



ESC NJ Update

The Educational Services Commission of New Jersey

New Jersey's Leader In Shared Services

Congratulations To All ESCNJ Graduates



CLL Student Receives Award



Assistant Superintendent Gary Molenaar's selection as the 2018 Special Education Administrator of the Year included a \$500 award. Principals were encouraged to identify a student deserving of the award. Tyra Johnson, who graduated from CLL this year was nominated by Principal Mary Beth Conley, and received the award from Mr. Molenaar to help defray some costs of transitioning to independent living.

Functional Living Tool Created For ALC

See page 5



See You In 2019!



The Vendor Expo for ESCNJ's Co-op Pricing System members next year is May 15th.

Wellness Committee Completes Annual Report

The ESCNJ Wellness Committee works collaboratively with parents, students, school staff, and community resources to educate students and encourage healthy lifestyle choices.

Chaired by Business Administrator Patrick M. Moran and Coordinated by Secretary to the Business Administrator Sonika Chhugani, the committee includes: Stacy Rieger, ALC; Cindy Borell, BBLC; Meena Pasupathy, CLL; Phyllis DeLucia, PRDS; Chastity Rivera, NAA; Daniel Grothues, Health & PE; Bette Miller, Nurse; William Walsh, NV; Katie Feiles, BBLC Secondary; Sha-Ron Karr, Food Service Staff; and student Germaine Venable.

To review the Wellness Committee report, please visit: http://www.mresc.k12.nj.us/files/_pILVI_Jc6d0a387dd0fb9693745a49013852ec4/Wellness_Committee-Annual_Report.pdf.



BBLC Students Enjoying Summer



Students take a break during the Extended School Year program at BBLC.

Congratulations To Our 2017-2018 Graduates



ACADEMY LEARNING CENTER

GRADUATES

- Jason Andersen
- Sandi Abdelmalak
- Jillian Balmaceda
- Kirolos Di Falla
- Mira Farrell
- Christopher Freeman
- Kacey Kuffner
- Valerie Lorincz
- Tanvee Patel
- Carly Raso
- Michael Romeo
- Charisma Rosa
- Anthony Urena
- Fatima Zaman



CENTER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

(con't)

GRADUATES

- Tyra Johnson
- Daniel Leonarda
- Andrew Lorada
- Thomas McCall
- Bridget McGrath
- Alejanda Murilla
- Jacob Nichols
- Bryant Perez
- Daniel Rivera
- Aashish Samtani
- Katherine Strong
- Jorge Vasquez



BRIGHT BEGINNINGS LEARNING CENTER

MOVING UP AND OVER CEREMONY TO PRDS

- Li'Ahni Arana
- Yoana Amaya
- Jason Diaz
- Adam El-Khettab
- Kimberly Montanez
- Adrian Robinson-Brazziel



NUVIEW ACADEMY

GRADUATE

- Fernando Marcial

MOVING UP

- Yosef Abdou
- Ryan Miller



NUVIEW ACADEMY ANNEX

GRADUATES

- Krzysztof Kazimierski
- Tianna Smith
- Germaine Venable



BBLC/SECONDARY

GRADUATES

- Joel Camarillo-Nieto
- Abdias Colon
- Phoeniz Kaba
- Sagnik Majumdar
- Malaysia Palmer

PISCATAWAY REGIONAL DAY SCHOOL

GRADUATES

- Neyshmarie Avila
- Jorge Class
- Nyle Gardner
- Ketki Kale
- Varun Karra
- Stephany Mangui
- Maria Jennifer Martinez
- Jason Rauch
- Carlos Sanchez
- Minhaz Uddin



CENTER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

GRADUATES

- Meher Arora
- Ramel Cabigas
- Anthony Cameron
- Francisca Escana
- John Escobar



Innovative New Software Available To Transportation Departments

New software offering greater speed and efficiency for school transportation departments is now available through the ESCNJ. The software is the result of a two year collaboration between the Princeton based Artha Systems, an international supplier of business management software, and the ESCNJ.

“The software is unlike anything on the market today for use in school transportation, and will be a tremendous resource for school districts, and welcomed by parents as well,” said Business Administrator Patrick M. Moran on ESCNJ’s Better Together podcast, (www.teachertube.com/audio/new-transportation-software-from-escnj-11537).

“The software incorporates cutting edge, cloud based technology, and will likely have an even greater impact on school transportation than we can even imagine at this point,” said Mr. Moran.

The ESCNJ has been searching for comprehensive school transportation software packages that includes a billing component for several years, Mr. Moran said.

“The combination of our Transportation Coordinator Chris Zarate providing Artha with information about the key transportation issues, and recently hired

Assistant Business Administrator Robert Pietrocola’s IT background took this project across the finish line,” Mr. Moran added.

The software also includes GPS turn-by-turn navigation so drivers can avoid congestion and identify the most efficient routes when picking up or dropping off students from home and school, said Artha Systems Founder and Chief Executive Officer Venku Mandalap, who also appeared on the podcast. Mr. Mandalap said parents would be able to access the software through a phone or computer app to obtain scheduling information, drop off, and pick up points, and a host of other features.

“Parent and vendor portals, and online route bidding are some additional modules included in the software,” Mr. Mandalap said.

Mr. Mandalap said transportation supervisors will be delighted with the functionality of the product.



New software to benefit school transportation is now available through the ESCNJ.

“This software is extremely user friendly,” he said.

“If you can operate a computer, you will have no problem using the software after initial training,” said Mr. Mandalap.

Assistant Business Administrator Robert Pietrocola agreed, adding the ESCNJ will offer training and welcomes the input of end-users.

“The software can be modified as needed, so the training is an opportunity to further understand the conditions faced by the people in the trenches,” said Mr. Pietrocola, also appearing on the podcast.

For additional information about the new software, transportation officials can contact Mr. Moran at pmoran@escnj.k12.nj.us or 732-777-9848 Ext. 3120. •

Visit From New County Superintendent



Mr. Kyle Anderson (L), recently named the Middlesex Interim Executive County Superintendent, following a recent visit with Superintendent Mark J. Finkelstein.

Board Members Appreciated



Dr. Frances Wood, Superintendent of the Somerset Hills Regional School District, and Ms. Yasmin Hernández-Manno, Interim Executive County Superintendent, were honored for their service (2016-2018), at their final Board meeting. Pictured above (L-R) Vice Pres. Bill Petscavage, Supt. Mark J. Finkelstein, Dr. Frances Wood, Ms. Yasmin Hernández-Manno, and Board President Dr. Dale Caldwell.

Rutgers Shares Educational Trends With Board Members



Dr. Clark Chinn, Interim Dean of the Rutgers Graduate School of Education, provided an update on educational trends at a recent Board of Directors meeting. Rutgers has joined the Board in a non-voting capacity for the 2018-2019 school year, and will share information about innovative educational techniques and strategies.

Functional Living Tool Created For ALC

While visiting the Philly Pretzel Factory in Hazlet over winter break last year, ALC Speech and Language Specialist Ann Marie Lusquinos noticed a store coupon stapled to the bag of each customer's order. Thinking that assembling the bags would be an effective functional living skill for students to learn, she asked the store manager if ALC students could provide the service and he agreed.

When trying to implement the project, Mrs. Lusquinos observed some students could not operate a manual stapler, and consequently had difficulty assembling the coupons to the bags. Mrs. Lusquinos subsequently posted an inquiry about needing a modified stapler suitable for students with special needs on ATMakers.org Facebook page.

Commando Technology Group Owner Todd A. Efaw contacted Mrs. Lusquinos about her inquiry. Mr. Efaw, a retired U.S. Air Force aviator and an electrical engineer, is part of the ATMakers group. Mr. Efaw has long envisioned a world where "assistive technology is available to every person to live a productive, independent, and dignified life, without regard to disability". The Assistive Technology Division of the Commando Technology Group conducts research, testing, and evaluation of assistive hardware and software to increase the affordability and availability of these technologies.

After Mrs. Lusquinos and Mr. Efaw connected, the stapling issue was resolved within a week. First, Mr. Efaw installed a mechanism inside an everyday electric stapler to deactivate the automatic stapling function. He then designed an external device that students can touch lightly to activate the stapler, enabling them to complete the project independently.

"Not only did Mr. Efaw make this customized stapler specifically for our students, but he also graciously donated it to ALC as well," said Mrs. Lusquinos.



Kevin Hansen (L) and Nicole Cano can now use a customized stapler designed by Commando Technology Group Owner Mr. Todd A. Efaw and participate in an assembly project for the Philly Pretzel Factory in Hazlet.

A light press of the button and students can activate the custom stapler designed by Commando Technology Group Owner Mr. Todd A. Efaw.



"We are most grateful to Mr. Efaw and the Commando Technology Group for his ingenuity and generosity," Mrs. Lusquinos added.

Welcome Aboard

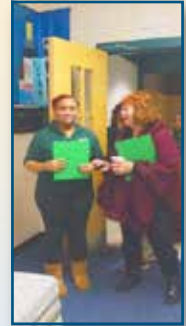
The ESCNJ welcomes first time Board representatives: Dr. Richard Tomko, Superintendent of the Belleville Public Schools in Essex County; Ms. Kathleen Haines, Superintendent of the Clementon Public Schools in Camden County, and Dr. Robert McGarry, Superintendent of the Holmdel Public Schools in Monmouth County. Additionally, we welcome Mrs. Gretchen Dempsey, Superintendent of Somerset Hills Regional in Somerset County, representing the district for the first time.

We are also excited about Rutgers University joining the Board in a non-voting advisory capacity. With 31 Board Members representing seven counties, the vision of statewide representation on the ESCNJ Board of Directors is now a reality.

Video Of Board Member Touring NAA With Students

Like NuView Academy, the NuView Academy Annex (NAA) works with higher functioning students ages 5-21 with behavior management challenges.

When Board Member Beth Moroney visited NAA, the Student Council President accompanied her on a tour of the school. A brief video of the tour, along with NuView Academy footage, can be viewed by clicking: <https://www.teachertube.com/video/school-tour-for-escnj-board-member-474957>.



CLL And NuView Academy Art Displayed



NuView Academy artwork.



CLL and NuView Academy student artwork was on display recently in the Board Conference Room.

BBLC Secondary School Renamed

Following recent approval from the Board, the ESCNJ has changed the name of the Secondary Program at the Bright Beginnings Learning Center to the Future Foundations Academy (FFA). A program for higher functioning students ages 13-21 with Autism Spectrum Disorders, the FFA will remain at its current location on the Piscataway Campus, and expand for the 2019-2020 school year to include 12 additional classrooms presently under construction.

Principal Sandy Giardino can still be reached at 732-339-9331 or sgiardino@escnj.k12.nj.us.

“We will have greater capacity to reinforce productive independent living skills for an increasing number of students,” said Superintendent Mark J. Finkelstein.

Along with core academic and curriculum offerings, the FFA program includes robotics, computer coding, experiential culinary and horticultural courses, and wellness instruction.

A major component of the FFA curriculum is Community-based Instruction (CBI), the research-based method that facilitates participation in life skills experiences including: job sampling, use of public transportation, shopping, meal preparation, house cleaning, and operating common home appliances like toasters, microwave ovens and dishwashers. Behavior management techniques and conflict resolution skills are also part of the curriculum.

The FFA building will also be home to ESCNJ’s Professional Development Academy. Two conference rooms with a 300-seat capacity will be used for PDA programs. The facility will also be available for business and greater community use. •



A rendition of the Future Foundations Academy.



Two conference rooms with a 300-seat capacity will be part of the FFA.



The FFA curriculum includes Community-based Instruction, robotics, computer coding and wellness instruction.

Turning Point Academy Program Established

The ESCNJ has assumed administrative oversight of the educational program housed within the Middlesex County Juvenile Detention Center. The program is now called the Turning Point Academy (TPA) based on the consensus of approximately 50 middle and high school aged youth placed there by the courts.

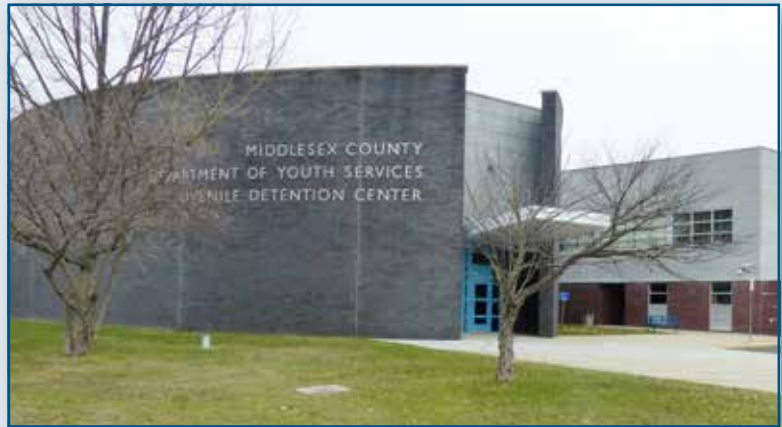
Ms. Phyllis Lewis is Supervisor of the TPA, which includes comprehensive academic and behavior management services for youth from five counties. Overseen by the Middlesex County Board of Chosen Freeholders, the TPA is located at 99 Apple Orchard Lane in North Brunswick. For additional program information, please contact Ms. Lewis at plewis@escnj.k12.nj.us, or 732-398-4405. •



Artwork by some Turning Point Academy students.



George Samra is a History Teacher at the Turning Point Academy.



The Turning Point Academy is housed within the Middlesex County Juvenile Detention Center in North Brunswick.



The Educational Services Commission of New Jersey

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