

School MATTERS

Titusville School District Newsletter



Stephanie Keebler
Superintendent

*Fall Issue
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Enhancing School Safety:

An overview of TASD and PCCD Safety Grant Initiatives



As part of the Titusville Area School District's ongoing commitment to ensuring a safe and supportive environment for our students, we are excited to share important updates regarding our participation in the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency (PCCD) safety grants. These initiatives aim to enhance mental health support, bolster school resource officer programs, and conduct comprehensive safety assessments within our district.

Mental Health Support for Students

One of the key components of the PCCD safety grants is the enhancement of mental health services through the hiring of dedicated social workers. These professionals play a crucial role in addressing the emotional and psychological needs of our students. By providing counseling, crisis intervention, and support for mental wellness, we aim to create a safe space where students feel valued and understood. This initiative not only fosters a positive school climate but also equips students with the tools they need to navigate life's challenges.

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Strengthening School Resource Officers (SROs)

The grant also supports the integration of a School Resource Officer (SRO) into our schools. SROs are specially trained law enforcement officers who serve as a vital bridge between law enforcement and the school community. Their presence helps ensure a secure environment, deterring potential threats while also providing a resource for students and staff alike. By fostering positive relationships with students, SROs can serve as mentors and role models, further contributing to a culture of safety and respect. We are happy to welcome Titusville Police Department Officer Fuller to our schools.

Competitive Safety Grant and Risk Assessments

In addition to enhancing mental health and law enforcement resources, the district submitted for the PCCD competitive safety grant aimed at addressing specific security needs. The Titusville Area School District identified the main entrances at Titusville High School and Titusville Middle School. The buildings' entrances will be renovated to include safety vestibules. The Titusville Area School District was awarded \$450,000 to address these upgrades in order to implement advanced safety measures. A key aspect of these initiatives involves conducting thorough risk and vulnerability assessments of all District buildings. The District is undergoing an assessment at this time in coordination with the Pennsylvania State Police. By evaluating our current safety protocols and identifying areas for improvement, we can create a more resilient and responsive school environment.

What This Means for Our Community

The collective efforts supported by the Titusville Area School District and the PCCD safety grants represent a comprehensive approach to school safety. By focusing on mental health, reinforcing law enforcement presence, and continuously assessing our safety protocols, we are taking proactive steps to protect our students and staff.



2024/2025 New Hires



Join us in welcoming these teachers to our community, and support them as they grow in their practice as educators.



Tyler Vath, Health & Physical Education Teacher at Titusville High School: “I chose to become an educator to give back the skills and knowledge I received and to share the lessons from my own experiences. I am dedicated to helping students develop lifelong, healthy habits and fostering their overall well-being.”

Kayla Mills, Life Skills Teacher at Titusville High School: “I teach because I have a desire to make a positive impact in the lives of students’. I want to be able to change the mindsets of children, and want them to know that they have people who really believe in them. They should know, no matter where you come from in the world, you can do and be anything you want. Not only am I teaching them and shaping their futures, but they are teaching me things everyday!”



Brandon Edwards, Technology Education Teacher at Titusville High School: “As I was growing up in the Corry community and developing my skills as a wrestler, I was constantly finding myself helping out the younger wrestlers throughout our community. Through doing so, I found that I enjoyed helping teach these younger wrestlers how to get better and seeing them grow. However, when I first graduated I didn’t choose to go to school to become an educator. I first went on to become a contractor and received my Associates degree in Building Trades. After completing this endeavor, I knew this was not the right career path for me and decided to transfer to California University of Pennsylvania where I was able to gain my Bachelors Degree in Education. I now feel that I have found my calling and enjoy being in the classroom, educating our youth and preparing them for their futures.”

Micheal Patterson, 10th Grade English Teacher at Titusville High School:

“Many of us didn’t become what we dreamed of as children, and often, that is for the best. I originally graduated college with a degree in journalism and public relations with a minor in marketing. I had aspirations of becoming rich in the business world, and I had a promising internship at Alcoa in Pittsburgh. I was lucky, and I should have appreciated the opportunity. However, every day I felt like I wasn’t really accomplishing anything of value. I was good at my job, but my job wasn’t making the world any better, and it certainly didn’t make me feel like I had a purpose. After completing the internship, I chose to enroll at Millersville University, where I earned my teaching certificate. After working in Harrisburg, my wife and I moved to Titusville 18 years ago, and I worked as the high school English teacher for the Tidioute Community Charter School. Not every day was perfect or easy, but I know that I made a positive impact on the lives of my students. I think people often forget what an honor it actually is to work with students and change their lives. It is a privilege I do not view lightly, and I look forward to working with the students at the Titusville High School as the tenth grade English teacher. It may not be my childhood dream job, but it is way more important and fulfilling.”



2024/2025 New Hires (cont'd)



Bethann Shantz-Hamilton, Secondary Transition Instructor at Allen Street: "I teach because I believe that the more positive influences a young person has in their life, the healthier they will be as adults. I believe that showing how to do something and letting students explore and test their own theories in a safe environment creates a dynamic for learning and growing as individuals. Additionally, I learn and grow every day from my students."

Robert DeLaO; Elementary Transition Teacher at Hydetown Elementary: "I choose to be an educator because I don't believe teachers are heroes or that they need to be placed on a pedestal, but because I believe they are important to our future generation to teach them HOW to think and to be a better person, rather than teaching them WHAT to think."



Jessie Pyle, Science Teacher at Titusville Middle School: "Growing up, I have always had a love for learning that was instilled in me by my parents and teachers that I have had throughout my life. I became an educator to help students discover their own passions and empower them to be critical thinkers."

John McGonigle, Technology Education Teacher at Titusville Middle School: "I choose to be a Technology Education Teacher due to a couple different factors. In high school I always found myself in the Tech Ed rooms and took every class that my school offered. I found a love for it. However, behind a lot of teachers is another teacher that gave them that inspiration to be who they are today. I am no different. Mr. Jones was my high school Tech Ed teacher. He is the one that inspired me to do what I do today. I knew during my Junior year, that's what I wanted to do. Being in his classroom he taught me valuable lessons that I carry with me to this day. Being a difference in students' lives means a lot to me, just like it was for my old Tech Ed teacher. I look forward to doing that here as a Rocket!"



Paige Cotton; STEM Teacher at Titusville Middle School: "I teach because I feel everyone should be given the best possible chance to succeed and I feel school is a way to give people that opportunity. Throughout my education, I have had a lot of different teachers that have helped shape me into the person I am today. Having someone who believed in me outside of my family helped instill the vision that I could achieve success. I wanted to be a teacher to be that person in students' lives. I wanted to be the person that looks at them and sees what they are accomplishing now, but also what they are capable of accomplishing."

Taylor Mosher; Family Consumer Science and Language Arts Teacher at Titusville Middle School: "When I was in high school, my Family Consumer Sciences (FACS), Mrs. Sopher, and 11th grade English teacher, Mrs. Cressman, taught me the importance of both subjects. From their guidance I developed a passion in both areas and went on to college to major in education. All students should be taught how to be successful after graduation. They should know how to live independently and have the skills to reach their goals. Just like my experience, I want to be the educator that gives students the tools to do so."





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2024-2025 Titusville Area School District



Title I

Title I is a federal program that provides funding to school districts with a high percentage of children from low-income families to help ensure equal opportunities for all children. All students in grades K4 - 8 are considered Title I students within TASD. The following is a breakdown of how Titusville Area School District will be spending our federal funding for the 2024 - 2024 school year:

Budget Summary

- ⇒ **\$965,117** - Salaries and Benefits for (5) Reading specialists, (4) Reading Aides, (3) Math Aides, (1) Elementary Counselor, (1) Social Worker (United Way), and (2) Administrative Supports
- ⇒ **\$95,528** - Homeless set aside, Family Engagement, take-home books, SWPBIS and other resources
- ⇒ **\$107,136** - Reading support / training / coaching

\$1,167,781 - Total funding awarded for 2024-2025 school year

(a funding decrease of \$32,277 from the 2023-2024 school year)

Breakdown of Title I student funding per school

Each building received funding based on student enrollment to ensure equality. The buildings were ranked according to need, determined by free and reduced meal status of building student population.

- ⇒ Early Childhood Learning Center allocated **\$1,692.31** per pupil (F&R = 76.15%)
- ⇒ Main Street Elementary School allocated **\$1,689.02** per pupil (F&R = 71.93%)
- ⇒ Pleasantville Elementary School allocated **\$1,679.10** per pupil (F&R = 63.21%)
- ⇒ Hydetown Elementary allocated **\$1,612.90** per pupil (F&R = 62.94%)
- ⇒ Titusville Middle School allocated **\$214.02** per pupil (F&R = 62.71%)

Title I grant performance goals for the 2024-2025 school year

1. Improve Reading & Math Literacy skills within students in grades K4 to 8.
2. Increase family partnerships and involvement within our schools.

ECLC News

3, 2, 1 BLAST OFF!

Our youngest Rockets participated in a Book Blast at the ECLC.

The Book Blast gives all the children a chance to earn quality books to take home and build their home libraries. Book Blast guarantees that EVERY child at the ECLC will receive at least 1 book with a chance to earn up to 10 books.

A favorite part of the Book Blast is the treasure map! After students get 10+ people to volunteer their email addresses, they receive a box of prizes. This year's box contained a floppy hat, a soaring axolotl, and a treasure box shaped like a book (keys and all)! The children are also entered into a drawing to win an Ipad or a treasure chest filled with money, trinkets, and gems. Four treasure chests and one iPad were awarded to children pictured to the right. Congratulations kids! We are now anxiously awaiting our books to arrive.

Title I Night – Fall Fest

The Title I Fall Fest was a great success.

The Title I teachers prepared learning games for families to learn to play at school. Then, the students and parents could take them home to play again and again. The games were based on the students grade level and the skills that they are currently learning in class. The night also included fun games, a craft, a storyteller, prizes, and students could wear their Halloween costumes if they chose to do so. It was a fun night for all!



Updates to the School Wide Positive Behavior Support Program – Bee Bucks!!

The Elementary Student Assistance Program at the ECLC is made up of a variety of teachers, the nurse, the guidance counselor, the school resource coordinator, and the principal. Each year this team looks at the effectiveness of our School Wide Positive Behavior Support Program. For years, the ECLC has utilized the Bee Card system to reward students for positive behaviors demonstrated at school. The team decided to revamp the program for the 2024-2025 school year to incorporate some financial literacy and bring the program up-to-date with the world we live in. The students can earn "Bee Bucks" for their positive behaviors at school. Each Thursday, the students can count their bucks and decide to cash them in for prizes from the school store "Beezon" or save them for bigger prizes when they earn more bucks. Then on Friday, the "Beezon" delivery person (Mrs. Nichols - the guidance counselor) drops the prizes off at the classroom door. It has truly been amazing to see how excited the students are about this, and we really have been impressed with the number of students wanting to save their bucks. It has been a great learning experience so far.



HYDETOWN HAPPENINGS

5TH GRADE BAND CONCERT



The 5th grade band students at Hydetown Elementary got to show off their talents and hard work during their first band performance of the year on Thursday, October 3. Miss Cicero began the concert by taking the group through a typical warm up. The students then had the opportunity to play through a few songs they have been working on this year.

This night was not only special for the performers, but the audience also got a chance to participate. During the course of the night, the students got to show their parent/guardian the parts of the instrument, how it works, and how to play a few notes. The smiles and laughter proved what a fun night it was!



LOVING LITERACY

To kick the ELA year off in 3rd grade, learners dove into the classic tale “The Wind in the Willows”. This first unit introduced the students to some fun characters and an entertaining plot. In an effort to bring the book and characters to life, Mrs. Crocker transformed her classroom into “Toad Hall” where students were able to enjoy some “tea and biscuits” to wrap up their unit.



In 2nd grade it was all Fairy Tales and Tall Tales to kick off their first ELA unit. This group of learners was able to read about Paul Bunyan, Pecos Bill, and several others to gain a better understanding of characters and how to make predictions. To wrap up their learning, students dressed up as their favorite Fairy or Tall Tale character. Later in the day, the learners completed a directed drawing of Paul Bunyan and also wrote about whether they would rather spend the day with Paul Bunyan or Pecos Bill.



WE'VE GOT SPIRIT, YES WE DO!

Hydetown students had a blast showing off their school spirit during the 2024-2025 Titusville Homecoming week! Each day brought a new theme from camo day to color wars. We finished up the festivities with brown and gold day and a visit from our very own THS band and cheerleaders!



MAIN STREET ROCKS

Respect, Own Your Behaviors, Caring Deeds, Keep Safe



Raising the Flag

Tradition continues as the VFW visits Main Street to teach proper flag etiquette to our students. All 5th grade students learn the meaning of all parts of the flag and how to properly put the flag up, fold it and the proper times to fly it. For the remainder of the year, students are in charge of raising the Main Street flag!

Finishing Off Unit One

Its October already? As we continue with our CKLA curriculum, teachers create rewarding activities to finish off their first units of learning. 2nd grade finished off Fairy Tales and 3rd Grade completed their unit on Classic Tales. Both students and teachers got creative!



The first Wednesday in October celebrates National Walk to School Day and this has been a tradition at Main Street for many years. 5th grade students meet at Roberts Grove Park bright and early and walk together to school!



School Spirit and Penny Wars

All buildings in the Titusville District support our Brown and Gold during Spirit Week. Students and staff love to show their Rocket Pride with fun-filled days and are encouraged to dress up to fit the theme! During this week Main Street also participates in Penny Wars, which is the first fundraiser for our PTG! This year we raised \$957 for our students!

Pleasantville Elementary

New year and new friends!

The start of the year has been enjoyable for the students and staff. Everyone is back into a routine and working to the best of their abilities. Open House was held on September 24th. This allowed the parents to have an opportunity to meet their child's teachers to see and hear the expectations and plan for the year. Our theme for this year is "Jungle" and the staff have already began decorating throughout the building. We also will be preparing for our Boo 'k' tacular night which will be held on October 22nd. This night mixes reading and trick-or-treating all into one. It will be a fun night for all.



School Spirit!

Homecoming week is always a great time for the students and staff to show their support for our Rockets. Throughout the week, individuals dressed up in camo, bright colors, workout attire, color wars and the week wrapped up with everyone wearing brown and gold to support the Rockets as they played against Warren. These weeks are a lot of fun and the students really get into it.



Boo 'k' tacular

On October 22nd, we held our 10th annual Boo 'k' tacular event. We incorporate some reading games with a little Halloween fun. Families come and learn ways to help their children with reading while the students get to show off their Halloween costumes and do a little trick-or-treating around the building. This is one of our most favorite nights of the year. Everyone has such a wonderful time and it is nice to bring the families into the school in a way that is helpful and entertaining all in one!

Fire Prevention Day

The local volunteer fire department comes annually to teach our students about fire and safety. The students are able to see what first responders have in their vehicles, learn about ways these brave men and women save people's lives, and handle the safety equipment used in their jobs. Students really enjoy using the fire hose, putting out small fires with fire extinguishers, tour a smokehouse on site, and look through the fire truck and ambulance. It is a highly education and fun-filled day for everyone.



Titusville Middle School

We are excited to reflect on the incredible energy and accomplishments that have filled TMS during the first quarter. Our students and teachers have been amazing, embracing each challenge and uniting to celebrate success.

The year began on a high note, thanks to the efforts of our TMS Parent-Teacher Group (PTG), who organized an unforgettable tailgate party. Over 600 students, families, and community members gathered at the middle school to celebrate the beginning of the year, enjoy food and games, and connect. This event set a positive tone for the year, building a sense of unity and excitement that has continued throughout the quarter.



One of the standout moments of the first quarter was Wilderness Quest, a highlight for our 6th-grade students. For three days, students, teachers, and counselors ventured into the woods for hands-on learning, personal growth, and team building. As the 51st Wilderness Quest, this year's experience was one of the best, with our 6th-grade students shining as they embraced every challenge with grit and joy. We are proud of their progress and look forward to watching them continue to grow throughout the year. We are especially grateful to the team of teachers who facilitated the camp, led by camp director Anneliese Ledebur, as well as the high school students who served as camp counselors. Wilderness Quest is a shining example of the TMS community coming together to achieve great things.



Throughout the fall, our students have been engaged in hands-on, experiential learning, making the most of every opportunity to connect classroom experiences with the real world. A new addition to our schedule this year, Rocket Block, has provided dedicated time for band, chorus, enrichment, and intervention. This change has allowed students involved in band and chorus to have a dedicated 40 minutes every day to pursue their musical passions. Meanwhile, other students have had structured time to work on personal goals, whether through enrichment activities or targeted academic interventions.

The positive energy at TMS from both staff and students is undeniable, and we're thrilled with the momentum we've built in these first months. As we move into the second quarter, we're excited to see further growth, success, and community spirit from our school community!



Titusville High School

Exciting Recognition for Our World Language Program

We are thrilled to share that Titusville Area High School has received the PEP Award (Pennsylvania Exemplary Program) from the Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association (PSMLA), recognizing our distinguished World Language Program with the Bronze Globe award.

This achievement reflects our commitment to excellence, as we have maintained a high percentage of total World Language enrollment, offered a variety of languages in a four-year sequence, and retained students at higher levels. Additionally, our participation in the AP (Advanced Placement) program, the scheduling of classes with one level per period, and the provision of an extended sequence of instruction in commonly taught languages have all contributed to this accolade.

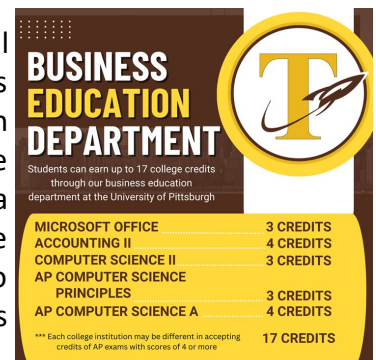
Furthermore, our implementation of PSMLA Key Instructional Practices, administration of end-of-year standards-based performance assessments, engagement in yearly staff development, maintenance of membership in professional organizations, and the provision of special program features have also played significant roles in achieving this honor.

Thank you for your support and collaboration in making our World Language Program a success.



BUSINESS DEPARTMENT EXPANSION

Our business department is expanding to integrate industry-relevant skills across all areas of business and computer science. We have recently launched a new sports management and marketing program, providing students with hands-on experience in organizing and promoting athletic events for all ages. Recently, the students organized and promoted an event called "Kick it to the Max," featuring a competition with one student from each grade, two female adults, and two male adults, competing for a prize basket valued at \$350. This event was designed to offer students valuable, resume-building experience in the field of sports management.



In our computer science program, students are gaining practical experience through their involvement with our new student-led manufacturing initiative. They are focusing on manufacturing automation, learning to work with coordinates, identify objects, and manage object movement. As they progress, the students will develop machine-learning models to recognize the shapes and colors of objects and manipulate them accordingly.

Titusville High School

ALLEGHENY COLLEGE CHORAL WORKSHOP

On Monday, October 21st members of the Titusville High School Concert Choir attended a choral workshop at Allegheny College. The day was organized by Dr. James Niblock, director of choirs, and assisted by Dr. Carol Niblock and Molly Moyer. Students learned about voice science, vocal health, and how to prepare for auditions. They were also given a tour said Allegheny's Fine Arts Department and attended a recital by vocal majors and the Allegheny Choirs.



The THS Reading Team participated in the Sr. High Reading Competition which is sponsored by the Riverview Intermediate Unit 6 Gifted Consortium. The team placed third in the competition but won the Spirit Award! Students read 24 books from a selected list and memorized the details of each story. Team members included from L-R: Jenna Crocker, Kathren LaLone, Aubrey Schumde, Stella Willis, Charlotte Winger, Elizabeth Watkins, Olivia Decker, Luke Keebler, Laurel McKellop, Tilley Foxberg and Madeline Johnson. Congratulations to these students!

Academic Challenge Team Earns 2nd Place

The high school's Academic Challenge team started its season off strong with a second place win on September 16, 2024 at a scrimmage sponsored by the Intermediate Unit 6 Gifted Consortium. Team members are Aden Winans, Charlotte Winger, Laurel McKellop, Ethan Morgan, and Adam Morgan. The team will compete in a second scrimmage at the Intermediate Unit 6 on October 17, 2024. They will participate in a tournament sponsored by WQLN, Erie's PBS station, during the week of November 4, 2024.



l to r: Aden Winans, Charlotte Winger, Aubrey Schmidt, Laurel McKellop
missing from photo: Ethan Morgan and Adam Morgan

Kids in Action!



Ancient Asian Civilization unit

Yu-Wei Tai, a Titusville High School Exchange Student from Taiwan, being hosted by Chris and Stephanie Fiely, came in to speak to the classes about the Chinese New Year and life in Taiwan. During the Ancient Asian Civilization unit, 2nd graders learned about the Chinese New Year and were extremely excited to hear about it from the first-hand experience of Yu-Wei. He shared many memorable traditions, but made sure to let the students know that the red envelope is the absolute best part of the Chinese New Year! He also demonstrated speaking and writing in Mandarin for the students, making connections to the Chinese characters covered during the unit.

Erie Otters

The Titusville High School Choir performed the national anthems of Canada and the United States at Erie Insurance Arena before the Erie Otters game against the Kingston Frontenacs! The Otters won 2-1 in overtime!



Tarbell Teas

Students from Titusville High School served as reenactors and welcomed guests to the Ida Tarbell House. The guests were treated to a delicious meal prepared by the students in the Family Consumer Science classes at THS. Thank you to Lynn Cressman who coordinates this program with Oil Region Alliance.

Penny's Diner

Titusville Middle School is excited to announce that Mr. Penny and his amazing students are once again serving up delicious lunches for the staff at TMS.



TMS MVT

Titusville Middle School is excited to announce that Ms. Ledebur has been selected by her colleagues as the first TMS MVT! This new monthly award, sponsored by the PTG, recognizes teachers who go above and beyond to make a positive impact on our school community.

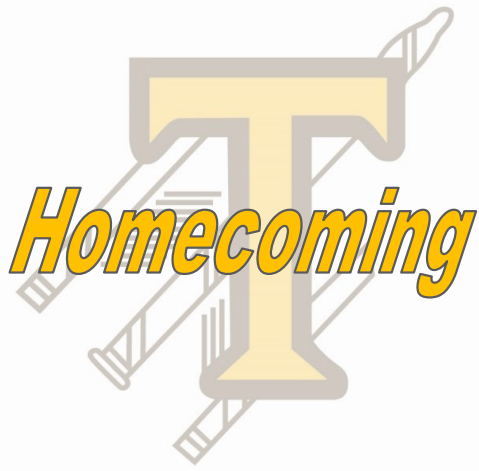




TMS



Homecoming Court



Main Street



Pleasantville



High School



Hydetown



ECLC