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Superintendent's Report

Dr. Frank Ranelli



Schor Students Find Happiness

T. Schor's Happiness Committee, under the advisement of Dr. Mosdell, celebrated themselves, each other, and their school in the week before winter break, using student ideas to boost school spirit. While the committee's mission is to improve school climate and happiness, it is essential that students understand the *process* of their work is as important as the outcome, and that the process includes collaboration and the pursuit of creative ideas and visions. Some of the week's themes included students and staff dress-up days in formal attire, in the style of a specific decade, and as a favorite Disney or Nickelodeon character. The Schor school community embraced this week-long activity, celebrating the lead up to the winter holidays in school-spirited style!

PHS AFJROTC Mentors Knollwood Students

After a hiatus last school year, the Piscataway Air Force Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps (AFJROTC) mentoring program returned to Knollwood last month. The program, organized and supervised by first grade teacher Mrs. Kendra Bryant-Morrow and kindergarten paraprofessional Mrs. Angela Seaboldt-Tripodi, pairs cadets from Piscataway High School with Knollwood students to take part in team-building activities, work on school assignments, read together, and play educational games in a supervised environment. Cadets travel to Knollwood School two afternoons each month to meet with their elementary buddies in this unique and meaningful program.



Children's Corner Rings In Holiday Fun

Children's Corner rang in the holidays with lots of fun activities for students and families. Under the direction of music teacher Ashley Dupont, students performed their first concert, spreading holiday cheer through



song and dance. In the classrooms, students conducted sweet science experiments, watching what happens to candy canes in water; participated in a door decorating contest; and wearing pajamas, snuggled up with hot chocolate during Winter Spirit Week. Families spent an evening together, decorating gingerbread cookies at the PTO Gingerbread Night. And, Children's Corner families and staff gave back to community members in need, donating toys, clothes and home goods.

King School Celebrates the Holidays with Music and the Boss

King School was in full holiday spirit in December. Prior to sending students off to Winter Break, teachers and students treated the school to a Holiday concert. Mr. Buchanan's students played holiday classics with bells, followed by a performance from the Benchmarks. Comprised of Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Plesnarski, Mrs. Lopez, Mr. Troutman, Mrs. Horvath, Mrs. Myers, Ms. Rushmore, and Mr. Applegate, the Benchmarks welcomed the boss — Principal Point-Du-Jour — to perform Bruce Springsteen's classic version of "Santa Claus is Coming to Town."



Conackamack Families Celebrate the Seasons and a New Auditorium

Conackamack families were treated to a holiday concert in the school's newly renovated auditorium. Under the direction of Ms. Royston (band), Ms. Jago (chorus) and Ms. Lee and Ms. McAdams (orchestra)



students performed favorites from a number of holiday traditions. Following the band concert, Ms. Royston brought back her personal holiday tradition, with a live, end-of-concert rap that she composed and performed as a soloist. Ms. Royston rapped about her happiness at being back in-person with her students, who had worked so hard to perform a great concert. Conackamack families showed their response with resounding applause.

Randolphville Continues a Holiday Tradition



Eisenhower Third Graders Take the Stage

Eisenhower third graders were happy to take the stage in song at their winter concert. Thanks to Mrs. Petsu and all the third grade teachers for making this happen.



In December, Randolphville students wore pajamas and sang together at the annual holiday sing-along. Students and staff enjoyed winter and holiday favorites in celebrating the special time of year. Students and staff alike were happy to hold this tradition together in-person!.

Author Sheetal Sheth Visits Grandview

Award winning author Sheetal Sheth visited Grandview School and led assembly programs with K-3 students. The students were excited and engaged as Ms. Sheth read her book, *Always Anjali* and discussed strong writing techniques. Each classroom received a copy of *Always Anjali* for their classroom libraries. Thank you to the Grandview PTO for sponsoring this program.



Quibbletown Students Celebrate Sweet Success

Quibbletown students worked hard and then celebrated their sweet spots on the Honor Roll with personalized certificates and ice cream sundaes.



PHS Artists See Publishing Success

PHS artists Gaby Ortiz-Ruidiaz, Takovah Townsend, Chloe Margavitz, and Serena Valentinuzzi had their artwork selected to be published in the *Celebrating Art* hardcover anthology. Congratulations — and special thanks to their teacher, Lisa Lentini-Pombrio!

Celebrating Art Published Winners



Chloe Margavitz



Gaby Ortiz-Ruidiaz



Serena Valentinuzzi



Takovah Townsend

PHS Chamber Orchestra Tour

The PHS Chamber Orchestra took their concert on the road, visiting all six district elementary and intermediate schools. As the group performed, Dr. Sumner guided our youngest students through the music. The younger students saw and heard first hand the music they would play and the musicians they would become if they continued to practice their instruments. Thanks to Dr. Sumner for an amazing tour. Some clips can be found [here](#) and [here](#)!



LEAP STEAM Students Study Simple Machines



Under the guidance of Mrs. Spasiano, second grade LEAP STEAM students explored the Engineering Unit on *Simple Machines*. Students worked in centers, built, researched, and used simple machines to

complete a task. First, they explored levers, inclined planes, wedges, pulleys, and wheel and axles. Then, they built two versions of a catapult, a working "copy machine" using Gadgets and Gizmos, and finally, constructed their own machine. These second graders loved learning how six simple machines combine to build complex machines. Discussions included how and why simple machines are useful, jobs they can do, and how using machines makes work easier by both reducing effort and extending ability to perform tasks beyond normal capabilities.



Seventh Grade Accelerated ELA Students Write Their Own Chapters

Students in Mr. Washington's Seventh Grade Accelerated ELA class at Conackamack Middle School are immersed in independent reading and showcased their work in December. Following a deep study of characters and their complications,



students analyzed several techniques authors use to develop their characters and convey complicated messages. Students then used these techniques to write additional chapters for their independent reading books. Some of the chapter highlights included students' interpretation and application of techniques such as tone, mood, symbolism, foreshadowing, and flashback. Students demonstrated a high level of respect for one another, employing speaking and listening strategies during the presentations.

Fourth Graders Take a Virtual Field Trip to a Zoological Park



Fourth graders at King School took a virtual field trip to the Bergen County Zoological Park to learn about animal adaptations, an extension of their most recent science unit. Through this experience, students connected their classroom learning to the real animal world. Thanks Mrs. Tedesco, for organizing this virtual event.



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