

## **Board of Education Summary, January 24, 2011**

Kathleen Kirk, student body president, reported that the Ridge teddy bear project is complete. About 220 teddy bears decorated by Ridge students and faculty were distributed to Bryan's Dream Foundation, which was working with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, and The Wellness Community, a non-profit organization that helps families impacted by cancer. A teen volunteer group at Morristown Memorial Hospital sent some of the bears to a hospital in Afghanistan.

As recommended by the Finance Committee, the Board accepted the \$420,000 donation from the Bernards Township Public School Initiative to restore full-day kindergarten for the 2011-12 school year. Adam Hecht thanked Valerie Goger, the Board, and the four elementary school principals. He said that the organization is committed to raise funds until the school district gets sufficient state funding to restore full-day kindergarten.

### **Public Forum**

Township Committee member Carolyn Gaziano urged township residents to write or call state legislators, the New Jersey Department of Education, and Governor Christie, to request that public school aid be restored to 2009 levels and ask that any cuts be made as the same percentage of state aid across all public school districts. Larissa Milligan and Douglas Wicks added their support.

### **Facilities**

After a lengthy discussion, the Board approved a resolution of intent to participate in the second round of solar energy projects from the Somerset County Improvement Authority. The Board also approved a contract for a conceptual design to correct drainage problems at the Ridge varsity complex.

### **Board Forum**

Susan Carlsson reported that the requirement for passing a second question on local school budgets has been reduced from 60% of voters to 50% plus 1. The district expects to receive state aid numbers for 2011-12 on February 24 and will resume budget discussions at the February 28 BOE meeting.