

Board of Education Summary
April 25, 2011

Fine and Practical Arts Showcase

Fine and Practical Arts Supervisor Michael Fackelman summarized K-12 course offerings in the five subject areas that he supervises: business, consumer education, practical arts, performing arts, and visual arts. Starting with the Ridge class of 2014, Financial Literacy is a new requirement. It is currently being met by a one-semester Personal Finance course, but Michael would like to offer additional courses to satisfy this requirement. In music, more “seat time” is needed for the WAMS ensembles (band, orchestra, and chorus) to improve the transition to the music program at Ridge, where band, orchestra, and chorus meet five days per week. He also hopes to introduce more cross-department opportunities, such as the Tile Project for the Bernards Township 250th Anniversary.

Anti-Bullying Program

New bullying prevention legislation goes into effect in September 2011. Paul Ciempola, William Annin Assistant Principal and District Coordinator for the Anti-Bullying Program, gave a presentation on the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program, which the school district has adopted. The program’s goal is to reduce bullying through better peer relations at school and a restructured school environment, where all adult staff act as authorities and positive role models. Staff training is currently in progress. Teachers are introducing school rules about bullying to students, and parents are involved with anti-bullying committees at each school. After the new legislation goes into effect, every school will receive a grade from the New Jersey Department of Education, which will appear on the district’s website.

The Fine and Practical Arts and Anti-Bullying presentations can be viewed on the district website, www.bernardsboe.com.

Solar Energy Proposal

Anthony Catana from the Spiezle Architecture Group answered questions about the proposed solar energy Power Purchase Agreement, which can be used for energy savings only or also include funding for a portion of the required \$1.5 million in roof repairs. The proposal calls for installation of solar panels on the roofs of five school buildings and on a parking lot canopy at Ridge (behind the building). Mount Prospect School will not be part of this project as originally planned, and there will not be a parking lot canopy at William Annin. The Ridge parking lot canopy will have a post every 30 feet, and lighting will be installed underneath the canopy.

The Board voted 7 – 2 to authorize the architect to obtain bids on the project. The base bid includes energy savings only; the second bid includes roofing work also. The project should pay for approximately \$780,000 of roof repairs.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee accepted donations from the Mt. Prospect PTO for an Apple iPod learning center and the Ridge Diamond Club for a batting cage. The Cedar Hill PTO donated \$60,000 towards library renovations.

Board Forum

The Board discussed the film “Race to Nowhere” and its relevance to student stress levels, primarily at Ridge. Further discussion of student stress is warranted, and the Board will look at this in the coming months.