



Friday, January 7th

Upcoming Calendar Events:

Friday, January 21st Family Game Night

Tuesday, January 25th District String Festival 7 p.m. RHS

Thursday, January 27th Marking Period 2 Ends

Wednesday, February 2nd "It's 21 For a Reason" 7 p.m. RHS

Upcoming School Events:

Monday, January 10th Grade 2 Character Ed Assembly

Thursday, January 13th LCS PRIDE club 8 a.m. Cafeteria

Friday, January 14th Spirit Day "What I Want to Be"

Notes from December 20th Board of Education Meeting

Dr. Goger said that a total of \$420,000 is needed to save full-day kindergarten for 2011-12. The cost estimate for mid-day busing for part-time kindergarten has been reduced by \$65,000. In addition, the school district will have to pay unemployment for 26 weeks only, resulting in additional savings of \$120,000.

Parents have raised questions about planned changes to science classes at Ridge. Dr. Goger announced that a new document, *Q&A on Impact of Schedule Change on Lab Sciences*, is posted on the bernardsboe.com website. During preparation of this document, the administration contacted 31 colleges to get their feedback on changes to the Ridge science curriculum. Some science labs will need to be modified because of the revised Ridge schedule; the administration will begin planning these changes in January. Brian Heineman, Supervisor of Science and Technology, will give a presentation about changes to the science program at the January 10 Board of Education meeting.

Dr. Goger also announced that Honors criteria have been tightened in math and science for the 2011-12 school year. The new criteria are described in the *Program of Studies 2011-12*, which is on the Ridge Guidance website. The reason for these changes is to keep class sizes down to approximately 25 students in College Prep classes. With the current Honors criteria, a substantial number of students struggle in Honors classes and drop down to College Prep classes. As a result, some College Prep classes have increased to 30 or more students. The honors appeal process will still be available, but the waiver process no longer applies to math and science courses.

Ray Pinney from the New Jersey School Boards Association gave an overview of the school budget situation throughout New Jersey. He said that over 75% of school districts had to cut staff last year, and

he expects more staffing cuts this year as a result of the new 2% cap. Most of the “toolkit” provisions will not help school districts in the short-term. Many school districts have instituted “Pay to Play” for sports and other activities, and are looking at reducing programs that are not mandatory, such as full-day kindergarten, extracurricular activities, and courtesy busing.

During the Public Comment period, kindergarten parent Adam Hecht said that he has been in email contact with over 100 parents, who have all pledged funds to save full-day kindergarten. If \$420,000 is raised by January 21, the Finance Committee will recommend that the Board of Education accept the funds.

Curriculum Committee

Bev Cwerner reported that Algebra I students are now required to pass the Algebra I End of Course exam, a state test. Students who score below “Basic” will have to repeat Algebra I, either over the summer or at Ridge. Students cannot move to Geometry until they pass the exam.

Community Relations Committee

Robin McKeon will distribute information through the PTO presidents in January about writing and emailing state legislators regarding state aid and unfunded mandates.

Liaison Reports

Municipal Alliance – The “21 for a Reason” presentations have been well-received at the elementary schools. A presentation for Ridge and William Annin is scheduled for February 2.

Project Graduation – The Phon-a-thon for the poinsettia sale raised more money than last year for Project Graduation activities.

Race to Nowhere – the PTOs have scheduled a screening of this film for January 26.

Bernards Parents for Exceptional Children – raised \$65,000 at their recent gala.

Cedar Hill PTO – is raising \$100,000 to renovate the Cedar Hill library.

Kindergarten Initiative Update

The Bernards Township Public School Initiative is a newly formed entity that endeavors to preserve Full Day Kindergarten in Bernards Township. A mid-January deadline will determine if a full day program can be in place for the upcoming 2011-12 school year. Please visit their website to learn more: www.brfulldayk.org

Photos of Students in the PTO Newsletter and Photo Shares

This is the current policy with respect to photos of students in the PTO Newsletter and in Photo Shares. Photos of the children will be placed in the PTO Newsletter that is emailed directly to parents. The photos will not be available in the newsletters that are posted on the LCS PTO website. Photos of the children at various school events will also be shared with parents via email in Photo Shares. If you do

not wish to have your child photographed, you will need to opt out. To do this, please email the LCS PTO Communications Officer, Heather Whyte-Kattas, at heather.whyte-kattas@lexisnexis.com. Please include your children's names and grades.

The PTO News goes out every week through the Board of Ed's Friday Folder. To submit items to the PTO News, please send them to Heather Whyte-Kattas at heather.whyte-kattas@lexisnexis.com Items must be received by Friday for the following week's PTO News.

PTO Board 2010-2011:

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For more information go to www.LibertyCornerPTO.org.