other allergens. Pollen exposure can trigger various allergic reactions including sneezing, runny nose, congestion, and even allergic conjunctivitis (red, watery, or itchy eyes). Respiratory illnesses such as asthma can also be more sensitive to pollen.

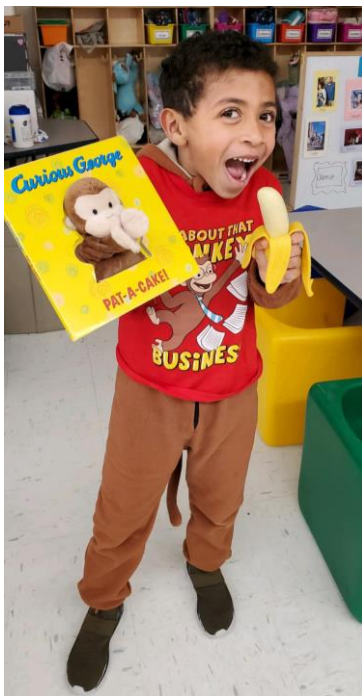
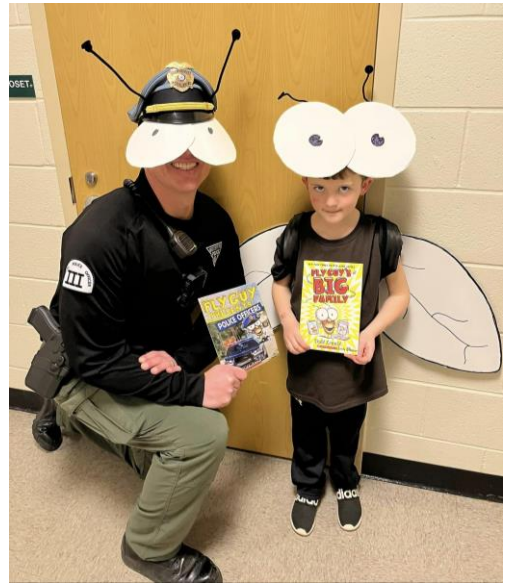
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that nearly 1 in 5 children (18.9%) have a seasonal allergy. Unlike the common cold, which typically lasts 7 to 10 days, seasonal allergies can stick around for weeks, or even months at a time. Untreated seasonal allergy symptoms can negatively affect a student's life and can include fatigue, poor concentration in school, learning problems related to poor sleep at night, and even days of missed school.

If you notice seasonal allergy signs and symptoms in your child, consider reaching out to a healthcare professional. There are many simple over-the-counter treatment options that your provider may recommend to alleviate their symptoms.

READ ACROSS AMERICA

Read Across America is an initiative on reading created by the National Education Association which focuses on motivating children and teens to read through events, partnerships, and reading resources that are about everyone, for everyone. Our District celebrated Read Across America the week of March 2-6 in numerous creative and innovative ways. However, our celebrations continued all month long! At Oakview, Mrs. Lokaj's class had a guest visitor and his dog Rusty who came and shared a story with them. Rusty is a member of FURever As Friends and frequently visits the library to read with children. Red Bank students had the chance to win prizes for correctly answering daily trivia questions about their favorite books. At Green-Fields, every Friday they [Drop Everything and READ](#) together, as well as a bookmark contest, and the Masked Reader Challenge. Middle school students read in comfy clothes and places. We had special days where students got to dress up as their favorite book characters. Please enjoy some of the photos below.





WDMS ROOT RALLY

On Thursday, March 9th, WDMS 5th graders participated in the Root Rally. For eight weeks, our 5th grade students had been studying roots for their word work. Students have learned the meaning of 60 different roots of Latin, Greek, Spanish, and Hebrew origin, along with example words, and the spelling of the words containing a root. This study enables students to strengthen their vocabulary, apply learned words to their writing, and broaden their understanding of how to decode word meanings by breaking down root parts. In order for our 5th grade Language Art classes to celebrate the hard work and instruction of our root study, the 5th graders have a Root Rally competition!



CELEBRATIONS

During February, our schools celebrated Black History Month, and then in March, NJ Arts in Our Schools Month, and Women's History Month. There were so many activities throughout our district to celebrate these important themes. Please include the photos below of some of our creative activities.







WORLD LANGUAGE HONOR SOCIETY & CLUB

**The Next Meeting is on Tuesday, February 28th!
Immediately After School in Room 38!**



◆ **In our next meeting, we will be introducing a new project highlighting women for Women's History Month**

[WDMS Black & Women's History Month Door Decorating Video](#)

GREEN-FIELDS SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT

We're blessed each year to have an opportunity of service for Cathedral Kitchen in Camden, and this year was another example of amazing kindness from our students, their families, and our past and present Green-Field's staff. We'd like to thank everyone who participated in some way to demonstrate sincere compassion, love, and care for many less fortunate than us. Beyond this, these are experiences that build bigger rooms in the hearts of our students. Here are some highlights from the evening...

- Over 200 of our Green-Fields Family in attendance (an all-time high for this event)!
- 1400 sandwiches made by many benevolent hands
- 100 hygiene bags filled
- Beautiful table centerpieces and placements created for evening meals at Cathedral Kitchen
- And...the life-altering experience of service for our children...and the adults present with them.

We're grateful for AmeriHealth who kindly sponsored our event this year, and our faculty and staff for volunteering to run the various "service" stations. A special thanks to our Character and Climate team for the planning and pre-work involved in such a busy night. You're all simply awesome!

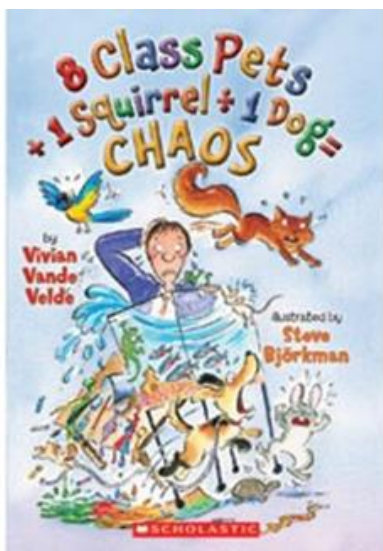




RED BANK & OAKVIEW KICK OFF ONE SCHOOL, ONE BOOK!

For the first time, Oakview and Red Bank decided to change our school-wide reading activity into a PreK-2 (Lower Elementary) reading activity. Both schools introduced the book *8 Class Pets + 1 Squirrel ÷ 1 Dog = Chaos* by Vivian Vande-Velde. Over the next few weeks, families are asked to read aloud portions of the book each night to their child(ren) so they can participate in activities and discussions at school. The One School, One Book is a unique program in which children of all grade levels will be listening to the same book. Reading professionals recommend reading material out loud that is beyond a child's own reading level. We have selected a title that can be followed and understood and enjoyed by younger students but will still captivate and stimulate older children.

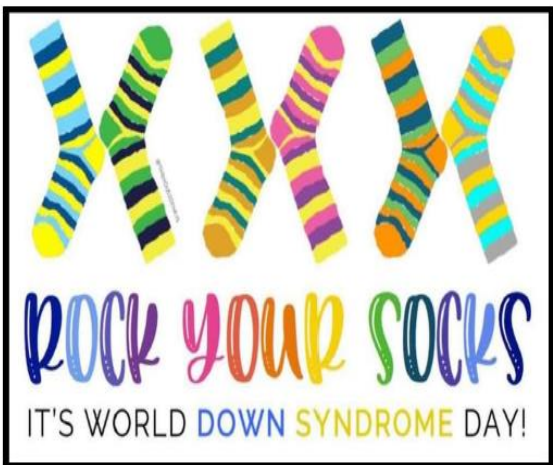
Both schools held a kick-off activity to motivate students and create enthusiasm for reading. While each school's activity was a bit different, it still held the same purpose: to build a school community that bridges home with school and creates a love of reading.





WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY

On March 21 we celebrated World Down Syndrome Day. March 21 is symbolic because those with Down Syndrome have three copies of their 21st chromosome. Students in our school community were encouraged to wear brightly colored, mismatched socks to show their support and celebration of World Down Syndrome Day. The Middle School Student Council and High School Key Clubs hosted sock drives. Oakview also set up an outdoor story walk which classes were able to walk through. This adorable story provided the students with more age-appropriate information about Down Syndrome.



WDMS PEOPLE'S CHOICE AWARDS

On March 16, West Deptford Middle School had an unforgettable night celebrating their 15th Annual People's Choice Awards. The PCA is an award given to a student by a staff member for any reason at all. This is a very powerful, positive event. Each student selected will remember this for years, if not a lifetime. Congratulations to this year's winners!



WDHS SCHOOL MUSICAL - SPONGEBOB THE MUSICAL

From March 17-19, FUN was the name of the game in SpongeBob the Musical, a family-friendly production with infectious songs. Our high school musical students did an amazing job bringing our favorite cartoon characters to life in a stylized designed show. It was a story of learning to believe in oneself with help from friends. Add in great dance numbers with chorus lines and there was truly something for everyone! Special thanks to Mike Wyatt, Bridgette and Jim Deacon, Bridgette Arseneau, and Nate Quinn for giving our students such a great experience!



CAFETERIA INFORMATION

- Please click [here](#) to view your school's cafeteria menu.
- All parents are encouraged to fill out a Free/Reduced Lunch Application. For more info, click [here](#).

UPCOMING EVENTS:

District-Wide Events

- March - Women's History Month
- March - NJ Arts in Our Schools Month
- 3/21 - World Down Syndrome Day
- 4/6 - Early Dismissal
- 4/7-4/14 - Spring Break
- 4/25 - National Bus Driver Day
- 4/26 - Administrative Assistant Day
- 4/27 - Take Your Child to Work Day

Red Bank Elementary

- 3/30 - Forces in Motion Assembly
- 4/29 VIP and Me Glow Party at RBES 2-4pm

Oakview Elementary

- 3/20-3/24 Buddy Bonding Week
- 3/21 - World Down Syndrome Day (wear mismatched socks)
- 3/22 - Chrysa Smith - Author Visit
- 3/23 - Spring Picture Day
- 4/3 - Celebrate World Autism Day
- 4/3-4/6 - Buddy Bonding Week
- 4/21, 4/24 & 4/26 - Teddy Bear Clinic - PreK
- 4/29 VIP and Me Glow Party at RBES 2-4pm

Green-Fields Elementary

- 3/21 - 3rd Grade Field Trip to Franklin Institute
- 4/29 VIP and Me Glow Party at RBES 2-4pm

Middle School

- 3/20 - Geography Bee Finals-grade 5
- 3/21 - Geography Bee Finals-grade 6
- 3/22 - Geography Bee Finals-grade 7
- 3/23 - Geography Bee Finals-grade 8

- 3/23 - Animal Therapy Room - Trivia Night Fundraiser 6-8pm
- 3/24 - Geography Bee School-Wide Finals
- 3/27 - Music in our Schools Month Spirit Week
- 3/28 - Spring Track & Field Season Begins
- 3/31 - 7th grade Glow Dance, 6:30-8pm

High School

- 3/25-3/28 - Senior Trip