



# WEST DEPTFORD SCHOOLS

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## Hello, Dolly Performed at West Deptford High School



Well...Hello, Dolly! Yes, that's right, the lovable Dolly Levy entered the building in this year's spring musical Hello, Dolly, at West Deptford High School. Bill Yerkes and his team worked together with cast and crew to bring the classic musical to life on stage. Set at the turn of the century, Hello, Dolly follows the story of Dolly Levy who uses her aplomb at matchmaking to help those around her find love. Using her skill of persuasion, she manages to see that everyone she interacts with finds a worthy partner, including herself. Starting with Mr. Horace Vandergelder, a rich, available bachelor of Yonkers, Dolly matches him with the lovely Ms. Irene Molloy. However, the match isn't quite right as we learn that Irene doesn't love Vandergelder and Dolly herself has her sights set on marrying him. As the story progresses, we are introduced to Barnaby and Cornelius, two clerks in Vandergelder's store, who are ready for

adventure as they head into the city for some fun. Who knew that the two men would find love themselves? Lastly, Dolly tries to convince Vandergelder that his niece Ermengarde's suitor, Ambrose, is worthy of her. Through Dolly's careful planning, all the characters manage to find themselves at the famous Harmonia Gardens where Dolly receives a very warm welcome from some of her old friends. It is at this restaurant where a polka contest brings them all together in one hilarious fun filled night. By the end, we are left wondering whether Vandergelder approves of Ambrose and more importantly will he marry Dolly? With songs like It Takes a Woman, Put on Your Sunday Clothes and of course Hello, Dolly, audiences can't help but be caught up in the enthusiastic and energetic music much like the characters can't help being swept away by the lively, lovable Dolly Levy.

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## West Deptford Middle School Shows Its Community Support

West Deptford Middle School held its first "Pajamas for Hunger Day" on February 19th. The philosophy behind this event is simple: bring a new box of cereal to school and wear your pajamas in school for the day. Over 560 boxes of breakfast cereal were collected during this one-day event and donated to the South Jersey Dream Center (SJDC)!

Pajamas for Hunger is one of many ways our WDMS staff and students work together to support local families in need. Although "Pajamas for Hunger" is new to WDMS, our partnership with the South Jersey Dream Center is not. Two years ago, WDMS began its partnership with SJDC by donating unclaimed lost and found items to them. What started

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## ...West Deptford Middle School

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as an occasional donation made once or twice per year has now evolved into something much more! Although students are encouraged daily during their lunch period to look through the collected lost and found items, the amount of unclaimed lost and found items collected each month is overwhelming. When storage became an issue, WDMS reached out to the SJDC to see if they would be willing to pick up the unclaimed items once a month. They jumped at the opportunity!

The South Jersey Dream Center was founded in 2010 as a way of helping struggling families. They are a non-profit 501c3 organization and funded solely through individual financial donations, grants, monthly partners and corporate sponsorships. They currently serve several local centers and organizations in the Gloucester County area.

WDMS is constantly looking for ways to give back to the community. Our partnership with the South Jersey Dream Center is just one of many. Earlier this year, members of the WDMS Learn & Serve Club donated 20 hand tied fleece blankets to the Robin's Nest in Glassboro and organized a school wide collection of pet food and supplies to be donated to the Gloucester County Animal Shelter. WDMS staff and students actively participate in Operation Blessing and most

recently partnered with West Deptford High School Key Club for their "Socks for the Homeless" campaign.

In March we launched our Alicia Rose Victorious Foundation "Bandana Sale". The Alicia Rose Victorious Foundation provides funding for the specific purpose of creating a new, non-existing Teen Lounge, or enhancing/renovating an existing Teen Lounge in area hospitals. It is all about enhancing the quality of life for teens with cancer during the many visits and stays at the hospital. By purchasing a bandana and participating in "Bandana Day" WDMS students helped raise awareness about the ongoing struggles teen cancer patients face.

Lastly, WDMS staff members participate in several "Jeans Days" throughout the school year. Staff make monetary donations and in return are permitted to wear jeans to school on the designated day. Each "Jeans Day" is designated to raise awareness and support for local charities and organizations. This year WDMS has been able to provide awareness and support to Operation Blessing, AIDS Awareness, Juvenile Diabetes Research, Colon Cancer Coalition, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Jeans for Troops and the Hand2Paw Foundation.



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## Green-Fields, Red Bank and Oakview Staff Come Together to Support the American Heart Association

It was standing room only! Yes that's correct...it was a packed house for the first annual Green-Fields vs. Oakview/Red Bank Staff basketball game organized to support the American Heart Association and our student Healthy Heart Challenge. What started as a crazy idea turned into a quite an event as students and parents filled the West Deptford High School gym for a night of "quality" sports entertainment on

behalf of a great cause.

Prior basketball experience or, for that matter, any athletic ability at all was not necessarily a prerequisite for participation, and thirty-one members of our district-wide elementary staff volunteered to show off their skills. So, after player introductions and a wonderful rendition of the National Anthem by our Green-Fields 4th grade choir, it was time for tip-off.

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## ...Green-Fields, Red Bank and Oakview Staff *Continued from page 2*

From the first touch of the ball, it was apparent that this was going to be a competitive affair with both teams matching shot for shot for much of the first half. Following a half-time activity involving the top student fund raisers for the Healthy Heart Challenge, the third quarter began in much the same way as the first...both teams trading baskets leading to a tie score at the end of three. With basically a new game at hand, it wasn't long before the Red Bank/Oakview team began to pull ahead, securing a 3-point victory as time expired.

From warm-up to the final buzzer, there were plenty of laughs, a few bumps and bruises, and a gym full of students, staff and parents united for a great cause. In fact, at the end of the night, Green-Fields had raised an additional

\$1,500 to add to their school total of \$11,400 collected from student fundraising. We're happy to add that one hundred percent of all proceeds will go to the American Heart Association and their ongoing work.

A special thanks to Jason Morrell for arranging our use of the High School gym, Coach John McKeown for providing the team uniforms for the night, Mrs. Tori Magsam for providing her voice as the PA announcer, Mr. Bill Gore for operating the clock, Mrs. Carla Graff for preparing our 4th grade choir, our elementary PTO for providing concessions, and a brave group of WDHS basketball players for officiating the game. As a result of the success of this special night, plans are already underway for next year's game. Hope to see you there!



## March Madness Hits Red Bank

Many great things happen at Red Bank all the time, but this year, March has been more fun-filled than usual. One of our school wide goals for this year has been to grow independent readers and create a love for books. First off, "Read Across America" day was March 2nd, but Red Bank wanted to extend its love for books and reading even further. To kick off the month, the first annual Blind Date with a Book was held. Students were encouraged to select a book that was wrapped so they could not see what they were selecting. To build the suspense, "dates" could not be unwrapped until they got home from school. You can just imagine how difficult it was for these young learners to carry a mystery book with them all day. After reading it, they completed a Rate Your Date form for a chance to win a grand prize. A dress up day was held to honor our favorite book characters. There were some fantastic costumes and many, many different characters walked the halls of our school. We also continued our "Got Caught Reading"

campaign. Parents send in pictures of children reading when least expecting it. Parents have been using all kinds of methods to send these photos; Twitter, Instagram, email, text, and even Class Dojo. Every other week, two pictures are selected



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## ...March Madness *Continued from page 3*



randomly. Winners get to choose their very own book, and parents receive a “cup of coffee” courtesy of Red Bank via a WaWa gift card. Finally, to stick with the March Madness basketball theme, Red Bank is holding a tournament of books. Teachers and staff shared their 64 favorite books. These books were added to the 2019 Red Bank Book Tournament bracket. Following along with the NCAA Basketball Tournament, students will vote for their favorite book in each bracket. Winners of each round will move through the tournament. It is going to be exciting to see which books make it through to the Final Four and even more exciting to see which one is the ultimate champion of the 2019 Red Bank Books Tournament. It is plain to see, just how much Red Bank loves to read!



## The Golden Dustpan, Silver Spoon & Golden Frisbee

One of our school goals for the 2018-19 school year is to “Culturize” all aspects of the school day for students. Specifically, we felt it was extremely important to include all stakeholders, not just teachers, who influence our students’ lives while at school. In establishing a committee and working collaboratively to brainstorm ideas, we came up with a plan to help students take pride in their classrooms and our school. This plan also aimed to empower our staff to take on the responsibility of recognizing individual classrooms for being good citizens.

Ultimately, we created three weekly awards that focused on the following areas: classroom cleanliness, lunch table/area cleanliness, and recess procedures. We appointed our custodians to oversee the classrooms each evening when cleaning, our lunch duty staff to monitor lunch tables each day, and our recess duty aides to supervise classes lining up

and following directions during outdoor recess. Each week, the cleanest classroom now receives the “Golden Dustpan” to display outside their door, the cleanest lunch table/area are recipients of the “Silver Spoon” that hangs above their lunch table, and the most orderly, quiet recess line are recognized with the “Golden Frisbee.”

These extra incentives have been a great addition that have helped instill pride in our classrooms and school. Students love seeing their awards displayed and we have seen an increase in class/lunch room cleanliness, as well as improved lines and following directions outside at recess. In addition, these small awards have provided our custodians and lunch/recess duty staff an opportunity to recognize students for their efforts and build upon our positive school culture. We can only hope this good citizenship transfers to your homes and you begin seeing cleaner bedrooms! 😊



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## Ms. Kris Donner: West Deptford Township School District Instructional Aide of the Year

Congratulations to Ms. Kris Donner for being named the West Deptford Township School District Instructional Aide of the Year! Ms. Donner has worked in our district for 16 years. She is reliable, caring, patient, and an outstanding person. She has worked as a one-to-one Aide in many different elementary grade level special education classrooms across all three elementary schools in West Deptford. Ms. Donner transitioned from a third/fourth grade self-contained classroom to the newly added preschool autism class this year. She takes on new assignments with a smile and is open to the new challenges that lie ahead. Within the classroom, Ms. Donner takes initiative when needed and follows directions presented to her. She is a great source of knowledge from her years of experience with various students and teachers. She respects the leadership and teaching style of the teacher in the classroom and works exceptionally well with the other aides. Ms. Donner takes time to ask questions about why specific strategies are used for each student to better understand how to prevent or respond to challenging

behaviors in the classroom.

Ms. Donner has a natural ability to understand the students' needs without them being able to express themselves verbally. She is compassionate and nurturing with every student in the classroom, but she also stands her ground when needed and holds each student to realistic expectations. She works well with all the students in the classroom, treating them all with love and respect. Ms. Donner is always willing to help and never hesitates to intervene during difficult behavioral situations in the class. Ms. Donner is truly an integral part of the preschool autism program and a valuable asset to the Oakview Elementary School community. Thank you Ms. Donner for your dedication, hard work and commitment to our youngest students' success...very well deserved honor!



## Mrs. Joan Petito: OVES Educational Service Professional of the Year

The Oakview Elementary School community is extremely proud to recognize Mrs. Joan Petito as our Educational Service Professional of the Year. Mrs. Petito has served as an Instructional Aide in our Preschool disabled classroom since 2009 and does a tremendous job with our youngest learners. Each day, Mrs. Petito brings her caring ways, dedication and devotion to these students. Her positive attitude and nurturing demeanor truly make a difference and the students adore her.

Mrs. Petito works diligently to get to know all students on a personal level and has built very strong relationships with them and their families. She gives 110% effort every day and is willing to assist with any task needed. She often comes to work early and leaves well beyond her contractual hours to make sure materials are prepared for the following day. Mrs. Petito plays an active role in the classroom, acting as a second teacher. She can often be found playing on the carpet with students, providing assistance in the bathroom, or taking

student helpers to perform their jobs around the building. Mrs. Petito is very compassionate and jumps right in to help blow a student's nose, give a gentle hug or some extra love when she senses someone is having a tough day.

Mrs. Petito is well respected in our school and uses her recess duty time to develop relationships with students in grades K-2. This often lends to Mrs. Petito seeking out students with more significant behavioral needs to help them feel supported and valued. From a friendly hello in the hallway to engaging students in heartfelt conversations on the playground, Mrs. Petito positively influences students on many different levels. We feel very fortunate to have Mrs. Petito as a member of our instructional team. Our students would not be the same without "Miss Joan."



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## Mrs. Noreen Mikulski: RBES Educational Service Professional of the Year

Red Bank Elementary School is proud to announce that its 2018-2019 Educational Service Professional of the Year is Mrs. Noreen Mikulski. For the past 18 years Mrs. Mikulski has been a staple in the West Deptford Education community. Mrs. Mikulski began her career as an instructional aide before moving into the classroom. She spent the first 15 years of her career as a classroom teacher molding the minds of our district's youngest learners in first and second grade. During this time, Mrs. Mikulski was an exemplary instructor, perfectly blending a mothering nature and ability to convey the lesson at hand. She instilled an unwavering love of education and unity in all the children who entered her room over the years. Four years ago, Mrs. Mikulski stepped out of the classroom and into the role of literacy coach. This allowed her to continue utilizing her Language Arts knowledge in a small group setting with a variety of learners and teachers. Her calm and

easygoing demeanor makes all students feel comfortable and want to learn. Not only does Mrs. Mikulski offer support to students, but she also offers support to staff and administration. Mrs. Mikulski is always willing to help a colleague in any situation. She offers words of advice and works with colleagues not only for academic growth of all students but social emotional learning as well. She currently serves on many committees that have positive impacts on learning and instruction. Mrs. Mikulski is a valuable member of the Red Bank community and is a huge asset to our district. Mrs. Mikulski is overwhelmingly a wonderful selection for Red Bank's Educational Service Professional of the Year.



## Mrs. Maria Budd: GFES Educational Services Professional of the Year

Green-Fields Elementary School is proud to recognize Mrs. Maria Budd as our Educational Services Professional of the Year. Mrs. Budd has served as our Green-Fields Elementary School Nurse for the last fifteen years, fulfilling a role that is arguably one of the most challenging within the building. In fact, anyone who has spent any amount of time in an elementary setting can certainly attest to the busy nature of her position. This, combined with a school enrollment of over five-hundred children, creates the elements of what may be described as a non-stop daily work schedule. Rumor has it that she even monitors the Principal's blood pressure on a semi-regular basis.

Many would believe that the job responsibilities of an elementary school nurse are minimal. After all, how hard can it be to work with children all day? Well, Mrs. Budd would be quick to dispel that notion. Among her varied job responsibilities, she maintains the medical records for each student, including performing yearly screening for vision, hearing, height, and weight. There are teaching responsibilities as well and Mrs. Budd provides health education on such topics as dental hygiene, drug and alcohol prevention and puberty. Beyond this, the daily medical needs of students are varied, and range from small cuts and loose teeth to respiratory distress and possible fractures. She rarely gets a chance to have lunch, often sacrificing her time to deal with the continual medical needs of a large elementary building. She maintains a

heightened awareness of all food that enters the building, often checking for harmful ingredients that may be unsafe for our students. However, throughout these busy days, Mrs. Budd never complains and treats each student and parent with empathy and compassion.

Mrs. Budd is collaborative with our staff and provides educational opportunities for CPR, EpiPen and AED certification. In addition, she has built trusting relationships with the adults in the building who often seek out Mrs. Budd's professional knowledge in regard to their own health needs or even those of a family member. It should be noted that this is all free of charge.

Finally, Mrs. Budd works with our community, using resources to help families in need. This includes information on obtaining health insurance, securing eye glasses for children, administering physician ordered medication, and providing information on additional resources and education for families. Her presence is invaluable at Green-Fields, and in spite of the fact that the position may sometimes be under appreciated, she certainly deserves much recognition. For these, and many other reasons, Mrs. Budd is an excellent choice as Green-Fields Educational Services Professional of the Year.



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## Mrs. Bettina Bride: WDMS Educational Services Professional of the Year

West Deptford Middle School would like to congratulate School Psychologist Mrs. Bettina Bride for being honored as the Educational Service Professional for the 2018-2019 school year. Mrs. Bride earned her Bachelor's Degree from Marist College in Psychology, her Master's Degree in Educational Psychology, and is a certified School Psychologist.

Mrs. Bride was nominated by her peers due to the tremendous impact she has made since joining the district in 1999. Mrs. Bride is responsible for identifying and evaluating students to determine eligibility for Special Education. Once identified, she works to develop individual educational and behavior intervention plans for students. In addition, she works collaboratively with parents, educators, and other professionals to create social-emotional functioning learning environments for all children. Mrs. Bride's personal goal as a school psychologist is to provide effective services to help students succeed academically, socially, behaviorally, and emotionally. With a caseload of 98 students districtwide, this personal goal could become daunting. However, Mrs. Bride reaches this personal goal with kindness, fortitude and her inherent ability to make students and their family feel as though they are her only case.

Mrs. Bride is committed to creating positive, productive, educational learning environments for all of her students. She has been involved with social skills training in elementary-level Special Education classrooms for the past

fifteen years. Social skills training has enabled her to facilitate social-emotional learning in the classroom environment. The objective of social skills training is to help students effectively understand and manage emotions, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships and make responsible decisions.



In addition to managing her own caseload, Mrs. Bride sits on the Middle School I&RS (Intervention and Referral Services) committee that meets to create interventions for students struggling in academic, emotional and/or behavioral areas. During the meetings, her insight and relationship with her students is drawn upon to create an appropriate plan for the struggling student to find success. Mrs. Bride is also an active member of the district Crisis Intervention Team.

Over the past nineteen years, Mrs. Bride has had the opportunity to work with students at all grade levels. Her greatest joy is to watch students grow and develop throughout their educational career. Her compassion and dedication to her students is why Bettina Bride is our Educational Service Professional of the Year!

## Mrs. Tara Lange: WDHS Educational Services Professional of the Year

Tara Lange was selected as the Educational Service Professional Recognition Honoree for West Deptford High School due to her active commitment to the High School, as well as her true dedication to our students. Mrs. Lange has been working as an Instructional Aide in West Deptford for years.

Mrs. Lange took on the role and responsibility this year of being the Instructional Aide in the self-contained 9th grade classroom. Mrs. Lange took it upon herself to make personal connections with each of these students, developing a rapport where she could sincerely demonstrate how much she cares for their well-being and their education, yet always holding them accountable. She developed her own "system" where she tracked the students' behaviors so that the team of teachers could effectively implement strategies that would find success for each student. Without her initial progressive moves to

create behavioral charts and a system of checks and balances, the students would have a truly rocky road experience ahead of them.



Mrs. Lange has dedicated a lot of her own time outside of the classroom to ensure that an incentive program was put into place as she works tirelessly with the teachers to create a positive learning environment. She has been an absolute gem this year and we are so thankful to have her as a part of our team. She has definitely become a prominent supporter, motivator and an influential person to our students at West Deptford High. With this, we are proud to honor Mrs. Tara Lange!

## Mrs. Janet Habina: OVES Governor's Educator of the Year

It is an honor to recognize Mrs. Janet Habina as Governor's Educator of the Year. Mrs. Habina has been an In-Class Support teacher for first and second grade for the past five years. During this time, she has also served as an interventionist in our RTI framework and worked collaboratively to design instruction to enable academic progress for our at-risk population of students. She is an active participant in our professional learning communities. Her engaging personality and ability to effectively collaborate with all peers are assets to all who have the opportunity and gift of working with her each day.

Mrs. Habina possesses a keen ability to develop rapport with students and families. Students love to work with her because she is patient, kind, creative, loving, encouraging and genuinely cares about them. Mrs. Habina gets to know every student she works with on a personal level, as she is invested in the whole child. As a result, she is able to determine the strengths of her students and helps instill confidence in them to believe they can accomplish any goal.

Mrs. Habina always advocates in the best interest of each student, inspires them to overcome their struggles, and fosters positive learning experiences to promote success.

Most importantly, Mrs. Habina believes in her students and dedicates her time each day to help them realize their potential. She spends nights on the phone with parents to encourage their involvement and seek their support. She is an exceptional listener who is always available to lend an ear to listen, offer advice or serve as an emotional support system.

Mrs. Habina is a dedicated educator, selfless mentor, unassuming leader, co-worker and a valuable resource to our staff, parents, students and community. It is an honor to work with Mrs. Habina each day and recognize her with this award for superior, professional dedication and performance.



## Ms. Carly Lundstrom: RBES Governor's Educator of the Year

Ms. Carly Lundstrom began her teaching career as a long-term replacement teacher in Mrs. Elberson's Kindergarten classroom. She easily became a member of the Red Bank Elementary School community. Ms. Lundstrom next moved into the role of a 1:1 Instructional Aide to finish the year. It was quickly realized what a wonderful and inspiring teacher she was going to become. Ms. Lundstrom became a permanent fixture at Red Bank as a first and second grade teacher. Her patience and compassion for the students was evident. From the very beginning, everyone knew she was going to accomplish great things as an educator. Ms. Lundstrom is one teacher who just has a way with kids. She is kind, loving, and most importantly very in tune with the needs of her students. Ms. Lundstrom works hard at providing a loving and nurturing learning environment for her students. One of Ms. Lundstrom's finest qualities is the positive relationships she builds with the families of her students. She is very aware that working together is necessary for success. Ms. Lundstrom is dedicated to each child she teaches and willingly takes

the extra time to become part of their world. She knows their likes and dislikes, their passions and their fears, and everything that makes them exactly who they are. She is very enthusiastic and is always searching for new and innovative ways to inspire her students. Ms. Lundstrom has unofficially stepped into the role as one of Red Bank's technology gurus. She never backs down from a challenge and will do whatever it takes to master a new skill or technique that makes learning authentic and meaningful for every single student in her classroom. Red Bank Elementary School is exceptionally lucky to have her as a member of our school family. Ms. Lundstrom, your commitment to excellence in education is an inspiration for all. Congratulations, you are so deserving of this honor.



## Mrs. Carla Graff: GFES Governor's Educator of the Year

Green-Fields Elementary School is proud to announce Mrs. Carla Graff as the Governor's Educator of the Year. Throughout her time here in West Deptford, Mrs. Graff has worked tirelessly to build an elementary music program that instills a love and understanding of music within children as they visit her each day. Her dynamic instructional presence, along with her consistent positive attitude creates a learning environment that is effective, fun and enjoyable.

Mrs. Graff has many gifts, but should be especially commended for the inclusive emphasis she establishes with her students. Regardless of the real or perceived ability of each child, Mrs. Graff is careful to provide opportunities for each student to shine. These occasions are presented through school-wide performances such as our holiday concerts, fourth grade choir presentations, the student variety show, All South Jersey Choir, and special events such as singing at the Wells Fargo Center as an opening for the Harlem Globetrotters. Through these and other opportunities, it is obvious that Mrs. Graff has a unique ability to help each student find the courage and confidence needed to perform publicly on stage. These performances are indeed a gift to the greater West Deptford community, and create a setting for parents and family members to share in the success of their child's accomplishments.

As one would assume of any quality educator, Mrs. Graff is passionate about her art and sets high expectations for her students. The music program is not looked upon as just another "special" in the day, but is seen as a place where students are presented with opportunities to learn and grow both

academically and socially within the music setting. Her lessons are structured with specific goals in mind and go beyond the normal scope of the curriculum. She is an advocate for her subject area and her district-wide contributions to the overall vocal and instrumental program are noted.

Finally, Mrs. Graff is a consistent positive and enthusiastic presence within our building. She has cultivated friendly, collaborative relationships with all members of our faculty and staff, and is looked upon as a trusted and helpful colleague, especially in the midst of occasional chaotic and stressful days. Her happy and energetic enthusiasm is contagious and one cannot help but be drawn to her warm personality while soaking up the joy she brings to our school. She is perhaps the working model of an Educator of the Year...a teacher that is dedicated to her art, always looking to bring out the very best from each student in an encouraging and motivating manner. Beyond this, Mrs. Graff is continually seeking professional and personal growth, consistently advocating for her program, and always looking to be a friend and helpful presence among her coworkers. In this regard, Mrs. Graff is an outstanding example...and an excellent choice for Green-Fields Governor's Educator of the Year.



## Ms. Paula Dearlove: WDMS Governor's Educator of the Year

West Deptford Middle School is honored to announce Ms. Paula Dearlove as the Governor's Educator of the Year Honoree for the 2018-2019 School Year. Ms. Dearlove holds a Bachelor's Degree in Arts from Rowan University, formerly Glassboro State College, and is dually certified in Elementary Education and Home Economics. Ms. Dearlove joined the West Deptford Township School District in 1989 when she became a Home Economics teacher for the Middle School. In 2000, Ms. Dearlove became a fifth grade teacher and has made "C" wing her home ever since! Over the past twenty-nine years, she has served as a mentor teacher for several new staff members and student teachers, as well as an advisor to the Craft Club. Ms. Dearlove has also served on several committees during her time in West Deptford including the Curriculum Writing and Technology Steering Committees. In addition to her regular teaching duties, Ms. Dearlove has continually volunteered to chaperone numerous school trips and after school events.

Ms. Dearlove is a nurturing and energetic teacher who connects with students of all backgrounds and abilities. Whether she is teaching a small group or the entire class, Ms. Dearlove is able to make each and every student feel like they are part of the lesson by differentiating tasks to promote engagement. As part of a co-teaching partnership, Ms. Dearlove has proven to be highly professional, collaborative and creative. She ensures all students have opportunities for success by researching strategies, designing leveled activities, exploring technology, and generally embracing trends in education in an effort to make all participants in a lesson be as successful as they can be.

Ms. Dearlove's philosophy is student-centered. As an

educator, she believes it is an honor and privilege to have a positive impact on a child's life. She believes in the importance of teaching the whole child. By cultivating a safe learning environment, she embraces and encourages mistakes as a model of productive learning. Ms. Dearlove encourages students to grow and learn day by day. She believes there is nothing more refreshing than witnessing students take chances and risks when learning without the fear of being wrong. She feels it is crucial for students to become accustomed to working hard, building stamina and surpassing their own beliefs about what they are capable of. As their teacher, Ms. Dearlove advocates for and supports her students. She believes in honoring each child who comes through her door and provides a kind and encouraging support for parents. With each student, she strives to introduce them to the beauty of language and the joyful love of literature and learning.

Ms. Dearlove exemplifies the delicate balance that is required of all educators in today's culture - to be encouraging, constructively critical, empathetic, supportive, non-judgmental and trusted. West Deptford Middle School is proud to have Ms. Paula Dearlove as their Governor's Educator of the Year Honoree.



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## Mr. Mark Thorn: WDHS Governor's Educator of the Year

Mr. Thorn was selected as the Governor's Teacher Recognition Honoree for West Deptford High School due to his excellent teaching style, active leadership within the High School Science Department, and true dedication to his students. Mr. Thorn began teaching in West Deptford High School in 2000. He is a graduate of Rowan University and the University of Delaware.

Mr. Thorn's dedication to the staff and students in our school is impeccable. He works extremely hard with not only the members of his science department, but with his co-teaching partners. He is always friendly, pleasant and good-natured as he is an unselfish person that believes teaching has allowed him to touch the lives of students. Mr. Thorn has realized that the rewards of his effort may not always include a thank you or a good job by his classes, but the ultimate reward that is more meaningful comes in the form of a sparkle in the eyes of a student learning.

In addition to his teaching responsibilities, Mr. Thorn

has dedicated countless hours to WDHS beyond the normal scope of a teaching day. He has been an integral part in the success of our Alternative School. Mr. Thorn continues to meet the needs of all of our students, literally day and night, to assist them in finding success. His patience, calm tone and great sense of humor are some of the many attributes that help build the confidence of students in his classes. His in-depth understanding of students legitimizes his genuine desire for the students in our town to be understood and he goes the extra mile to connect with them as he makes a difference in their lives. For this, we are thankful for his teaching capabilities every day. Congratulations Mr. Thorn for an honor well deserved.



## Mrs. Kelly Hansbury: Gloucester County School Counselor of the Year

On behalf of the Gloucester County School Counselor Association and the West Deptford School District, we are proud to announce Mrs. Kelly Hansbury as the Gloucester County School Counselor of the Year. Mrs. Hansbury has served as the Guidance Counselor at Green-Fields Elementary School for the past twelve years. Throughout this time, she has consistently demonstrated a unique sense of service to our students, their parents, our faculty, staff, and the greater West Deptford Community. Her influence is far reaching and her leadership is respected throughout our district.

Mrs. Hansbury has been instrumental in changing the common mindset of student support services within the elementary setting. The scope of the Guidance Counselor position has evolved due to the ever-changing dynamics of student services, and Mrs. Hansbury has responded to these challenges. She is student centered and child focused, often identifying potential issues in advance while providing solutions for positive outcomes. She has developed a well-designed program of instruction for our students by meeting with all classrooms on a regular basis, in much the same manner as our subject area specialists. Mrs. Hansbury's "curriculum" encompasses a wide-variety of topics, including conflict resolution, healthy decision making, service learning and benevolence, all combined with an exceptional emphasis on quality character education for children.

Over the past three years, Green-Fields Elementary has made a deliberate effort to improve the social and emotional climate of our building through an emphasis on

quality character. We have sought to identify and improve upon the following character principles... core values, proactive approaches to character development, creating a caring community, defining moral action, modeling ethical behavior, and the development of community partnerships. As a result of Mrs. Hansbury's leadership and efforts, Green-Fields has been designated as a State School of Character for the next two years. In addition, two of our daily building practices initiated by Mrs. Hansbury have been recognized nationally by Character.org. This recognition would not be possible without her motivating spirit and endless work in reaching our goals.

However, perhaps the best measure of Mrs. Hansbury's impact upon our student population is their response to her daily presence. She has worked tirelessly to cultivate trusting and effective relationships with our children and their parents, and their interactions with her are genuine and enduring. She maintains a safe and comfortable presence within our school...a presence that is certainly missed during those rare moments when she is out of the building. For these, and many other reasons, Mrs. Hansbury is a wonderful representative of the West Deptford School District, and an excellent choice as Gloucester County School Counselor of the Year.



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## Child Find

### SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

A wide variety of special education programs are available for students between the ages of 3 and 21 who require specialized instruction and/or related services such as speech/language services, occupational therapy and physical therapy in order to meet their educational needs. Educational program options include instruction in a general education class with all the necessary and appropriate supports, supplemental instruction, resource center programs, and special class programs within the school district, special education programs in out-of-district public or private schools, individual instruction at home, in medical institutions or other appropriate facilities.

### PRESCHOOL DISABLED PROGRAM

The Preschool Disabled Program provides appropriate educational experiences for youngsters between the ages of 3 and 5 who experience developmental delays in the areas of speech and language, motor development,

cognition and/or social/emotional functioning. The school district offers an educational program, related services, and door-to-door transportation at no cost to parents. The children are placed according to individual needs and developmental levels. In the preschool programs, they are encouraged to explore new materials, develop emerging skills, and interact in a social setting. Speech/language therapy and occupational therapy are offered as an integral part of the classroom program and/or on an individual basis as needed. If warranted, other services such as physical therapy may be initiated.

**If you have any questions about either of the programs described above and feel that your child may require services, please call the Supervisor of Special Education and Related Services, Mrs. Cheryl Fairchild, at (856) 848-4300, ext. 4213.**

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## New Elementary Grade Level Configuration Plan

During the 2017-18 school year, the Board of Education held three community group meetings to solicit input from various stakeholders in the development of a three-year Strategic Plan. This Strategic Plan identified specific goals in the area of student achievement that the group felt needed to be addressed in order for the district to reach its full potential. One of these goals was to create a grade level structure where our 1st and 2nd grade teachers remained in the same grade level for consecutive years.

In an effort to determine what this grade level structure would be, the Board again solicited input from various stakeholders through community meetings, discussions with staff and public board meetings. Based on this information gathered at these meetings, the Board, at their meeting held on March 18, 2019, approved the following grade level configuration plan for the 2019-20 school year.

Elementary School	Current 2018-19	New- Sept. 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2019
Oakview School	Preschool, Kindergarten, 1 <sup>st</sup>	Preschool, Kindergarten & 1 <sup>st</sup>
Red Bank School	Preschool, Kindergarten, 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Preschool, 2 <sup>nd</sup>
Green-Fields School	Preschool, Kindergarten, 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup>	Preschool, 3 <sup>rd</sup> & 4 <sup>th</sup>

Note: Oakview Elementary School will permanently house all Kindergarten and 1st Grade students, Red Bank Elementary School will permanently house all 2nd Grade students and Green-Fields Elementary School will remain the same (all 3rd & 4th Grade students) except that there will be no Kindergarten students attending Green-Fields Elementary School. Preschool students will be located at all three elementary schools based on room availability.

Since the grade level configuration plan approved by the Board is very similar to the current grade levels, it is anticipated that there should be a very smooth transition. Final teacher assignments and room locations will be determined over the next few months. The Board certainly realize that there will be an adjustment period as we transition to this new structure, but they are hopeful that all parents can appreciate the need for this change.

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**FOCUS ON WEST DEPTFORD SCHOOLS**

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For more information, please contact:

Kristin Melcher at (856) 845-7929 or

Dr. Shawnequa Carvalho at (856) 848-4300