



Readington Township School District Parent Newsletter

December 2015 Edition

Editor in Chief: Barbara Sargent, Superintendent bsargent@readington.k12.nj.us

SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello, families! Our cultural arts programs have begun to move into high gear as our students perform at Winter Concerts, rehearse for the RMS Theater production of *Fiddler on the Roof*, and work on repertoire for spring concerts. I look forward to seeing our students showcase their talents and to chat with parents at these events.

This is an important newsletter with information about a January 26th Tax-Neutral School Referendum which **WILL NOT IMPACT TAXES AT ALL** and allow the district to take advantage of more than \$500,000 in state aid. Additionally, the state released PARCC data and a quick glance at Readington's performance is provided.

I wish our families a wonderful holiday season!



TAX-NEUTRAL SCHOOL REFERENDUM

On Tuesday, January 26, 2016, the Readington Township community will be asked to vote on a tax-neutral referendum that will allow the school district to borrow an amount not to exceed \$1,780,000 to pay the cost of parking lot improvements at Readington Middle School and Holland Brook School, stairway reconstruction at Readington Middle School, and stairway reconstruction at Three Bridges School.

Passage of this referendum allows the district to access approximately \$569,000 in state aid to offset construction costs. This nearly 32% savings would be returned to the district's Capital Reserves account to fund future projects. **No taxes will be raised as a result of this referendum.**

Readington Township School District has the necessary funds already in the Capital Reserve account to pay for the proposed construction projects. Several projects are proposed for completion by September 2016. These include:

Holland Brook School

***Parking Lot and Driveway Repaving* \$990,000**

The driveway leading from Readington Road to Holland Brook School has been in need of repair for several years. Patching has occurred as a temporary fix, but a complete repaving is necessary to prevent pothole craters from expanding.

Readington Middle School

Step Reconstruction

\$121,600

Parking Lot Repaving

\$548,000

The side parking lot at RMS will be expanded to accommodate our fleet of school buses. Currently, the buses are parked on the front lawn of the school in an area of mud and loose gravel, a combination which erodes the underside of our buses. Expanding the lot on the east side of the middle school will allow the buses to be parked on blacktop in a more secure location on campus. Improvements to the new parking area will include new lighting, electrical outlets for bus block heaters, and new landscaping.

The student entrance to Readington Middle School is in need of repair. A section of the staircase has crumbled, requiring the temporary fix of a metal plate. The same crumbling and separating of concrete is now occurring on other steps in this entrance, requiring a total replacement of the stairway. This is a safety issue for our students and staff and requires immediate attention.

Three Bridges School

Stair Reconstruction

\$120,000

The stairway exits for the Media Center and Nurse's Office at Three Bridges School have eroded to the point where they are unsafe. Repeated freezing of water on the stairs has resulted in crumbling concrete and an unstable stepping surface. A full repair of these stairs will include redesign and replacement of the steps and landing areas, along with new safety railings and handrails. The repairs and improvements will bring these fire exits up to date with current ADA standards for accessibility.

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS: \$1,779,600

Estimated State Debt Service Aid \$569,000

(This is estimated at nearly 32% of the project cost.)

Total Cost with Successful Referendum \$1,210,600

Additional print material will be sent via backpack mail in January. A complete project description can also be found on the main pages of the school and district websites.

The Board of Elections designated the Municipal Building and Three Bridges Fire House as voting locations for January 26 between 7:00 am to 9:00 pm. Your sample ballot will specify your designated voting place. We appreciate your support and invite your feedback to bsargent@readington.k12.nj.us

PARCC DATA

A presentation of the district's 2014-15 Assessment Results was reviewed at the December 8th Board of Education meeting. Individual student scores were received last week and are being mailed; families may expect to receive them by December 22. Parents with high school students may have received results earlier as high schools received data earlier than elementary and middle schools.

PARCC results will also be reviewed at the January 13th Home and School Business Meeting. The PARCC assessment was new to teachers and students last year and the student score information is also presented in a new manner. Parents are encouraged to contact their child's principal for any questions they may have regarding this assessment, or any aspect of their child's school experience. Please see the chart below for a quick glimpse of Readington's performance.

SUPERINTENDENT'S CHAT

Attending on Friday, December 11 were: Ludo Belan, Rebecca and John Hennings, Vicki Grimes, Charles Wajszczuk, Mark Reynolds, Debbie Engler, Jodi Bettermann, Megan McCoy, Karen Iervolino, and Barbara Sargent.

Following a presentation of the district's Assessment Results 2014-15 and a review of the summer construction projects being included in the January 26 Tax-Neutral School Referendum (see article on this), the meeting moved to Open Forum with the following items discussed:

- PARCC administration for 2016 and anticipated needs;
- High school graduation requirements as related to PARCC and other tests;
- Medical assessments for athletic participation;
- Signage for security cameras;
- District interest in solar arrays and panels;
- General questions about placement into advanced math and literacy classes.

The next Superintendent's Chat will be on Wednesday, February 17th at 6:30 p.m.

This table indicates the % of students Meeting and Exceeding Expectations for Literacy on the PARCC 2015 Assessment	PARCC States Arkansas, Colorado, Washington, D.C., Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, and Rhode Island.	New Jersey	Readington
Grade 3	38%	44%	67%
Grade 4	42%	51%	76%
Grade 5	40%	52%	72%
Grade 6	39%	49%	73%
Grade 7	42%	52%	67%
Grade 8	42%	52%	59%
This table indicates the % of students Meeting and Exceeding Expectations for Mathematics on the PARCC 2015 Assessment	PARCC States Arkansas, Colorado, Washington, D.C., Illinois, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Mississippi, New Jersey, New Mexico, Ohio, and Rhode Island.	New Jersey	Readington
Grade 3	38%	45%	72%
Grade 4	32%	41%	70%
Grade 5	32%	41%	64%
Grade 6	32%	41%	67%
Grade 7	29%	37%	30%
Grade 8*	27%	24%	4%
Given the large number of students taking the Algebra I PARCC in NJ, these scores are not representative of 8 th grade performance as a whole.			
Algebra I	31%	36%	81%
Algebra II	21%	24%	89%