

A message from Dr. Joseph Meloche, Superintendent, Cherry Hill Public Schools.



CHPS WEEKLY

District News for the week ending January 27, 2017

Discussion & Decision

The following is a letter from Dr. Meloche regarding the production of *Ragtime* at Cherry Hill High School East.

Dear Cherry Hill Community,

Words matter.

The Cherry Hill School District has come under close scrutiny during the past few weeks with regard to Cherry Hill High School East's chosen spring musical production, *Ragtime*. When concerns were raised earlier this month regarding the use of the N-word in the production, we as a district carefully considered the impact of the production on both our student community and the community at large. On January 20, 2017, we released a statement that we would remove the N-word and other derogatory racial and ethnic slurs from the script. This decision spurred passionate debate in the Cherry Hill community that quickly garnered media coverage and national attention. The need for continued conversation became clear. Several in-person meetings were held following the January 24, 2017 Board of Education Action meeting. These meetings included stakeholders with diverse life experience, professional backgrounds and opinions. Several telephone discussions with Music Theatre International, the distributor of the script, made it clear that according to the contract between the district and MTI, the play must be performed as written or not performed at all. This fact was brought into our stakeholder conversations. I am grateful to Cherry Hill African American Civic

UPCOMING EVENTS

West Theater Production

The Complete Works of William Shakespeare Abridged
January 27 & 28 @ 7 pm
CHWest Old Auditorium
\$10 adults; \$5 students/seniors

Policy & Legislation Committee Meeting

February 6 @ 6 pm
Malberg Administration Building

Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting

February 6 @ 7 pm
Malberg Administration Building

Business & Facilities Committee Meeting

February 7 @ 6 pm
Malberg Administration Building

Board of Education Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

February 7 @ 7 pm
Malberg Administration Building

Board of Education Work Session

February 14 @ 7 pm

Association, a perennial partner and foundational stakeholder in our school district, to the Camden County East NAACP, to the Jewish Community Relations Council, and to the Anti-Defamation League for their commitment to work with our district and our children as we move forward.

In coming to a decision, our focus remains on our students, on their safety and their development – which has always been and will always remain our top priority. Education must take place in a safe way, in a safe environment. The final decision regarding *Ragtime* was not made based on a vote. We do not deem any individual or group who voiced an opinion in this process as wrong. Nor is any person or group more valuable than another. We are greatly appreciative of all who have joined the hours of discussion, and for the respectful manner in which most conducted themselves.

These are tumultuous, difficult times. We believe that while these difficult times provide challenges in our educational community, they also provide an opportunity and an obligation to educate. We believe we can educate using difficult subject matter presented in a safe, sensitive way. To that end, Cherry Hill High School East will present *Ragtime* as written. The school community will be supported by curriculum and conversation leading up to and continuing through the show's performance dates and beyond. The curriculum additions will allow all of our students to learn from the production without feeling threatened or disenfranchised. We will present resources and conversation regarding the production at each performance. We will make it abundantly clear that we loathe the N-word, that we despise this most vile of words in our language. We have been offered professional support in this endeavor from within the Cherry Hill Schools community and from professionals outside the community. We will be availing ourselves of these resources from now through the performance schedule of *Ragtime* at Cherry Hill High School East – opening on March 10, 2017 and closing March 19, 2017 – and into the future.

We look forward to continued conversations with the stakeholders who have generously and respectfully offered their time and perspective to this process. We also look forward to our community treating each other with kindness and respect moving forward.

Words matter.

There is much work to be done. Please, join us in

Malberg Administration Building

SAVE THE DATE

5th, 6th, 7th & 8th Grade

Parent Program:

Internet Safety: The Dangers of Sharing Too Much

Presented by the Cherry Hill

Police Department

February 22 @ 7 pm

Carusi Middle School

supporting our children – all of our children – in moving forward. Be a positive voice, be part of a positive change.

Sincerely,

Joseph N. Meloche

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Superintendent, Cherry Hill Public Schools



CHPS Named State District of Character

The New Jersey Alliance for Social, Emotional and Character Development (NJASECD) has named the Cherry Hill Public Schools a 2017 New Jersey District of Character. The District will maintain this status for three years, through 2019.

The District will be honored at a recognition ceremony during the NJASECD Conference in May at Rider University. The District application now will be forwarded to character.org for consideration as a 2017 National District of Character.

Congratulations to District of Character Committee Chair Dr. Kirk Rickansrud and his team for a job well done in assembling the lengthy and detailed application to earn this prestigious designation.



Important Message Regarding New PARCC Graduation Requirements

On August 3, 2016 the State Board of Education approved updated state regulations for the high school graduation assessments requirements in both English language arts (ELA) and mathematics for the Classes of 2017 through 2021, and beyond.

Click on the links below for charts containing the list of assessment requirements in both ELA and mathematics for the high school graduation Classes of 2017 through 2021 and beyond:

[Class of 2017](#)

[Class of 2018 and 2019](#)

[Class of 2020](#)

[Class of 2021 and beyond](#)



Kindergarten Registration and Middle School Open Enrollment Dates Now Available

Kindergarten/first grade registration for children entering public school for the first time begins on March 7, 2017 at the Malberg Administration Building, 45 Ranoldo Terrace. **Children must be 5 years old by October 1, 2017 to be eligible for kindergarten.** It is not necessary to bring your child to register. Specific dates and times for each school are available on the [District web site](#).

Information meetings for 5th grade students and their parents will take place in late January and early

February. Parents and students are recommended to attend the session at their sending school and at Rosa International Middle School. Dates and times of the information sessions, as well as the open enrollment period dates, are available on the [District web site](#).

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