

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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School Facility Upgrades

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Over the summer the Board of Education had the opportunity to complete several important construction projects. For the past several years, savings achieved through energy efficiencies, staffing turnover, and other operational adjustments have been set aside to fund projects that will insure the safety and integrity of our school buildings without adding to the district's outstanding debt. Past projects included HVAC and roof replacements, however, several roofs still needed to be replaced since they were well past their life expectancies. This summer the district was able to complete the remaining roof replacement projects at Readington Middle, Three Bridges and Whitehouse Schools. This will eliminate the need for numerous repairs and patches required during the last few years. The board funded 60% of the replacements costs and secured state construction grants to cover the remaining 40% of the cost. Completion of these projects was an important step in protecting the district's structural investments.

While infrastructure projects are very important, it is more exciting to share information about projects that have a direct impact on the educational programs of our students. Last year's renovations paved the way for the start of our all-day Kindergarten Programs. This year the board was able to fund the renovation of a classroom at our middle school for students with special needs. The classroom will house the district's life skills program, a special education program that provides training and real-life practice in essential everyday skills. Students in our Life Skills program learn important communication skills, visit local businesses, assist with clerical work, and run a successful Breakfast Cart for the middle school faculty. Before the renovation of the classroom, the Breakfast Cart program was largely conducted on hot plates and through the generosity of teachers and paraprofessionals who would do much of the food preparation at their homes. The classroom is now equipped with a refrigerator, stoves, dishwashers, a washer/dryer and cabinetry that will enable students to expand and practice these lifetime skills.

With a beautifully upgraded Life Skills classroom, our middle school students will enjoy a much enriched experience as they make recipe choices, shop for supplies, prepare food in a real kitchen, learn culinary safety, and practice the etiquette involved in the service industry. In fact, the new Life Skills classroom has benefited from the good will of the middle school teachers as they donated baking supplies, pantry items, towels, and other necessities to support this wonderful program.

Through careful budgeting and attention to outside funding resources, the Readington School District has succeeded in upgrading its facilities and, through this, providing a safe and engaging environment in which to grow and learn. We encourage your thoughts and suggestions and hope you will contact us at Boardmembers@readington.k12.nj.us