

# WEST DEPTFORD SCHOOLS

## Oakview Early Childhood Addition Opens its Doors to our District's Youngest Learners

After almost a year of construction, our new addition is officially open for business; and, we could not be more excited for the wonderful learning opportunities it will create for our students. The five-classroom addition currently is home to three full-day kindergarten classrooms and two pre-kindergarten classes. On Back to School Night, our parents had the pleasure of spending time in these new classrooms and were highly impressed their children would be the first students to occupy these awesome rooms!

Each classroom is designed with its own bathroom and contains ample space to optimize student learning. In addition, each has a brand new, 70-inch SMART TV for teachers and students to use as a cutting-edge learning tool. The early childhood addition is also equipped with energy efficient LED lighting, which helps create a warm learning environment for our students. Finally, thanks to our numerous fundraising events organized by teachers and supported by our PTO, we were able to purchase a beautiful, new playground, which has been recently installed and ready to be put to great use.

With the implementation of full-day kindergarten, as well as the start of our new, half-day, tuition-based pre-kindergarten program, it was a perfect time to expand upon Oakview School.

Thanks to William J. Gross, Inc. and Remington & Vernick Engineers, who were a pleasure to work with and did a fantastic job with the new building! For more information on our pre-kindergarten program, please visit our District website or contact our office. Best wishes for a successful school year!



**Please Remember to Vote!  
Meet our Board of Education  
Candidates on Pages 6 & 7!**

# Team “Helping Hands” Comes to Red Bank

There was a great deal of excitement throughout the West Deptford Elementary Schools when it was announced that a full-day kindergarten program would be heading our way. Many uncertainties often come with new programs. Here at Red Bank the biggest question was how we were going to handle lunch and recess with the inclusion of our new kindergarten students? How would they fit in with the second graders and what would life be like on the playground? We didn't have to look far for the answer. It was right in front of us with our great bunch of kids.



After observing the positive interaction of the second graders in the cafeteria and on the playground, an idea was formed. Why not have the older students help the younger students during this time. Just like that, Team “Helping Hands” was formed. Team “Helping Hands” is a group of five second graders who are recommended by their teachers for one week of duty to eat lunch and support the kindergarteners during recess. The qualities of the team members are patience, compassion, responsibility, and understanding. It is their job to assist our Teachers and LPC Aides and act as positive role models.



The very first Red Bank Team “Helping Hands” was made up of Bobby Brooks, Brayden Curcio, Tori Still and Addie Fronza. They played with the kids and organized group games during recess. They acted as escorts to the bathrooms and even took some to the Nurse for Band-Aids. Team “Helping Hands” took their job seriously and took it upon themselves to extend their duties throughout the day. Holding hands and helping the little ones get on and off the bus became a common sight.

Week #2 brought us an all-girl team along with miserable weather. Riley Walsh, Joelle Kulnis, Jenna Petrilla, Brianna Valentino and Kara Christy had the extra challenge of indoor recess. It was a large group since both kindergarten classes stayed together, but the girls were wonderful. They colored, did puzzles and read stories with them. The kindergartners absolutely love being around their new friends.

Each week a new team is selected. Every second grader is anxiously awaiting their turn. With the help from our kids, Red Bank is truly a family of learners. It is an awesome sight seeing everyone working together with such energy and enthusiasm.

# Welcome to the World of Full-Day Kindergarten



After months of preparation and anticipation, Green-Fields Elementary School has embarked on a most epic adventure. Our first year of full-day Kindergarten is underway, and we're off to an excellent start! Four new classrooms of enthusiastic and eager children have adjusted remarkably well to their new daily environment and are enjoying the measured independence that comes with a full school day.

Nonetheless, adapting to a new daily structure that adults sometimes take for granted is not easy for a five year old. That said, here is a small list of challenges that our young friends have overcome in a relatively small amount of time...early wake-ups, bus rides, a large building with over five-hundred students, co-existing with 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade children, a six and a half-hour daily schedule, lunch, recess... all combined with a rigorous academic program throughout the day.

There certainly is a lot to know, learn, and experience in this new world. Yet, our youngest students have adapted well and are ready for what is still to come in the long school year.

Of course, our success early in the year is a direct result of the exhaustive work put forth by our fantastic Kindergarten staff...Mrs. Smollock, Mrs. Schwantes, Mrs. Back, and Miss Tenerelli. Together with our Instructional Aides, Mrs. Harverson and Mrs. Sparks, our Kindergarten team facilitates an excellent program that will be the model for years to come. In addition, the district administrative staff has done an outstanding job of preparing for this new journey. Finally, we're grateful for our parents who have trusted us to prepare their children for the rigors of the daily school environment. We thank you for your help with this new adventure.

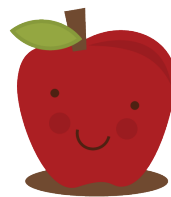
Well, what's on the Kindergarten agenda for today? Its outdoor arrival, crazy hat and hair day, computers, gym, art, music, reading, writing, math, recess, lunch...and the busy day continues!

## West Deptford School Welcomes New Staff!

### Elementary School New Staff



Pictured from left to right: Amy Wilson, Alyssa Petito, Rachael Marion, Gerald Patrick, Jamie Tenerelli, Theresa Staley, Madeline Cross and Wendy Ashenfelter.



### High School New Staff



Pictured from left to right: Sarah Smith, Erika Cepurneac, Ashlee Cox and Carmen Costi.

### Middle School New Staff



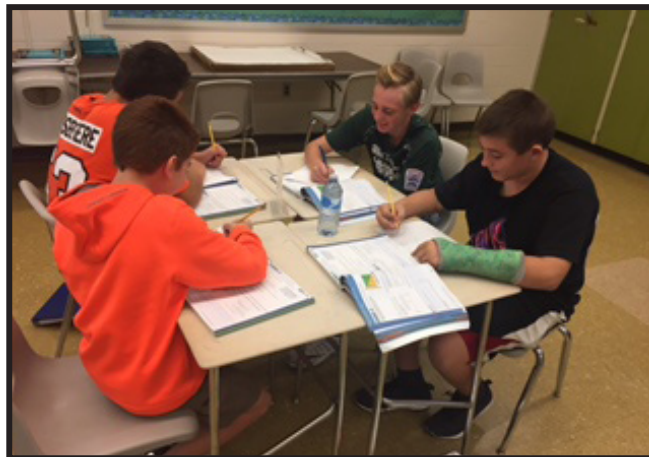
Pictured from left to right: Sandra Arroyo, David Jacobs, Kyle Britt and Lauren Moyer.



# Check out what's NEW at WDMS

West Deptford Middle School is extremely excited to have our students use the brand new enVision Math 2.0 Program! This program supplies instructional material through both digital and traditional formats to be used in school and at home. Through the use of this new math program, students' needs at various ability levels will be met. Teachers utilize the resources in enVision to provide high-achieving students with more rigorous and critical thinking activities, as well as additional lessons and videos for students who may need additional support.

EnVision Math 2.0 is a great resource to prepare students to be college and career-ready when they graduate High School. The Middle School math program places emphasis on rational and proportional reasoning, number sense, and expressions and equations, all of which lead to an understanding of functions and linearity. Each lesson is embedded with a problems-based activity followed by guided and independent practice activities. The Middle School Math Teachers are utilizing the daily assessment to track student progress, thereby targeting necessary skills for review or enrichment.



Students can be assigned work and videos to watch through the Pearson Realize Platform; or, lessons can be completed through the use their Student Companion to gain mastery of the standards. The magnitude of online resources is endless due to the program's ability to provide students with individualized lessons, sample videos, examples, and additional practice activities. West Deptford Middle School is excited to utilize all the amazing features of enVision 2.0 into our daily math instruction!

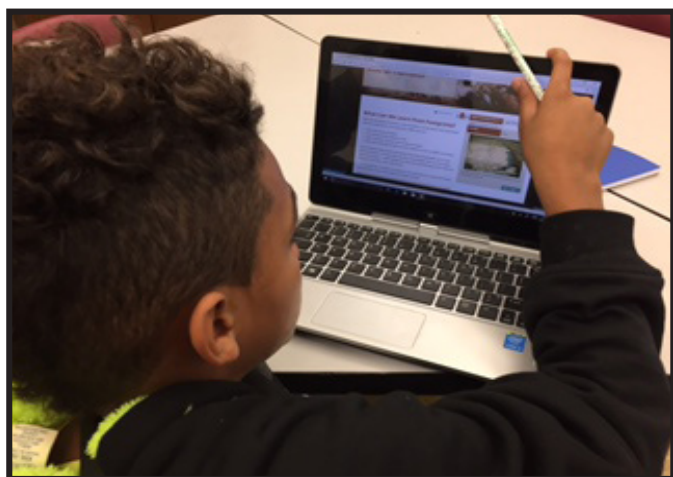


In addition to our new math resources, our sixth through eighth grade Middle School Social Studies students have access to a wonderful on-line resource from Discovery Education. This tech book uses an inquiry-based learning approach to

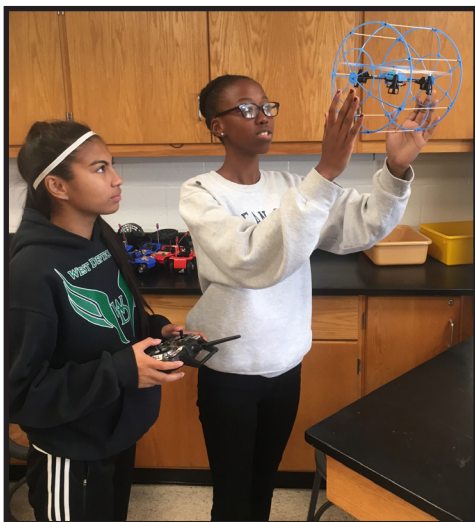
history. For example, seventh grade students have learned how to create a digital notebook by selecting and highlighting important text, as well as using online Post-It notes to make important notations about Medieval Europe. These notes are used to provide textual evidence in their writing assessments. Additionally, the tech book provides a variety of media for students to access information, such as videos, excerpts from primary sources, and interactive games.

One of the Middle School's goals this year is to integrate appropriate writing assignments throughout the disciplines. Building-wide, agreed upon writing techniques, are being implemented in the classrooms. The overall focus is for students is to write more consistently and with uniform expectations. In eighth grade Social Studies classes, students

have researched and discussed the first presidential debate. Students then composed a paragraph analysis utilizing their research and incorporated transition words and textual evidence in their writing.



# STEM Courses Expanding at WDHS



This fall West Deptford High School begins year two of our exciting STEM Curriculum. In the 2014-2015 school year, West Deptford Students were first introduced to the semester course Introduction to Computer Science I. Due to its success, we've expanded to include a sister semester course, Introduction to Computer Science II. These two courses, offered for the second consecutive year, provide a direct focus on the programming end of computer science in which students investigate several programming languages. Beginning with Logo, a language created at MIT in the late 1960s, and moving through Scratch, Python, and JavaScript, students will discover and investigate abstractions and algorithms, while becoming more aware of the strengths and weaknesses of each language and the role of the designer and programmer. Students will design and create artistic scenes, games, and interactive programs throughout the year.

In addition to these two semester courses, WDHS has added two full-year courses to its newly developed STEM curriculum. The first, Advanced Computer Science Principles, is a new Advanced Placement course which will be tested by the College Board for the first time this school year. WDHS is among the first schools in the country to offer this course in which students explore the foundational concepts of computer science and how computing and technology can impact the world. Students will use a problem-solving approach to investigate real-world applications of programming, abstractions, algorithms, large data sets, the Internet, cybersecurity concerns, and the impact of technology. Through September, these students have read and debated the topics introduced in the book, *"Blown to Bits: Your Life, Liberty, and Happiness After the Digital Explosion."* Currently, this group of students is working with binary and other number counting systems, including creating physical binary systems and investigating network protocols using the Internet Simulator. We recently filmed two-minute Flash Talks centered around privacy and security concerns on the Internet. The study of Computer Science is alive and well in West Deptford!

The second, brand new full-year course added to West Deptford, is Exploring Engineering II. Beginning last year, WDHS has been working collaboratively with Dr. Pramod Abichandani of Drexel University and his team of engineers at LocoRobo Innovations to develop curriculum for both of our Exploring Engineering courses.

Engineering I currently has an enrollment of 26 students. We are very pleased that seven freshmen have enrolled, demonstrating their continued commitment to STEM learning; uninterrupted from the Middle School. Additionally, two students who completed our first Introduction to Computer Science I & II sequence last year have enrolled in Engineering I to apply their programming skills to robotics.

In Exploring Engineering I, students program their LocoRobo robot in Python to sense the world and respond to it. One task involves having their robot climb up and down a bumpy hill without toppling over. Another task might have one robot controlling another robot by telling it how to move around an obstacle. Students accomplish these tasks by programming their robot in Python, rather than using a joystick. Their robot collects data from its sensors, analyzes it, and then initiates a response through an algorithm that the students designed and programmed. The sensors available on the robot include: an accelerometer, gyroscope, ultrasonic ranger, temperature, and motor encoders.

Over the summer, the following enhancements have been added to Exploring Engineering I course. First, the robot now has a crown of 8 (Red-Green-Blue) RGB LEDs. Using a combination of small red, green, and blue pixels, these LEDs can display millions of colors. For example, a robot can alert its audience to success or failure with a unique light display. Second, the robot can now play musical notes. Thirdly, a standalone encoder kit has been added to the LocoRobo kit of sensors. Encoders turn mechanical motion into an electrical signal that is used for speed and/or position control and are used in many applications. Our LocoRobo robot uses its motor encoders to control two motors in real time so motion in a straight line motion is achievable. Fourth, LocoRobo is building a library of on-line lessons that include video instruction by "Professor LocoRobo" so that students can consult outside the classroom... *Continued on Page 6*

To continue this education, we have implemented Exploring Engineering II this school year. Engineering II has four areas of study: drones, robotic arms, renewable energy, and wearable devices. Using the 2.4 GHz joystick controller supplied from the manufacturer, students are learning about the physics of flight by flying their “quadcopter” drone. A quadcopter is a multi-rotor copter with four arms, each with a motor and a propeller at the end. Our drone is enclosed in a plastic cage which nicely absorbs impacts without damaging the drone. It is flown inside our classrooms. Students and their teachers are learning that controlling four motors simultaneously with a controller that does not have a linear response is extremely difficult. Simply hovering is not even a fixed setting on the controller.

The second method of controlling the drone we will use a controller designed by LocoRobo. The controller includes an accelerometer, RF transmitter, two joysticks, and an Arduino microcontroller. This fall, the challenge for the students will be to design and program their own controllers. To prepare for this task, our students are using the LocoRobo Academy series of lessons to renew their structured programming skills. It looks to be an exciting fall for our Engineering students.

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## Board of Education Candidates

### Nancy Barna



My name is Nancy Barna, and I am a candidate for the West Deptford Township Board of Education. My husband John and I have raised our children through three decades in the West Deptford Township School District. Much has changed over those years, including advancements in technology. Students have gone from learning exclusively with textbooks to integrating laptops into the classrooms. One thing that has not changed is my dedication to instilling the love of learning in our children. The West Deptford Township School District is second to none, and the schools have provided an important educational foundation for our children: Dr. Ryan Barna – WDHS Class of 1998 – Pharmacist; Melissa Barna Jennings – WDHS Class of 2003 – Chemist; and Tyler Barna – WDHS Class of 2017 – Governor’s School in the Sciences & Boys’ State Scholar.

My leadership roles as a Trustee of the West Deptford Free Public Library and as the President of the GFWC Woman’s Club of West Deptford have provided me with over ten years of experience in serving the community while working as a Board member.

Keeping the focus on the student is of utmost importance to me. My volunteer service with the Greater Woodbury Cooperative Ministries Food Pantry, as well as leadership roles with Boy Scout Troop 9, Girl Scouts and Cub Scout Pack 296 have given me great opportunities to listen to what is important to families in West Deptford.

I received my Paralegal degree from Gloucester County College, and majored in political science with a minor in sociology and pre-law at Rutgers-Camden. I have over 30 years of experience as a Paralegal, and have worked as assistant to the Comptroller of the bank now known as Wells Fargo.

## Board of Education Candidates (Continued)

### Steve Catando

Steve graduated from Woodbury High School in 1988 and then attained his Bachelor of Arts degree from The University of Delaware in 1992. After graduation, Steve entered the business world where he worked as a buyer and product manager. He has since become a purchasing manager and leads a team of nine buyers for one of the largest wholesale floral distributors in the United States, DVflora. Steve has been living in West Deptford for 14 years along with his two children: Kristin 13yrs and Anthony 10yrs (both currently in the middle school). He is currently on the WD Board of Education and nearing completion of his first three year term. Steve comes from a family line of educators where his father was a superintendent of schools and his mother a lifelong teacher.



I am going in to my 23rd year of working in a fast paced, commodity based, and perishable industry. I've gained a solid understanding and appreciation of developing positive solutions that provide value for our customers. My leadership and decision making skills combined with international business experience including worldwide travel are attributes that I believe I can apply and utilize in our school system and community. Preparing our children for global competitiveness is paramount for us. Being able to support that goal and remain fiscally responsible is mandatory. I am extremely optimistic about our school system and the opportunities that lie ahead for us. It would be my honor to continue serving our students and community for another term.

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### Jacquelyn Naphys

Jacquelyn Naphys graduated from Nazareth Academy High School in 1985. She then received a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Education from Holy Family College and a Masters of Education from Beaver College. Jacquelyn also has a Reading Specialist Certification. She has been employed by the School District of Philadelphia for 23 years. She began her career as a classroom teacher, later serving as a professional developer, a literacy facilitator, and a Reading First Coach. Currently, Jacquelyn serves as a reading specialist in the Title 1 Program. Over ten years ago, the Naphys family moved to West Deptford. Daughter Kaitlyn attended Green-fields Elementary School, West Deptford Middle School and is now a sophomore at West Deptford High School.

Jacquelyn believes in the power of an education. "We need to give children the necessary tools and guidance to enable them to reach their full potential. The Board of Education members, administrators, teachers, parents, and members of the community must all strive to work together to create a rigorous, yet caring learning environment for all of our children. I would be honored to serve on the Board of Education for West Deptford Township."

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## Message from the Acting Superintendent

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is William H. Thompson. At its meeting on September 26, 2016, the West Deptford Board of Education appointed me as Acting Superintendent of Schools. I will be working closely with Administration and Central Office to ensure that the District continues to move forward in a positive direction. I look forward to bridging the gap between now and the time when the Board of Education selects a new Superintendent of Schools.

With that being said, attached is our annual Fall Newsletter. I invite you to read through its pages to see what is new in our District. There are a number of interesting developments in our Schools that I would like to highlight for you.

As you can see from the previous pages of this newsletter, we have added a significant number of outstanding new staff members this year who will do an excellent job educating your children.

As we approach the conclusion of our "Building Excellence" Referendum that was approved in September of 2014, the projects below either have been completed or are scheduled to be completed during the 2016-2017 School Year.

- Installation of windows at Red Bank, Oakview, and the High School.
- Installation of interior doors at Red Bank, Oakview, Green-Fields and the High School.
- Repairs to the Middle School Dryvitt.
- Installation of a new elevator, gym floor, stage floor and cafeteria floor at the High School.
- Re-Keying of all interior and exterior doors in all buildings.

You will also find Board of Education Candidate profiles in this newsletter. The School Board Election is scheduled for Tuesday, November 8<sup>th</sup>. Three candidates will be running for three available seats (3 three-year terms). There will not be a "Meet the Candidates Night" this year.

I look forward to working with the members of the West Deptford Community. I will stay committed to carrying on the excellent traditions forged in West Deptford Public Schools.