

# CHIEF'S REPORT

PISCATAWAY HIGH SCHOOL HIGHLIGHTS



*Jason Lester, Principal*

*October, 2017*

## MESSAGE FROM MR. LESTER

The season is upon us with the changing of the leaves. ☺ This is a great time of the year as we are fully engaged in the school year. Autumn brown and orange leaves dominate the landscape and as the temperature drops slightly soon we will be able to smell the wood-burning stoves and fire places from days gone by. I get a warm, fuzzy feeling because I know the students and staff of PHS are working hard to make the EMPIRE great! Throughout the month of October I was able to engage PHS grads from early-early on as well as recent grads, and I am proud to report that they are doing AWESOME things that strengthen this community and the communities in which you live.

This past month we were able to provide our FABULOUS teaching staff with several professional development opportunities. The first focused on team-building day through the EMPIRE GAMES. Each department competed for the FACULTY Championship Belt. A series of events that challenged their ability to work together, problem solve, and most of all—have FUN! The second PD day we were able to have vertical and horizontal articulations throughout the district. This allowed us to tightly align our curriculum as well as share best teaching practices from K-12. It was inspirational to see professionals challenging themselves to meet the needs of ALL students. I look forward to more work like this. Please read on to learn more about good things happening in PHS.

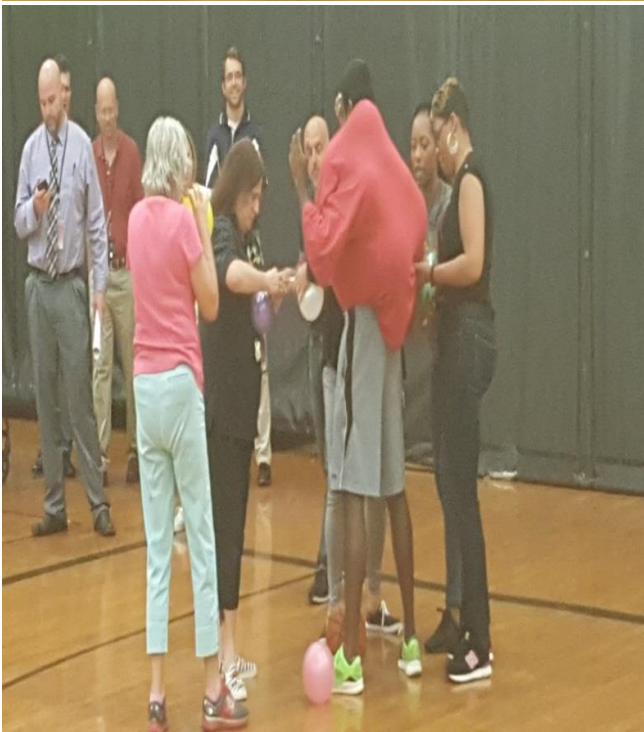
Strength & Honor

The PHS EMPIRE is STRONG and GROWING...to actively be engaged with us keep reading. ☺

## **PHS HAPPENINGS**

On October 19, 2017, our In-Service day, we held our first Empire Games of Piscataway High School. Our teams were by department and everyone who participated had a fun filled afternoon. Our first competition was Ping-Pong Ball Relay, Big T-shirt Basketball, P'way Human Curling, and we ended the afternoon with Name that Tune. The team with the most points at the end of the competition was named Champion and will have bragging rights until the next competition. Congratulations to the Science Department!! Excellent teamwork by all department members. I also want to thank the Committee for all their hard work in planning this Event Kelly Chilakos, Jim Grimm, Cynthia Botett, and Jesse Anstett.









## Science

During the October 19<sup>th</sup> in-service, department members worked under the guidance of John Boczany, Office of Assessments, NJDOE on Classroom assessments aligned with NGSS.

On October 20<sup>th</sup>, Mike Flynn took his Environmental Science students on a field trip to Hacklebarney State Park. Students are provided hands-on experience discovering environmental science concepts instead of reading about them in a book. They observe insects feeding on trees, micro-ecosystems under rocks and dead branches, fungi acting as saprophytes decomposing plant matter, succession of the forest, biogeochemical cycles, and other interactions between the flora and fauna. Mike has been bringing his students to Hacklebarney over the past 30 years.



## World Language/ESL

Piscataway High School and the World Languages Department observed Hispanic Heritage Month, which runs from September 15th through October 15th and celebrates U.S. Hispanics and Latinos, their culture and their history. Started in 1968 by Congress as Hispanic Heritage Week, it was expanded to a month in 1988 by an act of Congress under Ronald Reagan.

Students and teachers showed their Hispanic/Latino pride in their lessons, clothing, classroom displays and morning announcements. Ms. Ber's Honors classes and Spanish Club created a mural outside of room F103 as a product of studying artistic expression in the Hispanic World. Inspired by the prominent street art that can be found currently in East Harlem, known to the Latino community as Spanish Harlem, and from the masters of Mexican Muralism such as Diego Rivera and David Alfaro Siqueiros, students contributed to the mural expressing their thoughts on culture, society and politics. The mural will remain in the hallway across from F103 for the next month for all to enjoy!!!





### **The Barcelona Exchange Program**

This year we celebrate our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Barcelona Exchange Program (1992-2017). Every year in February, a group of students from Piscataway High School have the privilege to live and to attend school for 10 days in our sister school, Sagrada Familia in Barcelona, Spain. In March, this rewarding experience is reciprocated to them. We also invited Scotch Plains High School to be part of this wonderful experience. The program has grown so much over the 25 years.

In addition, tours are organized to various sites in Madrid and in Barcelona. During the entire trip our students are immersed in the Spanish language and culture. Through participation in this program, students are given a true sense of what it means to be part of a Global Community.

It is an honor for me to be the coordinator of this amazing program. The Barcelona Exchange Program has been very successful thanks to the hard work and cooperation of our World Language Department, Piscataway High School faculty and staff and our community.



**Cullen family scholarship past winners and Rutgers students**

On Thursday, October 12th I was invited to a luncheon to honor the Cullen Family Foundation scholarship at Rutgers University. Mr. Cullen hosts an annual luncheon for these students in the Presidents Dining room. He loves to hear how they are making a difference in the community as well as in Piscataway. I must say that the young people are truly amazing with their level of commitment to their academics and community service. Many of them are deeply involved in service projects that has a huge impact on young people as well as the elderly. As I listened to the update from each student, I felt like the “Grinch that Stole Christmas” especially when his heart expanded ten times...their stories inspired me to work that much harder for the young people at PHS. Again, I cannot thank Mr. Cullen and his family enough for the opportunity he is providing my students.





On Saturday October 7th, 2017, 20 + field hockey players and Coach Botett ran in a 5K for the Sean Hanna Foundation in Duke Island Park. Funds for the foundation go to assist children with cancer. The attached picture is the team gathering ,accompanying and cheering on Coach Botett as she makes her way to the finish line. Go Chiefs!!



Last June, Mr. Zirin competed and won the Greater Middlesex Conference Coach's Cup. This event was a handicapped tournament for all coaches in the GMC. Mr. Zirin's score for 18 holes was a 74 (+4). With the handicap adjustment, it was a 60. Mr. Zirin won by 6 strokes over the next closest competitor.

## VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS NEWS

### PHS Marching Band Hosts District 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Instrumentalists!

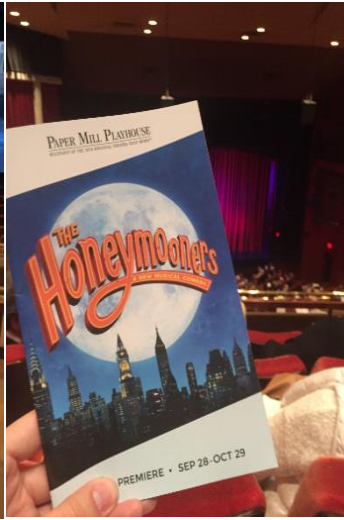
On Friday, October 20<sup>th</sup>, the Piscataway Superchiefs hosted approximately 50, 8<sup>th</sup> grade students from across the district. These students played alongside the Marching Band as they prepared to play at the Homecoming Football game. Additionally, students had an opportunity to tour the high school, meet upperclassmen, and ask questions about the high school instrumental program. At 7PM the 8<sup>th</sup> graders joined the Superchiefs as they played pep music throughout the game and then had an opportunity to watch the halftime show from the sidelines. Special thanks to Ken Zampella, Chris Sumner, and the Band Parents for hosting such a wonderful night!



### PHS Theatre Students Attend *The Honeymooners*

As part of Piscataway High School's distinction as a Paper Mill Playhouse "Adopt-A-School," the 28 PHS students that are involved in the program attended the first of four shows at Paper Mill Playhouse in October! *The Honeymooners* is a new musical making its premiere at the playhouse this season. The students LOVED *The Honeymooners*. Before the show, Carrie Rubino – The Senior Manager of the Education Programs at Paper Mill, lead a discussion on the history of Paper Mill and the production process of *The Honeymooners*. Carrie created a digital presentation that students were able to follow along with on their cell phones. The students were engaged and asked wonderful questions. During the show, the students displayed fantastic audience etiquette and were truly swept up into the world of the musical. A lot of the audience members who were sitting around us complimented the group on how well behaved and enthusiastic the students were. The next production will be *Annie* on December 12<sup>th</sup>!

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## ATHLETICS NEWS



Congratulations to everyone for such an arts-filled Homecoming game on Friday! This was an event in which we had an opportunity to showcase the amazing arts and performance opportunities in our district – to a wider audience.

The marching band gave a fantastic performance and was supported in the stands by members of the middle school instrumental programs – playing alongside high school students for all of the pep music! The 8<sup>th</sup> grade students had a front row view for the half-time performance and I heard 8<sup>th</sup> graders cheering on the PHS students as they exited the field. It was a great show of what the future of the PHS Marching Band will be for these students and beyond! It was also great to see the seniors in the Marching Band and Color Guard recognized with their families on the field!

The Dance Team presented an outstanding half-time performance and I am continually impressed by the level professionalism and technical skill these students demonstrate in all of their performances! It was great to see the seniors of the Dance Team recognized with their families on the field as well!

The Chamber Choir gave a beautiful rendition of the national anthem. The performance was balanced, blended, and there were audible comments from the stands about the beauty of the group's singing.

Chris, Ken, Jessica, and Megan - Thank you all for making the evening so nice for the Piscataway community. We are grateful for all you do to go above and beyond for the students and the Music Department!

On October 25<sup>th</sup> the Novice GMC Meet took place in our Patton Auxiliary Gym. The Meet was very successful! One to two of our PHS Gymnasts scored a top 5 placement on each gymnastics event! Thank you for all your support and guidance during this hosting process and throughout the 2017 gymnastics season! Noelle Hartje and Julia did a great job hosting their first (of hopefully many) Novice Meets. Congratulations, Noelle Hartje GMC Coach of the Year!!

2017 Novice GMC (10/25/17):

Vault:

Julia Martorano - 2nd (10th grade) and Gianna Rovito - 5th (9th grade)

Uneven Bars:

Sydney Thompson - 3rd (12th grade)

Balance Beam:

Emma Cusmano - 1st (10th grade)

Floor Exercise:

Shamiah Johnson - 2nd place (11th grade)

GMC PHS Top 5 Results (10/21/17)

PHS 5th Place - 100.175 (Team Score) First time since 2011 based on PHS Gymnastics records!

All-Around:

Troi Marshall - 4th (12 grade) 35.7

Vault:

Troi Marshall - 2nd (9.550)

Floor Exercise:

Troi Marshall - 2nd (9.4)

Additionally, we have FOUR of our PHS gymnasts qualify for Sectionals, which will take place on Saturday, November 4<sup>th</sup> at Hillsborough HS! This may be a PHS Gymnastics first! I did not come across any PHS Sectional data in our PHS gymnastics records dating back to 1995 to present.

Competing All-Around (all 4 gymnastics events) Troi Marshall (12th grade) and Jenna Engels (9th grade)

Uneven Bars, Balance Beam and Floor Exercise:

Julia Martorano

Floor Exercise:

Sydney Thompson



## **STAFF NEWS**

### **New Staff Members for the 2017-18 School Year**

We are pleased to welcome the following new staff members to the Piscataway High School family:

- **Patricia Killian – English**
- **Wendy Karabinos – Special Ed.**
- **Wanda Posada - Security**

### **IMPORTANT DATES:**

<b>November 7</b>	<b>In-Service Day (No School for students)</b>
<b>November 8</b>	<b>End of the Marking Period</b>
<b>November 9 &amp; 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>NJEA Convention – School Closed</b>
<b>November 15</b>	<b>Chiptole Restaurant (PTSO – Dine to Donate) 5:00-10:00pm</b>
<b>November 15</b>	<b>ICCA Volleyball Tournament 2:00-4:00pm Patton Gym</b>
<b>November 16</b>	<b>ICCA Volleyball Tournament 2:00-4:00pm Patton Gym</b>
<b>November 16</b>	<b>PHS Fall Play 7:00-10:00pm in the PAC</b>
<b>November 17</b>	<b>PHS Fall Play 7:00-10:00pm in the PAC</b>
<b>November 18</b>	<b>PHS Fall Play 2:00-5:00pm and 7:00-10:00pm in the PAC</b>
<b>November 20</b>	<b>PTSO Meeting 7:00-9:00pm in the Commons</b>
<b>November 22</b>	<b>1/2 Day before Thanksgiving</b>
<b>November 23 &amp; 24</b>	<b>Thanksgiving Holiday – School Closed</b>
<b>November 30</b>	<b>Barnes and Noble (PTSO-Fundraiser) 6:00-8:00pm East Brunswick Square Mall Rt.18</b>