

# School

Titusville School District Newsletter

# MATTERS



Karen E. Jez  
Superintendent

Winter Issue  
February 2018

## District Comprehensive Planning

By Karen Jez, Superintendent

"Comprehensive planning is a thoughtful, ongoing process that involves multiple stakeholders and seeks to clearly define the mission, vision, and shared values of the Local Educational Agency (LEA) as well as establish realistic goals consistent with those principles, and develop a plan of action based on the organization's capacity for implementation." (PDE <http://www.education.pa.gov/Pages/default.aspx>)

PDE describes the Comprehensive Planning process "as a continuous process used to ensure that all students are achieving at high levels. All LEAs can create better environments so that more students are successful. Continuous planning of Local Educational Agencies is essential to providing increased student performance and quality results. Innovative, exemplary, and research-based programs, coupled with staff development, focused and aligned resources, and public participation in planning, are critical factors in districts that demonstrate continuous growth."

The District's Comprehensive Plan covers several mandated state reports such as the: Special Education Plan, the Professional Education Plan, the Teacher Induction Plan, the Student Services Plan, the Gifted Education Plan, Pre-kindergarten Plan if the school offers it, and the Technology Plan to take advantage of the federal eRate funding opportunities. These seven plans are mandated to be submitted on a three- or six-year cycle to PDE for state approval. Additionally, the Comprehensive Plan includes six sections: Profile, Core Foundations, Assurances, Needs Assessment, Action Planning and Plan Submission. In 2017, the federal requirement to submit an annual report on the goals and accomplishments of School-wide Title I schools was added to the state's PDE Comprehensive Plan web-based tool. All of our elementary schools and the middle school are designated Title I school-wide buildings; therefore, last June the

principals, with Mrs. Amsler's support completed these annual federal reports.

Act 118, effective November 2, 2016, provided school districts a one-year extension to submit to the Secretary of Education for approval a three-year Act 48 Professional Education Plan. Since the PD plan is embedded within the Comprehensive Plan, the entire comp plan was also delayed by one year for submission. Titusville Area School District is a Phase 3 district and our plan is required to be submitted by November 30, 2018. Phase 3 school districts' (TASD) Special Education Plan is required to be submitted following board approval and a 30-day public review period on May 1, 2018.

### Strategic Design

It is time once again to review and update the mission, vision and goals of the District for the next three- to six-year cycle. The District will establish objectives for improving student performance based on a vision of a preferred future for our schools. This work will be completed by the Administration together with the Board of School Directors and a District Steering Committee comprised of community and business members, parents, students, and other district representatives.

Although attaining high levels of student performance is every educational institution's primary goal, understanding the process by which those results are achieved - or not achieved - is equally important. A school's effectiveness must extend beyond the measures of student performance highlighted in government rankings or standings published in national and regional magazines. It must also take into account factors such as:

1. Quality and continuity of the school's leadership and governance
2. Condition of school facilities
3. Finances and fiscal stability
4. Effectiveness of student services
5. Health and safety
6. Staffing
7. Long-range planning

### Inside this issue:

Comprehensive Plan	1
THS Blood Drives	2
School Directors	2
PSSA Testing Dates	3
Main Street Rocks!	3
Making an Impact with Our Youngest Learners	4
Families Engage in and Support Learning	5



### School Directors

Kevin J. O'Neill  
(President)

Jack D. Roberts  
(Vice President)

Richard E. Skinner, Jr.  
(Secretary)

James Y. Roeder  
(Treasurer)

Members:  
James E. Come  
Lynn J. Cressman  
Charlene Eggleston  
Carol Shaffer  
Jean M. Spence

## THS Student Blood Drives

Did you know that someone in the U.S. needs blood every two seconds?

Whether the blood is used to help an accident victim, an organ donor recipient, or a patient with cancer, more than 38,000 blood donations are needed in hospitals around the country every day. This could be a friend, a relative, or a total stranger but either way, helping someone in need is a great feeling! This is something every high school student has a chance to do during their time at THS. In cooperation with the physical education staff, Titusville High School offers four blood drives throughout the school year, two by the Community Blood Bank of Erie and two by the Central Blood Bank of Pittsburgh.

Along with the rewarding feeling that comes with donating blood, many people are anxious or nervous about donating. The number one excuse given for not donating blood is fear. Feeling scared is normal, but knowing what to expect can alleviate the fear. To help educate the students about what to expect when donating, a representative from either blood bank comes in and speaks to the students. They discuss the importance of blood donation, what to expect when donating, and tips for a pleasant donation experience.

The presentation not only educates students, but also inspires them to donate. In fact, our first blood drive of the year produced 45 units of lifesaving blood to help the people in our community. Another incentive for students is that both blood banks offer scholarship money to the schools who donate the most throughout the year. This money is put into a general scholarship fund to help students in our district who are continuing their education.

Although the blood drives at THS are supported primarily by students, community donors are welcome. Donating blood is a great way to support our students because all the units collected that day add to our scholarship fund.

For those interested, the blood drives scheduled this year are February 22nd, and May 9th from 8:30am to 1:30pm in the high school board room. Walk-ins are welcome provided the staff can accommodate everyone.

## Welcoming TASD School Board Directors



School Directors (L-R) seated: Char Eggleston, Lynn Cressman, Jean Spence, Carol Shaffer; standing: Jack Roberts, Jim Come, Jim Roeder, Rick Skinner and Kevin O'Neill

### *Re-elected and Newly-elected Board Members Join Board at December Reorganization Meeting*

At the December 4, 2017, school board reorganization meeting, five school directors took their oaths of office and officially joined the Titusville Area School District Board of School Directors. Re-elected in the November general election were Lynn J. Cressman (2-year term) and Kevin J. O'Neill (4-year term). Also joining the board for four-year terms each are newly elected board members: James E. Come, Charlene A. Eggleston, and James Y. Roeder.

Officers were elected/appointed at the reorganization meeting, they are:

President: Kevin O'Neill  
 Vice President: Jack Roberts  
 Secretary: Richard Skinner, Jr.  
 Treasurer: James Roeder

Superintendent Karen Jez welcomed the new members and expressed her appreciation for their willingness to serve on the board of directors. She noted that school board members play an important role in supporting the success of school operations, and their time and dedication to address the numerous educational, financial, governmental, and legal issues that come before the board cannot be understated.

Outgoing school directors, recognized at the November meeting, include Timothy G. Harger, Ronald G. Lytle, and Dwight S. Proper. The outgoing members each received a certificate of appreciation presented on behalf of the school district and board of school directors.

Share this newsletter available on our website:  
[www.gorockets.org](http://www.gorockets.org) under district information tab

Blood Drives continued

So many lives are touched every day by individuals who take time out of their schedules to donate blood. We are proud of our students who make it a point to help others by giving the gift of blood.



## Pennsylvania System of School Assessments

### PSSA Testing in 2018

All students in grades 3-8 will take the Pennsylvania System of School Assessments (PSSAs). The testing windows are as follows:

- **English Language Arts - April 9-13, 2018**
- **Mathematics - April 16-20, 2018**
- **Science - April 23-27, 2018**
- **Make-Up - April 30-May 4, 2018**

Titusville High School will be participating in the Keystone Exams. The Keystone Exam testing window will be on the following dates:

- **Spring: May 14 -25, 2018**
- **Summer: July 30-August 3, 2018**

Student attendance is especially important during this testing window. All students will be included in the assessment, except for a few students who meet specific criteria. Parents and guardians may review the assessments by making arrangements with the School Assessment Coordinator at each school in the District. In order to view the exams, Confidentiality Agreements must be signed, and no copies of the assessment or notes about assessment items will be permitted to leave the school. If after reviewing the test parents/guardians find the test to be in conflict with their religious belief and wish their student(s) to be excused from the test, parents/guardians must provide a written request that states the objection to the Superintendent of Schools.

The Titusville Area School District takes a great deal of pride in our student performance. To prepare for the test, it is important for students to get plenty of sleep the night before the test, eat a good breakfast and encouraged to do their best. If at all possible, parents are asked not to schedule appointments during the testing period as there is a specific amount of time for testing. Once students leave the session they are not able to come back and continue. Thus, every missing response would be considered as an incorrect answer/response.

Again, student attendance is extremely important during the year as well as this testing window. You can access school assessment data at:  
[www.paschoolperformance.org](http://www.paschoolperformance.org).



Questions?  
Contact:  
Larry Rondinelli, T ASD  
Assessment Coordinator  
[lrondinelli@gorockets.org](mailto:lrondinelli@gorockets.org)  
or call (814) 827-2715



### Main Street Elementary

#### School-Wide Positive Behavior Support

*By Stephanie Keebler, Principal*

Our team wants to take a moment to update you on our School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) program at Main Street Elementary School. After signing the commitment to fidelity agreement with the Pennsylvania Positive Behavior Support Network (PaPBS), our faculty and staff began this initiative at the start of the 2016-17 school year. It is ongoing, and the purpose is to clarify behavioral expectations, reduce incidences of misbehavior, and celebrate the great choices that our students routinely make when it comes to their behavior.

It is shaping up to be a great 2017-18 school year! Here are some highlights from the first and second quarters:

- 8,208 “You Rock” tickets were handed out as of January 16, 2018. These are given by an adult in the building when they see students demonstrating appropriate behavior. We have 269 students in our school so that means an average of 30.5 tickets per student earned so far this year. Another way of looking at it is 94 tickets handed out per school day. That’s a lot of great choices!
- 225 of our 269 students have not received a single office referral for discipline (known by the students as “pink forms”) during the first and second quarters. That means 84% of the students at Main Street were consistently doing the right thing. Of the 44 students that did receive a referral in the first and second quarters, only 2 students had more than two referrals. The students are making great choices and learning quickly to avoid repeating bad choices.
- We celebrated all of this fantastic behavior with a surprise Fall Festival to reward the students on the morning of Friday, October 27th. They had a fun time doing relay races, creating scarecrows, and getting their faces painted.

*Continued on page 6*

# 4 *Making an Impact with Our Youngest Learners*

By: Diane Robbins, Principal of ECLC

The Pennsylvania Principals Association along with the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, the Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators, the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials, the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools and the Pennsylvania Association of Intermediate Units are working to create videos focusing on outstanding educational programs for Pennsylvania public school students.

According to Dr. Joseph H. Clapper, Assistant Executive Director of the PA Principals Association, they received hundreds of submissions. The Titusville Area School District's Early Childhood Learning Center (ECLC) was selected as a school that is making an impact in early childhood education. On Monday, February 5, 2018, Dr. Clapper and a videographer came to visit the ECLC to see the programming that is available for 4 and 5 year olds within the school district. While they were in the school, they visited classrooms, spoke with children, teachers, parents, and administration to learn how the school provides quality early childhood education to the district's youngest students. Speaking with a wide array of people, Dr. Clapper was able to get a clear picture of the programming at the ECLC from very diverse perspectives.

The district's goal for early childhood learning is to provide a rich array of experiences that nurture student success and prepare children and families for a positive beginning to school. The ECLC program ensures each child attains the skills necessary to develop the whole self, including social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development.



The K4 (4 year old) program started in 1982, and full day kindergarten (K5) began in 2004 which has been funded primarily through the Pennsylvania Department of Education Accountability Grant. The district opened the Early Childhood Learning Center in 1991 demonstrating support and dedication to appropriate early childhood learning experiences.

There is a strong emphasis on language development and multi-sensory learning tied to kinesthetic motion. Children are active participants in the learning process and are well on their way to becoming readers and writers. This is supported by data collected from DIBELS, indicating learners consistently leave kindergarten being 95% to 98% benchmarked. This success is due, in part, to the quality of the K4 program preparing children for entry into kindergarten. Over the years, kindergarteners enter kindergarten between 75% and 80% benchmarked. The curriculum offered by the school district is aligned to the PA early learning standards.

The ECLC's early childhood programs incorporate daily Physical Education that promotes and supports brain-based learning. Within the classrooms, the teachers and children are supported by a Title 1 teacher and aide, Learning Support teacher, Guidance Counselor, Speech therapist and classroom aides.

More recently, PreK Counts funds have been used to provide full-day experiences for a third of the District's K4 students.

These funds have enabled children to come to the K4 program that live in the outlying rural areas of the District. Cuts in funding would impact the affordability of a quality early childhood program. Many of our at-risk population would not have the opportunity to build a strong foundation for learning prior to kindergarten without state funding.

Dr. Clapper shared that the video being created will highlight how Titusville's Early Childhood Learning Center is making a positive impact on the youngest learners within the district. Once the video is produced and approved, it will be shared with Pennsylvania lawmakers and Governor Wolfe.

Upon leaving the ECLC, Dr. Clapper was excited about the opportunities that Titusville is able to afford its students and was eager to share the final video not only with lawmakers, but other people across the state. Once the video is finalized it will be posted on the district's website.

## DATES TO REMEMBER 2017-2018 School Year

No School Prof. Day	March 16
Easter Break	March 30-April 2
No School Act 80	April 20
No School Prof. Day Prom	May 4
Memorial Day	May 28
Last Day School	June 7
Graduation	June 8

## Family Fun Night Photos



## Comprehensive Plan

*Continued from page 1*

All of these factors directly contribute to student performance. School reform takes time, often more time than the tenure of the school's leadership. Schools that develop comprehensive plans for improvement through a strategic design have a road map for long-term improvement that withstands the test of time, including changes in board guidance and administrative leadership. "Improvement has to come from within each school, from committed individuals, including board members and administrators, who are closest to the problems and best equipped to solve them" (MSA, 2012).

To that end, in the near future we will be reaching out to our community members asking for input and participation in the strategic design process and meetings. If you have a desire to be a part of this important work, please contact the Superintendent's office 827-2715.

In closing, you are encouraged to read the current 2014 – 2018 Comprehensive Plan to understand the work of the schools and the District as we prepare for the future, because "Educating children is the most important thing our community does!"

References: 2012 The Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools; 3624 Market St., Philadelphia, PA .  
2018 Pennsylvania Department of Education website;  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Harrisburg, PA

## *Families Engage and Support Learning*

By Stacey McDonald, Title I Reading Specialist

Throughout the year, the whole school is invited to attend five reading nights at the ECLC, and we ask that families commit to attending all five nights. These events have been going on for eight years.

We have two different sessions, one for K4 children and one for K5 children. The goal of this program is to help parents better understand the skills that are being taught in the classroom and provide fun ways to further develop those skills at home. It is a fun night for everyone and the students really enjoy the special one-on-one time with their parents. We have an overall theme for the year and individual themes for each night. This year the program is called *Splish, Splash, Read* and the beach is our main theme.

In October, we had *Hula in Hawaii* with a very talented, local hula hooper to kick off the event. Parents of K4 children learned about the importance of rhyming, listening skills, alphabet recognition, and how the PALS scores are used. The K5 parents were informed about the DIBELS assessment, letter fluency, and beginning sounds.

In November, it was *Surf's Up* which incorporated some awesome surfing skills by Mrs. McDonald and Ms. Proper. The K4 group practiced the phonological skills of words in a sentence and syllables and the K5 group did Phoneme segmentation.

On February 8th, we went on a search for *Buried Treasure*. We discussed onset rime with K4 parents and nonsense word fluency with K5 parents.

In March we will have *Shark Attack*. During the fourth session of our reading series we like to focus on transitional skills that the students will need as they progress to the next grade level. The final program of the year will be a *Beach Party* featuring local band "Necessary Experience".

At each reading night, the students leave with a book, an educational game, and prizes. We also coordinate with classes at the high school. Mrs. McFarland's students provide a delicious, theme-based treat for the children and help manage the classroom activities and babysitting. Mr. Uriah Sampson provides a photographer to document all of the fun. These family nights are very successful and rewarding.

## Main Street Positive Behavior Support (continued from page 3)

The Titusville Police and Fire Departments brought vehicles to tour. The YWCA ran our “Haunted Basement” and 15 peer helpers from THS were on hand to assist.

- For meeting the goal of our *You Rock* tickets for quarter two, we celebrated by taking all of our students to The Rink Family Skating Center. Everyone enjoyed skating and time to be with their friends and classmates. A huge thank you to Julie and Tyler Cauvel from The Rink for having our students and making it such a positive event! We are already looking forward to our third quarter celebration and would like to incorporate a family night to get everyone involved. More details will be coming in the next month.
- Every Friday at lunchtime, student tickets are drawn for rewards. 79 students in the first quarter and 155 students during quarter two were able to select a prize from our SWPBS Reward showcase. On September 22<sup>nd</sup>, we had a special ticket drawing take place. At that time, 15 outstanding students had their *You Rock* tickets drawn and were selected to represent Main Street in the THS Homecoming Parade on September 29th. We invite you to check out our SWPBS webpage to see our weekly winners! <http://www.gorockets.org/SWPBS.aspx>
- Several of our students helped us demonstrate correct behavior. They gave up a few hours this summer to act in our behavior lesson videos. Adults tried an activity first as the “what-not-to-do” example, and then the real students gave a proper demonstration. In addition to being instructive, the short films are very entertaining! Mr. Cartney and Mr. Sampson from the THS Art Department did a great job of filming and editing the final product. You can watch all of the videos that were created. They can be found on the Main Street website under the SWPBS tab and then click modeled behaviors. We hope you enjoy the videos as much as our students do! <http://www.gorockets.org/SWPBSModeledBehavior.aspx>
- Bright yellow vinyl banners with the behavioral expectations have been placed at key places throughout the building. We hope you’ve noticed them if you’ve been in the hallways for one of our family events. They help teach and remind our students of what it means to “ROCK” –

**Respect,  
Own Positive Behavior,  
Caring Words and Deeds, and  
Keep Safe.**



- A few staff members from Main Street were invited to present at an Edinboro University workshop on September 27th. They were proud to share the success of our students with the SWPBS program at Main Street Elementary School. Ideas were given to help other schools and organizations that would like to begin their own program. Our core team has been invited to present at the annual PA Implementer’s Forum this May in Hershey. In addition to presenting, Main Street Elementary School will be recognized from the state for achieving SET Fidelity. On February 6, 2018, our school was evaluated on our level of implementation of the SWPBS program. We received a 99% score, earning 69 out of 70 possible points. This achievement is a tribute to the dedication of our students, teachers and staff. What an honor for our school and district!!!

We love having the opportunity to help our students succeed and we’re very proud of them for repeatedly making the right choices. We hope you are as excited as we are about the great work that the students have been doing. Our recent SWPBS evaluation confirms what we already know . . . **Main Street ROCKS!**



Main Street Quarter 2 SWPBS Recognition Assembly