

BERGENFIELD PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT DISTRICT NEWS



WINTER EDITION - MARCH 2024



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FROM THE DESK OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

By Christopher M. Tully Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools



As we find ourselves at the midpoint of the school year, I am thrilled to share some exciting updates and achievements from our remarkable students and dedicated educators. The Bergenfield School District continues to thrive, and I am pleased to report that our collective efforts continue to propel Bergenfield High School to new heights.

I am excited to announce that Bergenfield High School continues to be recognized among the top schools in Bergen County—securing the 13th position in the most current rankings by *US News and World Report*. This accomplishment is a direct result of the hard work and dedication of our staff, who have put our students in a position to be successful.

In a historic achievement, BHS has been named to the College Board's "AP School Honor Roll" for the first time ever. This recognition attests to our district's unwavering commitment to providing our students with the most rigorous courses and curriculum, further enhancing their preparation for both college and careers.

Please join me in congratulating the 44 Bergenfield High School students who have earned the Seal of Biliteracy from the New Jersey Department of Education. This achievement recognizes their proficiency in two or more languages, highlighting the linguistic diversity of our learning community.

Our commitment to providing a well-rounded education—which includes the arts—continues to be acknowledged. Our school district has been named one of the "Best Communities for Music Education" by the NAMM Foundation for the 14th consecutive year. This recognition underscores the Board's dedication to providing an excellent musical experience for our students.

As a district, we remain focused on making continuous improvements. Our many achievements have only been possible through the community's continued partnership and support. We remain energized in our efforts to explore new and innovative ways for our students to shine and succeed.

As we turn the page to the second half of the school year, I am confident that the remainder of the year will be marked by continued success and growth. Thank you for your ongoing support to our school district. Together, we are all making a positive difference in the lives of our students.

BERGENFIELD NAMED HIGH PERFORMING SCHOOL DISTRICT BY NJQSAC

The district is thrilled to announce that the Bergenfield Public School District has achieved a significant designation in educational excellence.

Following a thorough evaluation under the New Jersey Quality Single Accountability Continuum (NJQSAC), the New Jersey Department of Education has once again recognized us as a high-performing school district.

NJQSAC, the Department of Education's comprehensive monitoring and district self-evaluation system, emphasizes assistance, capacity-building, and improvement. The goals of this process align perfectly with the district's commitment to continuous improvement.

The evaluation process assessed our district in five crucial components: Instruction & Program, Fiscal, Governance, Operations, and Personnel. This recognition as a high-performing district is a testament to our dedication to these key factors that contribute to being a highly-rated school district.

This achievement reflects the collective efforts of our educators, staff, students, and supportive community. We are very proud of this recognition and remain steadfast in our pursuit of excellence.



DISTRICT NEWS

2023-24 TEACHERS OF THE YEAR



Mrs. Brown, Mr. Lavery, Mrs. Johannessen, Ms. Berkheiser, Mrs. Castillo, Ms. O'Neill, and Ms. Rotante.

Congratulations to each of this year's honorees on being selected as Teacher of the Year of their school! The seven recipients are: Mrs. Darlene Johannessen for Roy W. Brown Middle School; Ms. Robyn Rotante for Washington School; Mrs. Kiara Castillo for Franklin School; Mr. Andrew Lavery for Hoover School; Mrs. Ann Brown for Lincoln School; Ms. Veronica O'Neill for Jefferson School; and Ms. Kayla Berkheiser for Bergenfield High School.

Dr. Tully stated, "On behalf of the Bergenfield Board of Education, I would like to congratulate our 2023-24 Teachers of the Year. Each recipient is being recognized by his/her peers within our learning community for demonstrating outstanding commitment to our students. This honor is well-deserved!"

Our Teachers of the Year will be honored at a Board of Education meeting this spring.

ESPORTS TEAM CONQUERS



The Overwatch eSports Team with trophy.

Congratulations to the BHS eSports Team for being named PlayVs Eastern Region Overwatch Champions for the Fall 2023 season! The Overwatch squad (Onassis Abreu, Justin Yang, Diogo Alvarado, Jullian Ecal, and Michael Laman) went undefeated during the regular season, and will prepare for Nationals in May.

EMERGING ARTIST



Emily stands in front of her submission at art show.

BHS AP Photography student Emily Avelino was awarded a medal as an Emerging Artist of NJ at the 36th Annual Art Administrators of NJ Emerging Artist Art Show. She was also among 5 students awarded Honorable Mention for her submission. Emily's photography was on display at Kean University during the exhibit.

BERGENFIELD ARTISTS FEATURED IN STATE ART SHOW



Amira's self-portrait collage.

Youth Art Month (YAM) is celebrated across the nation each year during the month of March. In the months leading up to this event, students were challenged to create artwork for entry into a state-wide art competition.

Each county in New Jersey was tasked with selecting from a large number of student submissions from all of its elementary, middle, and high schools to represent their respective county at a state-wide art exhibit.

This year, two of Bergen County's four winning elementary artists are from Bergenfield—Amira Mathis of Hoover School and Sofia Pinton of Franklin School. Amira's submission was a self-portrait collage, while Sofia illustrated the impact of climate change.

The young artists' works are currently on display in the Art Educators of New Jersey (AENJ)/YAM State Show at the Grounds For Sculpture in Hamilton, NJ. Their work, along with the other state-wide winners, can be viewed in the West Gallery through the show's closing ceremony on March 23rd.



Sofia's climate change illustration.

DISTRICT NEWS



VETERANS HONORED AT ANNUAL APPRECIATION CEREMONY



Veterans from the community stand while being recognized during the ceremony.

On Wednesday, November 8th, Bergenfield High School hosted its annual Veterans Appreciation Ceremony on the athletic field. All staff and community members who had served in the military were invited to attend the event as honorees.

As part of the ceremony, the BHS Marching Band performed patriotic songs, including "The Star Spangled Banner" and "America the Beautiful." Isabella Melendez, Class of 2024 President, and Celine De La Rosa, Student Congress President, read the names of fallen graduates of BHS.

During the weeks leading up to the event, students in grades 3-5 participated in a letter-writing contest. Three grade-level winners from across the district were then selected. These students were invited to read their letters to the veterans in attendance.

RWB FIELD DEDICATED



Members of the community at the ceremony.

On September 2nd, the athletic field at Roy W. Brown Middle School was named the Col. Floyd J. Thompson Field in honor of the Bergenfield alum. Col. Thompson was the longest held prisoner of war in US history, spending nearly 9 years in captivity in Vietnam. He was released on March 16, 1973 in Operation Homecoming.

STEM PROJECT WINS GRANT



Ethan with STEM mentor, Ms. Thadani, and Mr. Neff.

BHS sophomore Ethan Lam has been selected for the New York Tech Mini-Research Grant Award from NYIT for his research proposal, "The Role of Bifidobacterium and Beta-Glucan Fermentation in GLP-1 Secretion." His submission was determined to have scientific merit and could potentially impact in the STEM fields.



Samantha Gomez, grade 4 winner from Franklin.



Amanda Holguin, grade 3 winner from Lincoln.



Ashish Thomas, grade 5 winner from Washington.

STUDENT REP FOR BOE



High school senior Vanessa Wood.

BHS senior Vanessa Wood was appointed as the student representative to the Board of Education for the 2023-24 school year. Boards of education in NJ are required to appoint a student representative to the local school board as outlined in P.L. 2021, c.446, which was signed into law in January 2022.

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DISTRICT NEWS



SALUTE TO OUR VETERANS

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