

Welcome Spring!



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News & Updates - April 2018

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Board of Education 2018-19 Budget Highlights

A preliminary presentation on the district's 2018-2019 annual budget was presented at the March 6 Board of Education meeting. The public hearing on the budget is scheduled for April 24, 2018. The meeting will be held in the Montville Township High School Media Center at 7:30 p.m. The Board is expected to adopt the final budget, which will have been reviewed and approved by the

Morris Executive County Superintendent, after the public hearing.

The budget incorporates objectives from the district's Five Year Strategic Plan. New initiatives include:

- The expansion of the one-to-one Chromebook Initiative at Lazar Middle School (the Chromebook initiative was implemented at the high school during the current school year)
- Upgrade of the Grades K-5 Math and Literacy Programs in all five elementary schools
- The implementation of an in-school administration of the PSAT. This is connected to the district's goal of improving student achievement. Previously approximately 50% of students took the PSAT. We believe strongly that increasing our participation in the PSAT will result in better performance on the SAT.
- The addition of a new Criminology elective at MTHS
- Addition of funding to support SRO/Class III Officers - still in discussion with the Montville Township Committee

Due to continued declining enrollment, a number of staff positions will be reduced. The district will still adhere to the class size parameters that are included in Board policy.

- Two full time teachers at the elementary level, due to declining enrollment.
- One full time STEAM Teacher due to the consolidation of STEAM activities into the science curriculum
- Two part-time Basic Skills Teachers, district-wide, due to declining enrollment and streamlining of the program
- One part-time E.S.L. teacher, district-wide, due to declining enrollment
- Seven full time teachers at Lazar Middle School, due to declining enrollment. It is noted that there have been no staff reductions at the middle school in the prior two years.

- Four full-time teachers at MTHS due to declining enrollment and the consolidation of class sizes
- One coaching position at MTHS due to lower participation levels
- One advisor position at MTHS - DECA Club - students have the option of participating in FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America - another business-based extracurricular activity)
- Twenty-two paraprofessional positions based on student need
- One maintenance position due to consolidation of responsibilities

The overall increase in the general expenditures is 0.52% over 2017-2018.

The PARCC Impact on School Ratings



In late February the Star Ledger published an article regarding the impact of PARCC scores on school ratings. While Governor Murphy has announced his intention to replace the PARCC assessment, the test remains in place for the Spring 2018 administration. PARCC performance was a primary factor in the recent School Summative Score calculated for each school in the latest School Performance Reports issued earlier this winter by the New Jersey Department of Education. In districts such as Montville (as well as Chatham, Westfield, and Bernards Township), the summative scores were impacted by the high numbers of PARCC test refusals. Many parents are unaware of the provisions of the Every Student Succeeds Act, the successor to No Child Left Behind, which requires schools to have at least 95% of their students take the state assessment. If the participation rate is less than 95% for the school, any student beyond the first 5% allowed under the law who does not take the test is reflected as not passing the test. The net result for Montville is a deceptively low proficiency rate.

This situation is a conundrum for districts like Montville. The state currently provides that students in the Classes of 2018 and 2019 may satisfy the graduation test requirement by achieving a specified score on an alternate assessment such as the PSAT, SAT, ACT, etc. This means that the district is penalized with non-proficient scores for those students who refuse to take the PARCC because they have already met the graduation testing requirement.

Bits and Pieces....

Congratulations to the French Program at Montville Township High School which has been designated as an Exemplary Program by the American Association of Teachers of French. This recognition was earned due to the fact that the program provides opportunities for students to engage in activities rich in authentic language experiences beyond the classroom walls.

Congratulations to the following MTHS students who have qualified for the New Jersey National History Day State Competition: Papers- (All 11th graders) Sang Park, Elina Huang, Jessica Blake, and Alex Park. Individual Documentary - Emily Wang (10th). Group Documentary - [Emma Zwickel and Micaela Rothenbuhler, (9th), Cameron Hojecki, Sarah Bolen, and Victoria Wei, (9th). Individual Website - Alex Demerjian (10th). Group Website - [Hannah Park and Kelly Chan, (11th), Aditya Sharma, Mathesh Patham, Matthew Pak, and Shyam Mehta, (10th)] Individual Exhibits - Sarah Holecio (11th). Group Exhibits - [Catherine Roy, Emma Bang, and Lisa Chueh (11th), Julia Kelly and Maria Papera, (9th), Charlotte Weinstein, Hannah Mikedis, Hayley Kirk, Isabella Kruger, and Megan Kirk, (9th), Andrew Parisi and Rebecca Sherman, (10th), Anesha Bhattacharjee, Maheebah Syed, and Minjoo Kang, (9th). Best of luck in the competition on May 5th!



School News

On Saturday, February 10, 2018, 10 mathletes from Lazar participated in the North Central Math Counts Competition at NJIT. Thomas Chen was the top individual from Lazar, placing 12th out of 212 individual mathletes. Lazar's MathCounts team placed 5th out of 27 teams at the competition. The students that made up the team were Thomas Chen, Kevin Chen, Agranya Ketha, and Girish Jayakumar.

Congratulations to Mary Gormley (MTHS) on her selection as the National Speech and Debate Association's Educator of the Year for 2018! Mary had been named the New Jersey Speech and Debate Association's Educator of the Year earlier in the school year.



Committee to Report on High School Start Time Feasibility Study

One of the district goals for 2017-2018 was to conduct a study of the Montville Township High School schedule to determine the feasibility of a later start time to the school day at MTHS. Earlier this year MTHS Principal Douglas Sanford convened a committee comprised of high school staff members, district supervisors and administrators, parents and students. The committee collected and reviewed relevant and current academic research and analyzed the impact of a later start time on the various aspects of the school and community. Members of the committee will attend the Montville Township Board of Education meeting on April 10th to share a summary of their findings. The Board of Education meeting will be held in the MTHS Media Center at 7:30 p.m.

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