

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



CHPS WEEKLY

District News for the week ending April 13, 2018

Fair Funding Push Continues

The challenges in the condition of our facilities are a direct result of decades of underfunding by the state of New Jersey. WE are dedicated to demanding fair funding for the sake of our students, now and in the future.

As you may have seen in this week's news coverage, it was a busy week for testimony before our state legislators. Monday April 9 was the day for two important events: the New Jersey Assembly's Budget Hearing held in Trenton and the Joint Senate/Assembly Legislative Committee Hearing on School Safety held at Camden County College in Cherry Hill. I had the privilege of [testifying in person](#) at the latter hearing, and Board of Education member Mrs. Kathy Judge submitted [my testimony](#) – along with that of other Board members – at the Budget Hearing.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with the decades-long dearth of state funding for the Cherry Hill Public Schools, I recommend you visit [the web site of the Zone PTA Fair Funding Committee](#). There you will find the statistics, gathered by this hardworking group of community volunteers, detailing Cherry Hill's astoundingly low portion of funding compared to similar districts' astoundingly high portion of funding. You will also find information on how to help.

Here are some facts about our state funding as it stands today:

- Cherry Hill receives approximately 45% of the state funding it should under the [School Funding Reform Act \(SFRA\)](#)
- In the 10 years since the SFRA was instituted, it has never been fully funded. Yet while some districts are woefully underfunded like ours, others are staggeringly overfunded, receiving well over 100% of the state funding they should under the

UPCOMING EVENTS

Coffee & Conversation with the Superintendent

April 14 from 9-10:30 am
Stockton Elementary School
200 Wexford Drive

Community Conversation on Safety & Security

April 16 @ 7 pm
Carusi Middle School
315 Roosevelt Drive
(This is the rescheduled date from the original meeting, canceled because of snow)

Board of Education Action Meeting

April 24 @ 7 pm
Malberg Administration Building
45 Ranoldo Terrace

Board of Education Policy & Legislation Committee Meeting

April 30 @ 6 pm
Malberg Administration Building
45 Ranoldo Terrace

Board of Education Curriculum & Instruction Committee Meeting

April 30 @ 7 pm
Malberg Administration Building
45 Ranoldo Terrace

SFRA

- Because of our lack of fair funding, Cherry Hill has been shortchanged by approximately \$120 million during the past 10 years. Additionally, we had been underfunded for at least 10 years prior to the implementation of the SFRA
- Because of our lack of state funding, 86% of our district budget for the 2018-2019 school year will come from the local tax levy, and an additional 5% will be money we carry over from this year's budget – this is a total of 91% of our district's annual budget. The average tax levy percentage that supports district budgets statewide is 60%

After years of pleas by CHPS administration and Board members, our state representatives informed us that real change to our funding crisis would take place only when our community members started voicing their outrage en masse. Within the last three years, they have – and their voices, OUR voices, are finally being heard. The most recent evidence is the extra \$1 million dollars we received from the state last year. We have been told that securing full funding remains years away, and we do not expect to recover the \$120 million we are owed, but we remain dedicated to securing fair funding. If you would like to join the effort, please visit the [Fair Funding for Cherry Hill Schools web site](#), or attend a Fair Funding Committee meeting on the fourth Thursday of the month at 6 pm in the Malberg Administration Building Board Room.

While we continue to advocate for fair funding, our facilities' immediate needs are pressing. To meet those needs, we will be putting up a bond referendum for vote on October 2, 2018. I encourage you to check the [district web site for the latest information about our proposed bond projects](#), now awaiting approval from the state. I also invite you to attend one of our [Coffee & Conversation meetings](#) about [our long-range strategic plan and the bond](#). The next meeting is tomorrow morning, April 14, at 9 am at Stockton Elementary School. And our final Community Conversation on Safety & Security is on Monday, April 16 at 7 pm at Carusi Middle School. Please join us – and bring your questions!

As you are out and about this weekend enjoying the lovely spring weather – at last! – be sure to

Board of Education Business & Facilities Committee Meeting

May 1 @ 7 pm

Malberg Administration

Building

45 Ranoldo Terrace

Board of Education Strategic Planning Committee Meeting

May 1 @ 7 pm

Malberg Administration

Building

45 Ranoldo Terrace

share a smile and a kind word. Kindness is contagious. Let's all continue to spread it and to make a positive difference in our community.

Regards,

Joe Meloche

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Superintendent, Cherry Hill Public Schools



High Schools East and West Win Honors at Certamen Competition

Congratulations to the students from Cherry Hill High Schools East and West for their successful showing at the Regional Certamen Competition (Latin Knowledge Bowl) on March 20 at Princeton University.

[The students from East](#) placed third in Level 1, and in both Level 2 and the category Upper both earned 1st place. The first place finishers will compete at the State Convention on May 12th. If they win, they will advanced to Nationals over the summer.

Cherry Hill High School West finished in second place in Level 2.

The results of the 2018 National Latin Exam also were released this week. [Students at from East earned multiple awards.](#) Congratulations to all!



2018 PARCC and General Assessment Information, Tips for Readiness, Available

The PARCC (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) assessments begin Monday, April 16, 2018 with high school testing. Middle school testing will begin Friday, April 20, and elementary school testing will begin Thursday, May 3. Middle school will test one unit per day. The elementary school schedule has been extended for two days.

[A full schedule, including make-up dates](#), is available on the District web site. Additionally, [high school graduation assessment requirements for the classes of 2016 through 2021 and beyond](#) are now available on the District web site, as is [a full calendar of all assessment dates](#).

[A letter for parents, detailing](#)



Earth Festival Poster and Video Contest Deadline Is Sunday, April 15

Students in Camden County have until Sunday, April 15 to enter the new "Reduce Plastic – Fantastic" poster and video contest at [Sustainable Cherry Hill's Earth Festival web site](#).

All 19 Cherry Hill Public Schools, as well as non-profit organizations and businesses will comprise more than 80 displays at the April 28th Sustainable Cherry Hill Earth Festival at historic Croft Farm from 10 am – 2 pm. This year's theme: "Reduce Plastic – Fantastic!" is part of with the global Earth Day Network theme to end plastic pollution.

Families, friends, and neighbors can enjoy:

- free tree seedling giveaway (while supply lasts); perennial plant swap,

[the PARCC and JNSLA-S assessments, including tips for preparing children for the tests, is now available.](#)

garden tips + rain barrel demonstration

- LourdesCare 8:15 am lawn yoga; 10:30 am chair yoga
- information about: recycling, composting, energy savings, home improvement ideas.
- Plastic bottle cap kiddie craft; My Gym moon bounce
- Healthy food choices for purchase
- Entertainment all day

[Also at the web site are links to join the Family Fun Bike Ride and volunteer at the Earth Festival.](#)

Adult volunteer supervisors are needed to help with:

- Training student volunteers (April 27th event)
- Event parking
- Vendor set-up
- Recycling, compost monitoring
- On-site art project
- Site break-down and cleanup

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