

# BERGENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## District Newsletter

March 2014

### FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

*By Dr. Michael Kuchar, Superintendent of Schools*



Margaret Elizabeth Sangster, once wrote “Never yet was a springtime, when the buds forgot to bloom.” This simple truth provides much needed hope to those of us who are weary of this taxing winter. While our backs are sore and our snow shovels mangled, our perseverance shall only make us stronger. The same holds true as we face other trials, every day, in our roles as parents, students, and educators. As long as we continue to hold our heads high and keep our vision focused towards our objectives, we will reach them, proudly, before moving forward to the next colorful stage that life has in store for us. As we brace for the final stretch of winter, we look forward to a productive spring. We are well beyond the halfway point of the school year; yet, much work still lies ahead of us. Our seniors have been training their whole lives for college and career readiness; and, with the final marking periods approaching—much like the athletes competing in the amazing Olympic Games—our students, too, must bear down to finish the race strong.

Just as coaches play a key role in the shaping of Olympic-caliber athletes, teachers create our community’s champions of tomorrow. Outstanding teachers are much like the personification of spring; they provide that perfect amount of light and warmth that makes everything burst into full bloom. Just as there has never been a springtime when buds forgot to bloom, in my experience, there has never been a child who did not yearn to learn and develop. Yet, it takes an exceptional teacher to acknowledge and cultivate this sacred promise of tomorrow in every child. Fortunately, in Bergenfield, we are

blessed to have many such teachers.

Please join me in sincerely congratulating seven such educators—our 2013-14 Teachers of the Year: Lisa Bencivenga—Washington School; Elena Bonifazio—Hoover School; Laura Haines—Lincoln School; Marie Noble—Franklin School; Jody Sullivan—Jefferson School; Patricia DiLorenzo—RWB; and Deana Rothenberg—BHS. Selected by their peers, these teachers inspire students of all backgrounds and abilities to learn. They demonstrate a strong ability to foster excellence in education as evidenced by ongoing contributions to the improvement of student learning and the learning environment. They demonstrate leadership in educational activities at the school, district, and/or state and national levels. They have the respect and admiration of students, parents, and colleagues, and they demonstrate poise, eloquence, and the ability to maintain a demanding schedule. Such exceptional attributes are truly deserving of our “gold medal” for excellence.

If you’re tired of gray skies and need a little pick-me-up to get you through the month of March, I invite you to think back to a teacher that helped you make it to a finish line—however you defined it. If you can, take the time to reach out and say thank you to that extraordinary nurturer that helped you grow. If it’s too late, please consider sharing your gratitude with one of our Teachers of the Year or any one of our district’s teacher. By doing so, not only will you brighten his or her day and your own, but you’ll become part of the invisible force that has driven never-ending seasons of teaching and learning for centuries. Don’t forget to bloom this spring; come join us in a commitment to lifelong learning!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Kuchar" followed by "R.D." in a stylized script.

### The Grand Stage



On February 2nd, students from the Bergenfield High School Marching Band performed live during the Pepsi Halftime Show at Super Bowl XLVIII. This year’s Super Bowl was featured at Metlife Stadium in East Rutherford, NJ, home of the New York Giants and New York Jets. This year’s halftime show was headlined by music artist, Bruno Mars, and featured the Red Hot Chili Peppers.

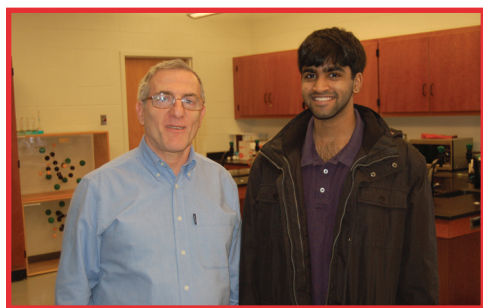
Leading up to the big game, the select group of students had practiced on their routine for several weeks, putting in tireless hours in the evenings following the school day and even on the weekends. The band marched in sync with members of 4 other New Jersey high school marching bands, as they surrounded the stage carrying giant LED light panels as the artists performed.

The entire district is extremely proud of our marching band for being selected for this amazing honor. The passion, dedication, and discipline of our students have continuously earned them accolades for many decades. Still, being selected to perform live before the largest TV audience in history is truly a momentous occasion that will resonate with the community for decades to come.



# AROUND THE DISTRICT

## BHS Senior to Compete at Regional STEM Symposium



*Pictured above, Dr. Ara Kahyaoglu, STEM mentor, and BHS senior, Kevin Joseph.*

On February 17th, the district received word that this year's evaluation committee has accepted BHS senior, Kevin Joseph's, STEM paper, "Hydrogen-Powered Car," to be orally presented at

this year's Northern New Jersey Junior Science and Humanities Symposium. The event will be held on March 24th and 25th at the Rutgers School of Engineering, Busch Campus. Kevin is one of only 22 students selected from hundreds of paper submissions throughout the state to orally present his research. He will be competing for an all-expense paid trip to the 52nd National Junior Science and Humanities Symposium to be held in Washington D.C. on April 23-27. The top three presenters at the Rutgers Symposium will be awarded scholarships ranging from \$1000 - \$2000. Each will also receive the all-expenses-paid trip to the National Competition.

This marks the first time that a Bergenfield student has been selected to present at this prestigious symposium. Kevin will be competing against top STEM students from other schools also known for their tradition of excellence in science instruction: the Academy for Enrichment and Advancement, Bergen County Academies, and the Marine Academy of Technology and Environmental Science—just to name a few.

Congratulations to Kevin and his STEM mentor, Dr. Ara Kahyaoglu, for all of their accomplishments thus far. The entire district wishes them the best of luck in the upcoming symposium!

## Haiyan Relief Update



The district has continued to generate relief funds through its partnership with St. John's Church to help the suffering victims of the Super-Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. The seven Bergenfield schools, combined, have donated another \$4,830.02 in February to help in the relief effort, bringing the total raised funds to over \$8,530!

## ATTENTION PARENTS OF CHILDREN IN GRADES 4-8

CYBER-BULLYING PARENT WORKSHOP  
MARCH 27, 2014 @ 7:00PM  
BERGENFIELD HIGH SCHOOL AUDITORIUM

with guest speakers from

BERGENFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT  
BERGEN COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

- Learn about the cyber challenges that our children face as they become digital citizens in today's world
- Understand how children are establishing "digital footprints" that can affect their future
- Learn practical steps to help keep children safe

To learn more about the program, please feel free to contact:  
Craig Vogt – 201-385-8804 | [cvogt@bergenfield.org](mailto:cvogt@bergenfield.org)

## Cell Phone Project Sparks Jefferson Students' Creative Genius



The fifth grade students at Jefferson School are taking part in the school's first ever "Cell Phone Project." Mrs. Irina Tesoriero, a Jefferson School parent and executive with GE, introduced the project to the school as part of GE's public school

outreach program.

The classes divided into 6 collaborative teams of 8 students each. Within the teams, children are working together on building their prototype phone, choosing the applications, designing features and benefits, setting the price point, and creating print and video marketing. Over the course of four sessions, the groups will work towards the goal of introducing their companies' cell phones to the "market." On the final day of the project, each company will present their product to the school for approval. The entire school will then take part in listening to

each company's creative presentation and deciding which company will be awarded their mock order.

The children are learning valuable lessons in how companies and brands become successful in today's market, how products reach the market, how teams work together, and how creative and critical thinking is vital in today's consumer-driven world. The names of the six mock companies are iFunz, Time Traveler, Infinite, Metrixx, Sharx, and Startek. A special thank you goes to Mrs. Tesoriero for sharing this special program with the fifth grade students at Jefferson School!



# STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS



★ Hoover School is participating in Read Across America. In order to get the students excited for this great event, we had a visit from The Cat in the Hat during February. The Cat in the Hat took pictures with the students and encouraged them to read each night as he went from room to room. Other activities that are being planned for Read Across America Week are guest readers from the community, classroom buddy reading projects, a Wacky Wednesday dress up day, and a Renaissance Learning's reading challenge titled "Read the Most from Coast to Coast." Hoover School is looking forward to an inspiring week of reading in March.



★ Last year, in Jefferson and Franklin Schools, fifth grade students explored the history of ancient Chinese terracotta statues. Then, the students created their own artistic versions of the statues in art class. In their March 2014 issue, School Arts Magazine, a national magazine for the visual arts, published an article on the students' project entitled, "Terracotta Warriors." The following students, now members of Roy W. Brown Middle School, had their art work featured in the article: Erin Dayan, John Loszynski, Arabella Yabut, Imani Hayes, Maria Lorelli, Austin Rajner, Joan Siasoyco, and Angie Charalambous. *To read the full article and see the students' artwork, visit <http://www.schoolartsdigital.com/>.*



★ In continuing along with the school's initiative on service to community, the Fifth Grade Youth Power Club at Washington School, sponsored by the Bergenfield Optimist Club, organized a food drive to coincide with the Super Bowl. Students promoted the program by hosting a themed food collection day, where school community members were encouraged to wear a shirt, or the colors of, their favorite team on the Friday before the "big game." In all, fifteen boxes of non-perishable foods were collected for the Bergenfield Food Pantry!

★ The Roy W. Brown Bears Club collected new and gently used coats from every homeroom during the month of January. The students collected a total of 139 items! All of the items collected during the drive were donated to local shelters and organizations in the Bergen County area. Thank you to all who helped support this important cause.

★ Students at Washington School are celebrating the 2014 Winter Olympics by reading. This year's theme for the school's annual Read-a-Thon is the Olympic Games. For the event, students are completing seven "events." To do this, students in lower grades read 15 picture books, while students in the upper grades must earn seven Accelerated Reader points to complete each event. In addition, each class represents a nation taking part in the games. During the Read-a-Thon, students are working with their classmates to use their research skills as they find out about the geography and culture of their country. At the end of the program, students who meet the three top levels will earn special prizes at a school-wide medal ceremony.



★ On February 26, eighth graders took a trip to William Patterson University for New Jersey's Annual Band Day. Roy W. Brown was the only middle school invited to perform in the event. The students performed beautifully in front of J. Craig Davis, Director of Bands and Coordinator of Classical Studies at William Patterson, and the other participants. The band received many positive comments based on their performance. In addition, they participated in a live clinic, received a campus tour, and ate lunch in the student center. Overall, it was a day filled with many accolades for the band members, their director, Greg Mulford, and the rest of the music department.



★ Congratulations to Bergenfield High School's Jake Goldstein, who won Honorable Mention at the 2014 White House Student Film Festival. This is the first-ever film festival at the White House, and they received more than 2,000 entries that demonstrated so much talent, hard work and enthusiasm for technology and learning. Jake's video will soon be featured on [www.WhiteHouse.gov/FilmFestival](http://www.WhiteHouse.gov/FilmFestival), and may be highlighted through White House social media channels. The Film Festival was aired live on Friday, February 28th, at 3:30 pm at the nation's capital. Jake's film will also be displayed on Optimum Cable channel 77, the BHS Bears on Air network.

# AROUND THE DISTRICT

## "DJT" Honored



On January 10th, the district honored retired music educator, Mrs. Donna Jeanne Turnell, with the unveiling of her initials, "DJT," installed near the piano bench in the choir room of BHS. Mrs. Turnell, who retired in 2013, taught music in the district for 25 years, serving as the general music teacher and choir director at Franklin School as well as the accompanist of the BHS choral ensembles and director of the women's choir. She has also served as piano accompanist for many Bergen County Choruses, NJ Region I Choruses, and the NJ All-State Chorus.

## CALENDAR OF IMPORTANT EVENTS

**March 14th**  
*Elementary Marking Period 2 Ends*

**April 3rd**  
*BHS Marking Period 3 Ends*

**April 4th**  
*RWB Marking Period 3 Ends*

**April 15th—18th\***  
*Spring Recess  
(Schools Closed)*

*\*Spring recess may be shortened  
further in the event of any  
additional school emergency closings*

## Persuasive Writers



The students in Mrs. McGrane's first grade class at Lincoln School have been very busy developing their persuasive writing skills. They have been examining various topics, sharing their opinions on these topics, and providing evidence to support their opinions. They have been working on different styles of persuasive writing, including judging collections and writing reviews. The students are applying many techniques, such as beginning with catchy leads, making comparisons, and writing counter opinions, in an attempt to persuade their readers.

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