



# Board of Education COMMITTEE REPORTS

OCTOBER 11, 2018

## Curriculum Committee

*The Curriculum Committee met on October 1, 2018 to review professional development and curriculum updates for 2019-2020:*

1. **Curricula on Website:** Information is provided for each course including syllabus, state standards, resources, etc. Currently, 120 curricula are available.
2. **Professional Development Session:** Topics for November 6 will include vertical and horizontal articulation, and identifying strengths and weaknesses in students in order to develop a more effective teaching strategy.
3. **Articulation Meetings:** Regular articulation meetings will continue throughout the districts at all levels to ensure continuity and uniformity of curricula.
4. **Parent-Teacher Conferences:** Teachers will use these conferences to learn how students learn best. The Committee discussed staggering dates and times of parent conference to make it easier for parents with children in different schools.
5. **Kindergarten ELA Pilot:** The current kindergarten ELA curriculum is Tools of the Mind, a play-based learning approach. An alternative curriculum, Teachers College Reading and Writing Project, will be piloted in two-three classrooms in each elementary school. This program has had good results in identify children with learning disabilities.
6. **Pre-Law and Justice Academy:** In 2019-2020, a fifth PHS Academy will be established for the Humanities: Pre-Law and Justice Academy. The application and admissions process for the Pre-Law and Justice, Engineering, and Biomedical Academies will be earlier in the year, giving students who are not accepted into the PHS Academies the opportunity to apply to out of district academies.

## Culture, Climate & Community Relations

*The Culture, Climate & Community Relations Committee met on September 25, 2018 to review Community Services and Brunch with the Board outreach:*

1. **Community Services Resource Document:** The draft of the brochure, which details all community services currently offered by the District, is near completion and will be ready for dissemination this fall.
2. **Brunch with the Board of Education:** The committee discussed January dates for this event. A brief presentation as to Board business as a whole, along with Committee business, will be part of the formal presentation, followed by informal discussions for committee involvement.
3. **Positive Reinforcement Messages:** The committee discussed partnering with Jersey Cares to paint positive messages in school bathrooms to combat bullying and build self-esteem, and will look into their next volunteer day in Piscataway Schools. If their volunteer dates are too far into the school year, the Committee will look to build its own volunteer committee to begin this project.
4. **New Business:** A committee member suggested bringing mental health “stigma-free” awareness to Piscataway Schools, offering information shared throughout Bergen County to promote this effort.

## Fiscal Planning & Operations Committee

*The Fiscal Planning & Operations Committee met on October 10, 2018 to review the district audit, capital projects, 403 (b) services, transportation, and food services:*

1. **Audit:** Field work is nearly complete for the 2017-2018 audit. A final presentation is expected to take place at the December Board meeting.
2. **Schools Development Authority (SDA) Regular Operating District (ROD) Grant Local Share Projects:** All PHS bathrooms have been completed. The district continues to evaluate the PHS exterior metal panel replacement project.
3. **Facility Capital Projects:** Completed PHS projects include: PHS turf field, fencing, paving, localized concrete repairs, Patton Building roof repair, and the PHS tennis courts. Soon to be completed is the track resurfacing. The Fall 2018 *Know Your Schools*, mailed to all Piscataway households., will highlight some recently completed maintenance projects.
4. **Grandview Addition:** The four classroom addition planned for Grandview School will begin November 1, with anticipated completion by September 2019.
5. **School Marquees:** Plans to construct new electronic marquees at all K-8 schools and the administration building is pending completion of electrical work, with planning for a new marquee at PHS to begin later in the school year.
6. **Cash Management:** The Committee asked the Administration to review investment options for a better return on the District's funds.
7. **403(b) Services:** The District added Vanguard as an option for 403 (b) accounts, and is reviewing Third Party Administrators (TPA) to provide compliance services for these accounts.
8. **Transportation:** The district worked collaboratively with the new bus transportation company, Layla, to successfully open schools, and continues to closely monitor all transportation routes.
9. **Food Services:** The District continues its efforts to reach all families eligible for free or reduced meals.