



LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY: STATE OF THE DISTRICT

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SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**

SEPTEMBER 2017

***“The battle over real power tomorrow begins with the struggle
over who gets to dream today.”***

Alex Rivera, Film Director

As educators, it is our collective responsibility to prepare students for a world that is shifting and that continues to evolve. Therefore, as an educational system, we must continue to change to meet that responsibility. Making systemic change is healthy and is what great districts do. WW-P is one of those great districts. Our challenge is to prepare students for a world that we cannot envision or define by current constructs. If your children are to be successful as global citizens, they must be able to interact and work with those from a broad spectrum of cultures, religions, philosophical beliefs, and social backgrounds. Within our school community, the diversity of our students' interests and passions is our strength. We must view this diversity as an asset and an opportunity.

As we begin the 2017-2018 school year, worldwide occurrences have demonstrated that we live in times of great social, political, and economic challenges. Topics in the

headlines have included: discussions of nuclear war; economic uncertainty; violent protests grounded in racial intolerance, bigotry and hatred; political unrest; and global warming. We are left to question the structures and systems that are meant to keep us safe and united. Further, this past month has brought historic flooding and devastation to millions in Texas, Louisiana, Florida, the Caribbean, and along the Gulf Coast. Internationally, we have seen devastation in South Asia and two devastating earthquakes in Mexico. If we are feeling such uncertainty, how must our students feel?

Now more than ever, we must question and redefine the purpose and the role of education. We need to ask, how are our roles and responsibilities impacted by global challenges, technological evolutions, and demands for social justice? Dr. Ruha Benjamin, assistant professor of Sociology and African American Studies at Princeton University, stated, “Our role as educators...is to incubate a better world in the minds and hearts of our students.”

We have the ability to empower and impact the world’s next generation of thought leaders. Linda Darling-Hammond wrote, “As educators, we know that today's students will enter a workforce in which they will have to not only acquire information, but also analyze, synthesize, and apply it to address new problems, design solutions, collaborate effectively, and communicate persuasively. Few, if any, previous generations have been asked to become such nimble thinkers.” (2013) These skills are further expanded upon by the World Economic Forum in the report at the following link: <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/03/21st-century-skills-future-jobs-students>

Make no mistake: the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District is an excellent school district. While bringing awareness to specific issues or concerns is healthy, important and necessary, misinformation and mistruths about our educational program and its educators, through social media or other communications, is wrong. The false public narrative that has been perpetuated by some has served to demean this amazing school district and school community, and it is not acceptable. The facts cannot be ignored: WW-P is a beacon for educational excellence. Your children, our students, are watching and we have a collective responsibility to uphold a higher standard. In the following letter, I will provide a variety of examples showing how our students demonstrate excellence in education.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Mission Statement

Building upon our tradition of excellence, the mission of the West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional School District is to empower all learners to thoughtfully contribute to a diverse and changing world with confidence, strength of character, and love of learning.

Strategic Goals

We believe that every individual has intrinsic worth, that embracing diversity enriches and empowers our community, and that people reach their full potential when encouraged to believe it is possible. Therefore, building upon our tradition of excellence, we will guide and support our students' growth, empowering them to value their individual learning journeys.

Every Child

Goal 1: Understanding that all students have diverse needs, backgrounds, and approaches to learning, we will integrate tools and structures to appropriately challenge and enable students to realize their full potential.

Global Child

Goal 2: Embracing a rapidly changing world, we will empower learners to assume active roles in their communities, to face and engage global challenges, and to contribute proactively toward a more peaceful, just, inclusive, and secure world.

Whole Child

Goal 3: Recognizing that children need to balance physical, social, emotional, and academic needs, we will maintain a supportive culture and build structures for the health, safety, and well-being of the Whole Child.

Every Child, Global Child, Whole Child

ACADEMIC SUCCESS

Research tells us that successful schools are characterized by dedicated educators, motivated students, involved parents, and supportive community. This partnership provides opportunities for our students to excel. Student achievement on standardized tests, such as the SATs and AP exams, is a testament to the hard work of students, teachers, staff, and families. State and national rankings are important but are subjective. Regardless of the measures and the criteria, WW-P has continually been a flagship district over a myriad of years.

NJ MONTHLY

High School North ranked #2 High School in NJ in 2016 (ranked #23 in 2014)

High School South ranked #9 High School in NJ in 2016 (ranked #35 in 2014)

NICHE.COM

#3 Best School District in NJ for 2018 receiving an A+ rating

#55 Best School District in the Nation for 2018

#1 Best Middle School in NJ – Thomas Grover Middle School

#5 Best Middle School in NJ – Community Middle School

#9 Best High School in NJ – High School South

#13 Best High School in NJ – High School North

Overall Niche rating for all schools was an A+.

U.S. NEWS AND WORLD REPORT

In April 2017, U.S. News and World Report issued its annual ranking of America's best high schools:

WW-P High School North – Ranked #10 in NJ (#3 comprehensive HS)

WW-P High School South – Ranked #18 in NJ (#9 comprehensive HS)

http://www.nj.com/education/2017/04/the_25_best_high_schools_in_nj_according_to_us_new.html

ADVANCED PLACEMENT SCORES (AP)

HIGH SCHOOL NORTH

HSN	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 – 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017
Enrollment	1623	1562	1498	1387	1387
Total AP Students	447	490	483	468	525
Number of Exams	995	1131	1149	1066	1186
AP Students with Scores 3+	417	463	453	440	497
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	93.3	94.5	93.8	94.0	94.7

HIGH SCHOOL SOUTH

HSS	2012 - 2013	2013 - 2014	2014 – 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017
Enrollment	1605	1611	1603	1585	1599
Total AP Students	482	483	526	517	571
Number of Exams	1075	1073	1122	1212	1342
AP Students with Scores 3+	460	456	497	485	539
% of Total AP Students with Scores 3+	95.4	94.4	94.5	93.8	94.4

SAT SCORES

As reported in *The Star Ledger*, “Statewide, 19 high schools achieved an average score higher than 1,300.” The article continued, “Specialized schools with selective enrollment and run by county vocational districts once again dominate the list of highest average scores, taking home the top 12 spots.”

http://www.nj.com/education/2017/04/nj_best_sat_test_scores_2016_high_schools.html

HIGH SCHOOL NORTH

High School North ranked #15 (3rd overall comprehensive high school) with an average SAT score of 1,317.

Reading score: 652

Math score: 665

HIGH SCHOOL SOUTH

High School South ranked #14 (2nd overall comprehensive high school with an average SAT score of 1,321.

Reading score: 654

Math score: 667

ACT

High School South was tied for #12 in NJ for the highest ACT score. In order to understand this ranking, we need to be aware that the top ten schools are all application-based public academies and selective-based county Vo-Tech programs. High School North tied for #19 behind several other public academies, Princeton, Tenafly, Chatham, and Milburn High Schools.

If we remove all public academies from the list, High School South would be ranked #1 and High School North would be ranked #6 for comprehensive public high schools in NJ for the ACT for the 2015 – 2016 school year (the last data set released).

COLLEGE ACCEPTANCE

The following list represents the TOP 100 schools to which students applied over the past five years by High School North and High School South students. Between the 2012–2013 school year and the 2016–2017 school year, WW-P students applied to 1,000 colleges and universities. Applications are tracked through Naviance and accurately represent applications submitted. The acceptance and attendance rates are

self-reported numbers by students. Therefore, it is possible that the numbers of accepted and/or attending are not 100% accurate. However, these numbers provide us with a strong sense of the colleges and universities to which our students are applying.

College/University	2012 - 2013 through 2016 - 2017			2016 - 2017		
	Applied	Accepted	Attending	Applied	Accepted	Attending
American University	210	105	26	36	14	1
Barnard College	106	13	5	24	0	0
Binghamton University	81	43	5	15	6	0
Boston College	311	56	14	63	15	3
Boston University	758	237	32	161	48	5
Brandeis University	97	30	5	16	5	1
Brown University	404	24	11	78	3	1
Bucknell University	106	27	5	23	6	0
California Institute of Technology	110	13	7	25	3	1
University of California, Berkeley	411	87	29	99	19	8
University of California, Los Angeles	300	57	8	72	14	1
University of California, San Diego	143	64	6	30	12	0
Carnegie Mellon University	701	169	68	147	29	9
Case Western Reserve University	337	130	33	77	24	6
University of Chicago	358	28	18	61	6	5
Columbia University	521	16	8	94	1	1
University of Connecticut	238	139	11	37	16	2
Cornell University	807	110	64	158	24	13
Dartmouth College	208	15	5	52	2	1
University of Delaware	524	271	62	88	34	5
Drexel University	678	490	53	106	72	9
Duke University	369	35	15	67	6	4
Emory University	337	81	26	75	9	2
Fairleigh Dickinson University - Metropolitan Campus	105	62	12	13	10	3
Fordham University	256	120	13	42	19	0
The George Washington University	350	119	30	78	18	4
Georgetown University	198	23	9	38	4	1
Georgia Institute of Technology	401	112	30	92	14	1

	2012 - 2013 through 2016 - 2017			2016 - 2017		
College/University	Applied	Accepted	Attending	Applied	Accepted	Attending
Harvard University	274	6	4	50	1	1
Hofstra University	108	74	10	16	10	0
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign	496	257	70	118	59	18
Indiana University at Bloomington	210	135	37	58	37	10
Ithaca College	142	93	10	16	10	2
James Madison University	165	79	13	23	10	1
Johns Hopkins University	507	45	21	103	7	4
Kean University	145	62	9	34	18	6
Lafayette College	122	43	12	18	7	3
Lehigh University	334	60	17	56	5	0
Loyola University Maryland	101	67	9	18	15	0
University of Maryland, College Park	791	407	78	172	81	17
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	261	25	15	50	3	1
University of Massachusetts, Amherst	242	158	13	45	29	2
Mercer County Community College	291	218	309	60	38	51
University of Miami	205	89	15	32	13	3
University of Michigan	783	145	40	178	24	7
Monmouth University	146	74	4	42	24	1
Montclair State University	318	136	32	68	29	8
New Jersey Institute of Technology	390	237	50	91	61	11
The College of New Jersey	932	399	101	222	81	19
New York University	922	272	98	184	49	21
The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	346	33	6	71	3	1
Northeastern University	621	251	47	141	63	17
Northwestern University	363	21	8	1	0	0
University of Notre Dame	84	7	2	16	1	0
Pace University, New York City	81	47	4	25	17	1
Pennsylvania State University	873	556	73	171	103	14
University of Pennsylvania	659	31	18	118	6	5
University of Pittsburgh	552	378	57	136	80	14

	2012 - 2013 through 2016 - 2017			2016 - 2017		
College/University	Applied	Accepted	Attending	Applied	Accepted	Attending
Princeton University	614	55	46	130	12	12
Purdue University	314	165	25	83	40	6
Quinnipiac University	135	91	6	31	21	3
Ramapo College of New Jersey	124	51	9	23	11	2
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute	166	80	8	34	18	2
University of Rhode Island	118	67	11	15	4	0
Rice University	187	18	4	43	2	0
Rider University	383	245	47	85	57	12
Rochester Institute of Technology	85	48	8	22	7	0
University of Rochester	111	40	5	16	5	1
Rowan University	418	234	54	106	56	12
Rutgers University-New Brunswick	2530	1940	635	546	365	125
Rutgers University-Newark	172	112	37	50	28	6
Saint Joseph's University	84	60	14	20	16	3
Seton Hall University	172	107	14	54	36	5
University of the Sciences in Philadelphia	89	65	12	11	7	1
University of Southern California	233	35	8	48	3	0
Stanford University	199	5	2	39	2	0
Stevens Institute of Technology	207	78	18	55	24	7
Stockton University	149	50	10	31	11	3
Stony Brook University	214	114	4	50	23	1
Swarthmore College	109	8	5	26	2	2
Syracuse University	287	120	21	56	22	1
Temple University	386	211	38	90	45	6
The University of Texas, Austin	182	49	19	58	16	8
The Ohio State University	210	95	21	49	21	2
Towson University	116	68	5	14	6	0
Tulane University	87	43	6	14	5	0
Tufts University	285	30	11	52	5	3
Vanderbilt University	153	24	5	31	4	1
University of Vermont	102	73	17	18	11	4
Villanova University	298	106	22	73	14	2
Virginia Tech	124	60	13	36	20	5
University of Virginia	292	39	6	71	10	2

College/University	2012 - 2013 through 2016 - 2017			2016 - 2017		
	Applied	Accepted	Attending	Applied	Accepted	Attending
Wake Forest University	108	11	5	18	3	1
Washington University in St. Louis	220	20	8	42	4	0
West Chester University of Pennsylvania	97	55	14	32	22	7
Wellesley College	87	16	7	18	3	2
College of William and Mary	119	33	14	32	4	1
William Paterson University of New Jersey	138	75	5	17	9	1
University of Wisconsin, Madison	115	33	7	32	4	0
Yale University	270	14	8	50	1	0

MIDTERM and FINAL EXAMS

In the 2015-2016 school year, I stated that we had “eliminated” midterm and final exams. I regret the use of the word “eliminate” as it set off a negative discourse on this change. While we removed exams periods, all academic departments continue to have quarterly exams and common assessments that are cumulative in nature.

This change was driven to remove the impact that a singular high stakes assessment could have on a student’s grades, which could contribute to a negative impact on the final grade. Midterm and final exams each were weighted as 10 percent of a student’s final score. In effect, this change simply shifted the weight of the exams into the 2nd and 4th quarter grades.

Given that final exams were administered at the very end of the school year, teachers were unable to provide feedback to students beyond the grade. Now students are demonstrating their learning during the quarterly exams and common assessments and teachers are able to give students more accurate and timely feedback to inform their progress and learning in the class. We continue to use feedback from quarterly and common assessments to inform teaching and learning.

DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PILOT PROGRAM

In September, the West Windsor–Plainsboro Regional School District Board of Education unanimously voted to support a pilot program in dual language immersion. The pilot will take place in two kindergarten classrooms beginning in the 2018-2019

school year. In dual immersion programs, students learn content through both English and the target language, both of which are aligned with the District's curriculum, and integrate academic content and language acquisition. The pilot will be offered in Chinese and Spanish, with student and parent interest ultimately determining whether or not the program runs. We believe that students will benefit with enhanced cognitive skills, improved academic performance, and higher second language proficiency. Further, research has shown this model to be highly successful at not only teaching grade-level content but also at developing impressive levels of language proficiency. Ultimately, a Dual Language Immersion Program aligns with the district mission, is an action step toward our strategic goal of Global Citizenship supports the 21st Century Competencies and provides substantial intellectual, academic, and life benefits to our students at minimal cost.

MATH REDESIGN

The redesign of our upper elementary mathematics program is grounded in the belief that ALL learners should have access to rigorous, high-level mathematical content in an environment where risk-taking, deep conceptual understanding, and growth mindset are the norm. To support this philosophical belief, we have introduced a Math Workshop approach to our instruction.

Math Workshop structures provide the following: opportunities for math talk; support building math communities where risk-taking is the norm; and provide opportunities for students to work individually, in partnerships, in small groups, and as a whole class to explore tasks and center activities that foster meaningful engagement. Math Workshop provides structures for the teacher to facilitate learning and supports students' reflections on their learning.

Depending on the content and goal, teachers may use whole group rich tasks, station or center activities (focused on a particular skill and designed for small group or partnership work), or work with individual students. Students begin and end the lesson together providing opportunities for students to reflect on their learning. The teacher utilizes ongoing assessments to continuously monitor and meet the needs of every student in the class, and to ensure they are appropriately challenged and engaged.

The change to Math Workshop was grounded in the belief that many high ability and high-performing math students were underserved. Essentially, too many students were being denied access to rigorous mathematics instruction. The programmatic shift that began during the 2016-2017 school year and has EXPANDED the number

of students who now have access to accelerated and enriched math by including ALL 4th graders.

This year the expansion continues. Based on the belief that the end of Grade 5 is a more developmentally appropriate time at which to identify students' eligibility to participate in an accelerated mathematics sequence, all regular education 4th and 5th grade students will be provided with an enriched and rigorous mathematics curriculum in the classroom during the 2017-18 school year. In late fall, WW-P will unveil the criteria for entrance into Grade 6 Honors and Accelerated Mathematics, which will begin in 6th grade for the 2018 – 2019 school year. As previously discussed in fall 2015, we believe 25-30 percent of current 5th grade students will become eligible for the Honors and Accelerated Mathematics program.

Because of the typically high level of student achievement in WW-P, it is not unreasonable to expect larger numbers of students in our advanced mathematics courses than in most other districts. While some community members state that advanced or accelerated mathematics should be limited to only a few, we know that our students are capable of incredible levels of mathematical thinking. Advanced mathematics should not be for an exclusive few. Based on evaluations of historical data, we believe we have underserved too many students for too long in advanced mathematics, and we will not allow the prevailing view by a vocal minority to limit the opportunities of our students. Our students have amazing capabilities and one of our many roles as educators is to eliminate the constraints that some would like to place on others. Our role is to provide greater opportunity for all of our students.

The Honors and Accelerated Mathematics sequence will progress through high school with the following offerings:

- 6th grade: Pre-Algebra Honors and Accelerated
- 7th grade: Algebra I Honors and Accelerated
- 8th grade: Algebra II Honors and Accelerated
- 9th grade: Geometry Honors and Accelerated
- 10th Grade: Pre-Calculus Honors and Accelerated
- 11th Grade: AP Calculus BC
- 12th Grade: Multivariable Calculus Honors

SELECTION OF STUDENT HONORS 2016-2017

Take a look at highlights of the 2016 – 2017 school year, showcasing student honors.

- Thirteen High School North and 21 High School South students were named finalists in the 2017 National Merit Scholarships Competition.
- WW-P high school honors: 47 National Merit Scholars Semifinalists; 45 National Merit Scholars Finalists; 143 National Merit Scholars Commendation; 156 A.P. Scholars; 103 A.P. Scholars with Honors; 252 A.P. Scholars with Distinction; 77 A.P. National Scholars.
- Ninety-two percent of high school students had scores of 3 or higher on Advanced Placement tests; 985 high school students took 2,279 A.P. tests. (15-16)
- In 2016-2017 1,096 high school students took 2,528 A.P. tests.
- Results from recent national tests show excellent scores on the SAT:
 - 616/649/622: WW-P Critical Reading/Math/Writing
 - 495/514/492: New Jersey Critical Reading/Math/Writing
- WW-P students scored very well on the ACT:
 - 27.9/29.0/28.1/27.1/28.2: WW-P English/Math/Reading/Sci/Composite
 - 22.7/23.3/23.5/22.5/23.1: New Jersey English/Math/Reading/Sci/Composite
- The High School North Science Olympiad teams competed in two Science Olympiad Invitational tournaments: The two teams placed First and Third at the Tiger Invitational, and placed First and Fifth at the Princeton University Science Olympiad Tournament. Also, the HSN students won numerous individual medals.
- Four High School North students were inducted to the German Honor Society. The Delta Epsilon Phi National Honor Society for High School Students of German recognizes the outstanding academic achievement of learners of German.
- One of the two New Jersey students selected as delegates to the 55th Annual United States Senate Youth Program is a senior at High School North. Each year, this extremely competitive, merit-based program brings 104 of the most outstanding high school students to Washington, DC, for an intensive week-long study of the federal government and the people who lead it.
- The High School South Science Club had major successes across its competitive activities this year: the High School South Science Olympiad team competed at the 2017 National Science Olympiad Tournament and finished at 20th Place; the HSS Science Bowl and National Ocean Science Bowl Teams placed 13th in their respective national tournaments; and the High School South Science Olympiad Team won the championship in the New Jersey Science Olympiad State Finals.

- The High School South Model United Nations (MUN) team won the award of Outstanding Medium Delegation at the Rutgers University Model United Nations. The event hosted nearly 1,500 students from around the nation and represented the top MUN programs in the state. Also, the High School South MUN team captured the Best Small Delegation Award at the Model United Nations Conference held at Princeton University. This event hosted nearly 1,000 attendees, including local and international schools, and represented some of the most competitive MUN programs in the country.
- A High School South student won Paper Mill Playhouse’s Rising Star Award for Outstanding Performance in a Featured Role and another High School South student received the Janet Sovey Scholarship, one of five scholarships awarded to outstanding individual students who plan to continue studying theater in college. The Rising Star Award is a statewide competition and was created in 1996 to encourage and reward exceptional accomplishments in the production of high school musical theatre.
- A High School South junior received the “National Center for Women in Computing National Award” for Aspirations in Computing. Given to only 50 students nationwide, the award honors high school women who are active and interested in computing and technology.
- Three High School South students received the overall First Place and the Business Award at HackNYU Competition. The students were honored for their Amazon Alexa-powered restaurant ordering system called “Expediter.”
- At its debut, the robot for the FIRST Robotics Team 1923: The MidKnight Inventors took home the Excellence in Engineering Award and received District Event Champions award. Students on the team are from High School North and High School South. At earlier competitions, the team took home the Entrepreneurship Award, and District Event Champions.
- The High School South Science Bowl Team placed First in the New Jersey Regional Ocean Sciences Bowl tournament.
- A student from High School South and a student from High School North were honored by the Mercer County Professional Counselors Association for outstanding demonstration of kindness, respect, and service to others. This 31-year-old tradition has created an event for these young adults to gather and hear about what their peers are doing to encourage others, as well as spread cheer and compassion in various aspects of their lives.
- Ten students from High School North and High School South were honored by the New Jersey Affiliate of the National Center for Women & Information Technology at its Aspirations in Computing Award Ceremony. The National Center for Women & Information Technology (NCWIT) honors young

women at the high school level for their computing-related achievements and interests.

- Twelve middle school and 18 high school students participated in the state National History Day National Competition. In the national competition, students were honored with a Gold Medal, Bronze Medal, and Special Award for Individual Documentary.
- Forty-one high school students and 34 middle school students were accepted into the Central Jersey Music Educators Association (CJMEA) Ensembles.
- The Community Middle School Girls Robotics Automotons Silver team members were the recipients of the Project Runner-Up Award. This honor qualified the team to advance to the FIRST LEGO League (FLL) State Competition.
- The Community Middle School Science Olympiad Team received 11th Place at the National Science Olympiad Tournament.
- A Community Middle School student participated in the national MathCounts competition, along with three other New Jersey students. The CMS student placed fourth in the nation. Also, nine Community Middle School and Grover Middle School students were tied for First Place in the regional MathCounts Competition and attended the state competition.
- High School and middle school students were honored at the Future Problem Solving International Championship, placing first, second and third. Also, a First Place honor went to the Community Middle School team NuYu.
- A Grade 8 student in the Grover Middle School PRISM program was invited to share her award-winning National History Day documentary with two academic groups in the state. Her presentation, “The Wizard of Menlo Park Casts a Spell Upon Our Ears: Thomas Edison’s Phonograph and the Evolution of Sound Recording,” was recognized at the New Jersey Historical Commission Meeting and at the New Jersey Studies Academic Alliance Meeting. In addition, this work was honored at New Jersey History Day Program.
- Students in the Grade 8 Grover Middle School Band and Orchestra were participants in the recent "Music in the Parks Festival" and achieved First Place with Superior Ratings in their respective categories. Also, the Grover Middle School Grade 8 Band was awarded the Best Overall Junior High/Middle School Band Award and the Grade 8 Orchestra received the Best Overall Junior High/Middle School Orchestra Award.
- WW-P has been named a “Best Community for Music Education” by the NAMM Foundation for the last three school years.
- During the 2016-2017 our music program had:
 - Two students accepted to the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) Eastern Division Orchestra.

- One student accepted to NJAJE Region II Jazz Band.
- Twenty Five students accepted to NJMEA High School All State Ensembles.
- Twelve students accepted to NJMEA Intermediate All State Orchestra.
- Wicoff Elementary School was awarded Bronze Certificate by Sustainable Jersey for Schools.
- Over 60 students were honored by the African American Parent Support Group (AAPSG) at its 2017 Accolades Program.
- A Grade 5 student at Millstone River School is the Middlesex County winner in the Conserve Wildlife Foundation of New Jersey's Art and Essay Contest. The winning essay was selected from over 2,500 entries across the state.
- A Village School Grade 5 student was named a regional finalist in the Healthy Comfort Foods State Challenge. She was among 40 regional finalists throughout the country.
- The West Windsor-Plainsboro Education Foundation hosted its first-ever Innovation Fair showcasing innovative and creative projects or talents in the areas of science, technology, engineering, the arts, and math (STEAM), or any other area where a student had an innovative project or talent to exhibit or demonstrate. Experiences also included an art gallery, music and dance performances, science, technology, and engineering exhibits.
- May 2017 served as the district month of service, which was organized by the district Volunteer Committee. Throughout May, schools, grade levels, teams, departments, parents, and teachers successfully engaged in community service activities supporting HomeFront and collected a record number of donations.

HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETICS

As with academic and co-curricular achievements, the students of WW-P are a force to be reckoned with on their respective fields, courts, pools, tracks, diamonds, and mats. In WW-P, we believe that participation in athletics contributes to physical, social, and emotional health, as well as to the development of social competencies and moral values. Cooperation and competition are essential skills emphasized in our athletic programs. Each year, numerous athletic awards are bestowed on individuals and teams by their respective conferences, divisions, and leagues. The following charts showcase a sampling of awards (NOTE: the numerous honorable mention, all-CVC, all-Mercer, all-Conference winners are not included here.)

SPORTSMANSHIP AWARDS

<i>Fall 2016 Sportsmanship Winners</i>
<u>Football</u>
WWP South – Valley
WWP North – Patriot

<i>Winter 2016 – 2017 Sportsmanship Winners</i>
<u>Boys Basketball</u>
WWP South – Colonial
<u>Girls Basketball</u>
WWP South – Colonial
WWP North – Valley
<u>Boys Swimming</u>
WWP North – Valley
<u>Wrestling</u>
WWP South – Colonial
WWP North – Valley

<i>Spring 2017 Sportsmanship Winners</i>
<u>Baseball</u>
WWP South – Colonial
<u>Boys Lacrosse</u>
WWP South – Colonial
WWP North – Valley
<u>Girls Lacrosse</u>
WWP South – Valley
WWP North – Colonial
<u>Golf</u>
WWP South – Colonial
WWP North – Valley

HS SOUTH ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

FALL 2016	WINTER 2016-2017	SPRING 2017
<p><u>Boys Soccer</u></p> <p>Three members named to all-state team.</p>	<p><u>Winter Track</u></p> <p>Girls: 2nd Place Mercer County Championship Boys: 3rd Place Mercer County Champions</p>	<p><u>Boys Tennis</u></p> <p>MCT Champions in 4 of 5 flights One member named an All American. Newark Academy Invitational – 1st team championship Division champs Sectional finalist</p>
<p><u>Girls Soccer</u></p> <p>Two players named to Mercer 33.</p>	<p><u>Swimming</u></p> <p>Division champs (boys and girls) MCT Champs (boys) Sectional title (boys)</p>	<p><u>Boys Golf</u></p> <p>Division Champs.</p>
<p><u>Boys Cross Country</u></p> <p>JV placed 2nd in the JV state championship.</p>	<p><u>Wrestling</u></p> <p>One member attained 1st at MCT, 2nd at Districts – 100 career wins.</p>	<p><u>Girls Golf</u></p> <p>Division Champs.</p>
<p><u>Girls Cross Country</u></p> <p>Divisional Champs MCT Champs</p>	<p><u>Ice Hockey (HSS/HSN)</u></p> <p>One member attained 112 HS career points. Another member attained 68 HS career points.</p>	<p><u>Spring Track</u></p> <p>Mercer County Champion for 110 Hurdles. Girls - Colonial Division Champions Girls - 1st Place Mercer County Championships</p>
	<p><u>Diving (HSS/HSN)</u></p> <p>One member attained 7th in states and 2nd in MCT.</p>	<p><u>Boys Volleyball</u></p> <p>Division Champs One member named 1st team all-conference, all area and Times player of the year.</p>
	<p><u>Fencing</u></p> <p>Sectional champs – Boys Sabre</p>	<p><u>Girls Lacrosse</u></p> <p>One member named Trentonian Unsung Player Award.</p>
	<p><u>Boys Basketball</u></p> <p>One member attained 1000 point club</p>	

HS NORTH ATHLETIC ACHIEVEMENTS

FALL 2016	WINTER 2016-2017	SPRING 2017
<p><u>Boys Soccer</u></p> <p>Division Championship One member named All-State.</p>	<p><u>Girls Basketball</u></p> <p>MCT Championship</p> <p>One student named MVP 2017 MCT Tournament, CVC Lifetime Achievement.</p> <p>One member named CVC Player of the Year, 1st Team All-CVC and All Area</p>	<p><u>Boys Tennis</u></p> <p>Division Championship</p>
<p><u>Girls Soccer</u></p> <p>Two members named to Mercer 33 and All-State Award.</p> <p>One member named to the Mercer Hall of Fame.</p>	<p><u>Fencing</u></p> <p>One member named to Girl's Sabre All-State #2 (All State Team I).</p> <p>One member named to Girl's Epee All-State #6 (All-State Team II).</p> <p>One member named to Girl's Epee – All-State #10 (All-State Team III).</p>	<p><u>Spring Track</u></p> <p>Division Championship MCT Championship NJSIAA Sectional and State Titles</p>
<p><u>Boys Cross Country</u></p> <p>Division Championship</p> <p>Two members named 1st Team All Mercer County.</p>	<p><u>Winter Track</u></p> <p>Sectional Championship –Boys</p>	<p><u>Girls Golf</u></p> <p>All Area Team of the Year MCT Championship</p> <p>Sectional Title</p>
<p><u>Girls Tennis</u></p> <p>Division Championship</p>	<p><u>Diving (HSS/HSN)</u></p> <p>One member attained 7th in states and 2nd in MCT.</p>	<p><u>Boys Golf</u></p> <p>Division Championship</p>
<p><u>Football</u></p> <p>Three members named 1st Team Division/Conference.</p>	<p><u>Ice Hockey (HSS/HSN)</u></p> <p>Noted above.</p>	

REVIEW OF ATHLETIC PROGRAMS

During the 2017–2018 school year the district will form a task force to review athletic programs and offerings. We will engage members of the community through both focus groups and surveys to make assessments regarding future programmatic offerings. The committee will identify concerns, recommend areas of athletic expansion, identify programmatic opportunities, and review facility challenges/needs.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Through the work of our district strategic planning process the “Whole Child” tenets were adopted by the district. Specifically, Goal 3 states, “Recognizing that children need to balance physical, social, emotional, and academic needs, we will maintain a supportive culture and build structures for the health, safety, and well-being of the Whole Child.” We believe that we have a responsibility to develop the “Whole Child.” As such, we will continue to support extra-curricular activities, the arts, music, sports, media centers, and technology. While we have much work to do in the implementation of this strategic goal, I am proud that our school community has adopted its focus.

WHOLE CHILD TENETS: (The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) began the Whole Child Initiative in 2007.)

- Each student enters school **healthy** and learns about and practices a healthy lifestyle.
- Each student learns in an environment that is physically and emotionally **safe** for students and adults.
- Each student is actively **engaged** in learning and is connected to the school and broader community.
- Each student has access to personalized learning and is **supported** by qualified, caring adults.
- Each student is **challenged** academically and prepared for success in college or further study and for employment and participation in a global environment.

PROGRAMS FOCUSED ON SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING (SEL)

Our counseling and teaching staff members are instrumental in providing a warm, welcome, and respectful environment. We strive to provide a school community that

provides safe learning environments that are free from harassment, intimidation, and bullying (HIB). Our staff works to support activities throughout the year with a myriad of programs focused upon conflict resolution, bullying prevention, promoting respect and tolerance, character education, cyber ethics, and cyberbullying. Fulfilling our mission statement and strategic plan requires the collaboration with a variety of partners: parents, community leaders, local and state organizations and agencies, and others. Together, we are collectively responsible for educating ALL children.

MINDFULNESS

As a strategy for addressing stress, the strategic action plan for Goal 3 calls on the district to “Create safe spaces for faculty and students to practice SEL, mindfulness, etc.” What we know is that toxic stress impairs attention, feeling and emotion, sleep, mood regulation and learning readiness. During the 2017-2018 school year we will work to identify mindfulness strategies and practices that could be implemented in our classrooms.

Several key components that will be incorporated into our work will be a focus on the basics of mindfulness meditation. Further, we will work to ensure that any adopted practices serve to cultivate gratitude, kindness, empathy, and compassion.

We are proud of the work that Community Middle School has done to lead us forward in this work. Last school year our CMS Future Problem Solvers (FPS) were named the FPS World Champions. Team NuYu’s mission was to improve the social-emotional well-being of students at CMS by spreading healthy coping strategies to teachers, parents, and students.

Many members of our faculty have begun to utilize mindfulness strategies in their classrooms. Over the next school year our expectation is that we will adopt an SEL framework in order to further support this work.

CAMPAIGN CONNECT

High School South, High School North, Grover Middle School, and Community Middle School all continue to participate with Campaign Connect-New Jersey (CC-NJ). The program is designed to “support New Jersey schools in becoming safer, more supportive, engaging, and inspiring by providing them with the training, tools, and resources to facilitate a team of stakeholders (administrators, faculty, students, parents, and relevant community organizations) through a data-informed, relationship-driven cycle of continuous school improvement.”

DAY OF DIALOGUE

During the last two school years, WW-P has participated in a countywide initiative entitled, “Day of Dialogue.” The Day of Dialogue brought representatives from all high schools in Mercer County, NJ together to engage in a dialogue on race, class, and gender.

The Purpose of the Day of Dialogue was to create a safe sharing and listening space in which we could:

- Learn more about each individual’s perception of diversity
- Learn more about others' perceptions of diversity
- Raise and explore challenging questions
- Begin to create something new, together

I’m proud to say the work has continued. As a county, we have held three events to date with two more planned for the 17-18 school year. Furthermore, Day of Dialogue teams at both HSS and HSN have lead conversations and trainings for students, staff, and community members.

FINAL MESSAGE

The success of the West Windsor–Plainsboro Regional School District is a testament to all students, parents, teachers, administrators, support staff, and community members.

Ensuring that our students will be well-rounded, thoughtful, and dedicated citizens of the world is complex and challenging work. It requires a steadfast commitment to unleashing the brilliance of every child. As such, we are committed to ensuring that our educational program provides students the opportunities to explore their passions. We are responsible for empowering all student voices and assisting them to be agents of their own learning.

Engaging students in deep and meaningful learning, focusing their development and growth on creating a global citizenry, and empowering a populace committed to empathy and social justice is a fundamental responsibility. However, in order to ensure that our students continue to shine, our district must continue to innovate. The complexity and responsibility of educating our students in a challenging and demanding geopolitical climate requires innovation and systemic change. The leaders

of tomorrow must be inspired to serve, to transform, to think deeply, to advance, and to improve our collective future.

Together we remain a beacon of excellence.

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