

# WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

A COMMUNITY OF  
21<sup>ST</sup>-CENTURY LEARNERS



# SPOTLIGHT ON YOUR SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER - DECEMBER 2011

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## SUPERINTENDENT'S MESSAGE



Jeffrey S. Mohre, Superintendent

Season's Greetings to the *Washington Township Community* and welcome to the winter edition of **SPOTLIGHT ON YOUR SCHOOLS**, a WTS publication designed to communicate various school happenings and events. As you peruse the various newsworthy items featured here, it is my hope that you will gain a genuine sense of *What's Happening* in **YOUR** school district. From curriculum and school finance, to board governance and facilities maintenance, WT Schools is forever striving to ensure high quality, 21<sup>st</sup>-century education and fiscal responsibility. As Superintendent, I remain in awe of our community's "*Children First*" approach to education and laud both our professionals and community members whose energies and efforts ensure that our young people remain center stage. Happy reading and ... Happy Holidays!

~Jeff Mohre



## Does Your Company have a Matching Gift Program?

WTS often receives monetary donations in support of student programming and many employers often sponsor matching gift programs designed to match charitable contributions made by their employees. To find out if your company has a matching gift policy, you can inquire at your place of employment.



Fifth grade *Peer Leaders* Micaela Shepard, Clayton Bernardi, and Gabriella Trimarchi presented cards and candies to our local veterans as part of a recent Veteran's Day ceremony at Old Farmers Road School. OFRS students conducted a Halloween Candy Drive and then shipped the sweets along with their homemade cards to US troops stationed in Afghanistan.

~ Photo by Regina Cevis



## CURRICULUM CORNER ~ Mr. Rick Papera

Here in the Washington Township Schools, we are continually reviewing our programs and practices in order to best serve the diverse learning needs of our students. This Curriculum Corner feature highlights our efforts in the areas of language arts and mathematics. Currently, we are in the process of updating and revising our curriculum in all content areas to reflect New Jersey's recent adoption of the Common Core Curriculum Standards. The New Jersey Department of Education requires all school districts to complete the revision process by September 2012.

In the area of Language Arts Literacy, we are working to bring curricular consistency, K-8. One piece that we have begun to implement is in the area of writing as our K-5 teachers have been using a writing guide called Empowering Writers. Empowering Writers fits seamlessly with our existing writing program. Teachers are finding it to be a valuable tool to help their students become better writers. In order to support faculty members, our Literacy Instructors are being trained as teacher coaches and will turnkey the writing strategies reflected in the Empowering Writers program.

In the area of mathematics, we are focusing on the pedagogy behind the mathematics and filling in the gaps that may exist between our existing programs and the new Common Core Standards. All WTS mathematics teachers are receiving professional development from Professor Nancy Schultz of Conquering Mathematics, LLC. During the professional sessions, teachers are learning alongside educators from other NJ school districts to hone their understanding of key mathematical concepts, supplement our existing programs to meet the Common Core Standards, and explore new ways to meet the individual learning needs of our learners.



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**BAC** - Third grade students enjoyed lunch on the stage with Principal, Dr. Battitori, and Assistant Principal, Mrs. Whitmore. The students were chosen as part of the "R.O.C.K.S. Raffle", a popular feature of the school's Character Education program. The **R.O.C.K.S.** program (**R**espectful & responsible; **O**pportunity to be a good citizen; **C**ommitment to follow school rules & cooperate with others; **K**indness towards others; **S**how self control & good sportsmanship) promotes a positive school climate as it recognizes students that make good choices and uphold the R.O.C.K.S. principles. Pictured from left to right: Ethan Stoute, Anthony Marino, Susan Whittemore, Dr. Battitori, Kyra Hoffman, Sophia Krawski, Megan Rainforth, Mrs. Whitmore, Shannon Preblich and Nicole Harrington.



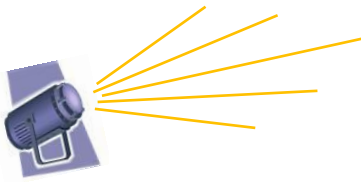
**FRKS** - The Flocktown-Kossmann PTA Family Programs committee sponsored its first ever Parent/Child Book Club. The evening was a complete success with over 20 children and their parents attending. The children, with their parents, read the Ant Bully by John Nickle. Students discussed the big ideas of the book with their parents as they read and then participated in activities related to the book. We are looking forward to another wonderful Book Club evening in March.



**OFRS** - Fourth grade "paleontologists" at Old Farmers Road School filtered through soil samples collected from the site of a mastodon skeleton discovery made in Hyde Park, NY. As participants in the Mastodon Matrix Project, students assisted project scientists by scouring the soil from the mastodon excavation, collecting data on their discoveries, and reporting scientific information. Examining and discussing are students Ryan Stecker-Loughney and Lizzie Fuscaldo. To learn more about the Mastodon Matrix Project visit <http://www.nytimes.com/library/national/science/090500sci-paleo-ny.html>.



**LVMS** - Newly elected Student Council Officers and Homeroom Representatives were recently honored at the Board of Education's November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting. Students were elected by their peers to provide leadership within the school and community for the 2011-2012 school year. Pictured here are President, Taylor Rahman; Vice President, Kylie Wilson; Treasurer, Laura Boiko; and Secretary, Owen Shannon; and Superintendent Mohre, following the official swearing-in ceremony. The Long Valley Middle School Student Council is led by LVMS faculty adviser, Mrs. Laura Sweeney.



# SPOTLIGHT ON YOUR SCHOOLS

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Like us on  
**Facebook**

<https://www.facebook.com/WTSchools>

## LVMS Featured on NJTV!

The NJTV network will shine a **SPOTLIGHT** on Long Valley Middle School as part of its NJEA-sponsored Classroom Close-up series. The episode, titled Learning in the 21st Century, will air on December 25th at 12:30 and 7:30 p.m. Or, you can tune in now by visiting the WTS homepage at [www.wtschools.org](http://www.wtschools.org).



## No-Cost Solar Project = **\$512,000** Savings for WT Schools



WTS has approved a solar energy project which is expected to be completed by October 2012. The project, underwritten by the Morris County Improvement Authority with no cost to the district, entails the installation of solar panels on the LVMS roof and the creation of a solar canopy above the bus parking lot located behind the Board of Education offices. The project is anticipated to yield a \$512,000 energy savings over the ensuing 15 years.

## 2011-2012 School District Goals!

### STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Goal: *By June 2013 all learners in grades 1 - 8 will achieve proficiency and/or growth in reading as measured by 2 assessment criteria.*

### CURRICULUM & INSTRUCTION

Goal: *The Washington Township Schools, in its quest to procure the optimal 21<sup>st</sup> century teaching-learning environment for its students and faculty, will develop and implement a systematic plan to revise all current curricula to reflect the newly adopted New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards within a framework that emphasizes active student engagement and high quality professional development.*

### FINANCE/SHARED SERVICES

Goal: *To continue the exploration and identification of shared services opportunities in conjunction with local government officials and neighboring school districts so as to contain operating costs and enhance the overall educational program.*




## High Marks Again for WTS Finances



The Washington Township Schools recently received high marks from the accounting firm of Nisivoccia LLP following an audit of the Board of Education's financial operations for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2011. The firm examined practices relative to 8 specific areas: Administrative Practices; Financial Planning, Accounting, Reporting, School Purchasing; School Food Services; Student Activities; Application for State Aid; Transportation; and Facilities and Capital Costs. Unequivocally, the firm determined that the Washington Township School District's fiscal practices were in full compliance with all State and Federal requirements and, as a result, made no recommendations. A representative of the accounting firm will be present at the January 10, 2012 meeting of the Board of Education to present the Comprehensive Annual Financial Report reflecting these findings. Congratulations, WTS Business Office!



If your child will be five years of age on or before October 1, 2012 then s/he is eligible for kindergarten! Kindly contact your school to arrange a personal registration appointment:

	Benedict A. Cucinella Elementary School	-	908-850-3161
	Flocktown-Kossmann Elementary School	-	908-850-1010
	Old Farmers Road School	-	908-876-3865

Registration forms can be accessed at [www.wtschools.org](http://www.wtschools.org). Simply click on the *Parent Information* tab located on the left side of the homepage and look for the *Kindergarten Registration* link. Parents who do not have access to technology can call the school to pick up the registration documents.