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Readington Public Schools Financial Literacy *Sarah Pauch, Supervisor of Math, Science, & Technology*

Students in Readington Township are learning the importance of financial literacy. Our students are being exposed to financial decisions and concepts they will encounter over the course of their lives. It is necessary to develop the skills that students will need to handle their personal finances now and in the future.

In 2014 the state of New Jersey developed standards for 21st Century Life and Careers. The state's vision expresses, "In today's global economy, students need to be lifelong learners who have the knowledge and skills to adapt to an evolving workplace and world." The Personal Financial Literacy Standard includes the areas of Income and Careers, Money Management, Credit and Debt Management, Planning, Saving and Investing, Becoming a Critical Consumer, Civic Financial Responsibility, and Insuring and Protecting. The New Jersey student learning standards state, "This standard outlines the important fiscal knowledge, habits, and skills that must be mastered in order for students to make informed decisions about personal finance. Financial literacy is an integral component of a student's college and career readiness, enabling students to achieve fulfilling, financially-secure, and successful careers."

Starting in Fourth Grade students will explore how income affects spending, identifying common household expenses, types of credit and ways to avoid credit problems, distinguish between saving and investing, and comparison shopping. Their study of financial literacy was kicked off with a visit from one of TD Bank's Financial Education Instructors who provided students with an overview of the need for checking and savings accounts, how to write a check, and the function of ATM machines.

When students move on to Readington Middle School Financial Literacy is available as an encore class for sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. These classes not only meet but exceed the New Jersey Student Learning Standards by having our eighth graders explore the high school standards addressing General Management and Market Research / Entrepreneurship. These high interest and engaging classes use project-based learning as well as independent research to address topics such as Money Management, Investments and Financial Planning, Economics and World Trade, and Civic Responsibility and Insurance.

Our coverage of the Personal Financial Literacy Standard will create a baseline understanding of real-world personal finance and help students to be prepared for personal and civic financial literacy.