



THE CR REPORT

CAESAR RODNEY SCHOOL DISTRICT QUARTERLY
"Where Excellence is Our Tradition"

Your District-Wide Information Source

February 2012 Issue



Governor Jack Markell presents the National Title 1 Distinguished School banner to Nellie Stokes Elementary School while over at Star Hill Elementary School, students and staff receive their State Title 1 Distinguished School banner.



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Ten Year High School Reunion Now Being Planned

The Caesar Rodney High School Class of 2002 is planning its ten-year reunion to be held on Saturday, June 16, 2012 at the Duncan Center in Dover. For tickets and additional information, send an email to: classreunioncr2002@gmail.com.

The CR Report is a publication created exclusively for the Caesar Rodney community. For questions or comment, please contact Ron Gough at ronald.gough@cr.k12.de.us.

What's Happening?

Board Meetings (7:00 p.m.)

February 21: Nellie Stokes Elementary School

March 20: Niel F. Postlethwait Middle School

April 17: John S. Charlton School

Special Events:

February 20: President's Day-Schools Closed

February 22: Interim Reports Issued

March 26-30 Kindergarten Registration



This image is a Quick Response Code (QR) for the Caesar Rodney School District website. If you have a Smartphone with a camera, just search for a QR "app" then use your phone to take a picture of this image. You will then be taken to the district website. Once you have installed the "app" on your phone, go to www.google.com and type in "QR Generator." You will then be able to create your own QR codes to share websites, videos or other information.

Caesar Rodney School District, 7 Front Street, Wyoming, DE 19934



Message From the Superintendent



The Caesar Rodney School District continues to receive accolades on a state and national level for excellence in our schools. Nellie Stokes Elementary school has been recognized as a National Distinguished Title 1 School. Add to the school's recent award as a National Blue Ribbon School, Stokes is the first school in the history of our district to receive both distinguished honors. Also, Star Hill Elementary School has been recognized as a State Title 1 Distinguished School while four other CR elementary schools received State Title 1 Distinguished Honoree status. I am proud of the hard work of our teachers, staff and students who work so hard every day to make our school district so successful.

We say goodbye to Assistant Superintendent Dr. Lou Ann Carlson who retires after serving our children and our district for so many years. Her caring for children, her commitment to education as well as an infectious smile will be missed by us all. We also say farewell to Janella Newman who retires as our Director of Special Education after a wonderful 33 year career.

I am delighted that 24 CR students have earned Michael Ferguson scholarships. These \$1,000 scholarships are given to students in grades 8 and 10 who have attained high scores on the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System in reading and mathematics.

We also take time to "spotlight" two sisters who have made a difference as well as one volunteer who gives her time to help our "Littlest Riders." There are so many in our district who go "above and beyond" to help others. I personally want to thank each and every person who sacrifices their time to help others have a better way of life.

Brown Elementary opens "Bank At School" Program

Students in grades 3-5 at W. Reily Brown recently participated in a ribbon-cutting event launching the school's first "Bank At School" program which allows students to create and manage their own non-custodial savings accounts. In partnership with the



With Caesar Rodney local school board members, banking officials and City of Dover Mayor Carleton Carey looking on, students at W. Reily Brown cut the ribbon opening the school's "Bank At School" program.

University of Delaware's Center for Economic Education and Entrepreneurship, Delaware Financial Literacy Institute, the State Bank Commissioner and TD Bank, the program is designed to teach students about



L to R: State Banking Commissioner Robert "Prudent Paul" Glen accepts play money from Brown teacher Monica "Grandma With Money" McCurry while assistant principal Jean "Wasteful Wendy" Allen gets ready to spend all of her money. In the background, Chevis Anderson from TD Bank and board president Kathleen Haynes look on as managers.

economics and financial management using hands-on, contextualized learning. Brown students in grades 3-5 can open up a savings account with as little as \$1.00. To encourage savings, TD Bank has offered to deposit \$10 in each student's account.

Dr. Lou Ann Carlson Retires

Assistant Superintendent Spent 23 years With the Caesar Rodney School District

Dr. Lou Ann Carlson, Assistant Superintendent for the Caesar Rodney School District announced her retirement effective the end of January. Dr. Carlson began her education journey in the former Newark School District which is now the Christina School District.

In 1980, Lou Ann began her career at Caesar Rodney working at Nellie Hughes Stokes Elementary School (then in Camden) in an Intensive Learning Center for special education students.

In 1983, she took maternal leave and returned in 1991 where she would once again teach at Stokes Elementary.

In 1995, with grade configurations changed at Stokes, Lou Ann was moved to fifth grade. It was that year that she was selected as Teacher of the Year for both Stokes and the Caesar Rodney School District.

Dr. Carlson would soon be reassigned as a Title 1 teacher at Stokes in grades K-3 for two years and put in charge of the Teacher Mentoring Program. She was also tasked as an Elementary Writing Resource Teacher.

In 1999, Dr. Carlson started her career in administration as an assistant principal at Allen Frear Elementary School. Just one year later, Lou Ann would be appointed as Supervisor of Reading by then superintendent Dr. David Robinson. In 2004, under the leadership of former superintendent Dr. Harry Roberts, Lou Ann was appointed as Director of Instruction. In 2006, she became Assistant Superintendent. One year later, Lou Ann completed her Doctor of Education in Innovation and Leadership.

"I will forever appreciate the people who have been around me in my career," said Dr. Carlson. I have learned from so many; they have taught me so much. If you are looking for something good, you will find it. If you are looking to learn, you will find it. This is what I have seen in those I have worked with."



Dr. Carlson reads to a kindergarten class at the McIlvaine Early Childhood Center.

Student Named Distinguished Finalist in National Program

Jennifer Hoffstadt, a senior at Caesar Rodney High School has been named a Distinguished Finalist by the Prudential Spirit of Community Awards pro-

gram. The program honors young people for outstanding acts of volunteerism. Jennifer collected more than 2,000 greeting cards from students in the Caesar Rodney School District and sent them to soldiers through the American Red



Cross "Holiday Mail For Heroes" program. Jennifer also volunteers her time with the USO and has raised money for families of fallen soldiers. She also volunteers with the Special Olympics and Habitat For Humanity. Jennifer will receive an engraved medallion from Prudential Spirit of Community Awards.

Early Intervention Program Now Accepting Applicants

The Caesar Rodney School District Early Intervention Program is now accepting applicants for role model positions for the 2012-2013 school year. This program offers part-time classrooms for three year olds and full-day classrooms for four year olds.

All classrooms are run by teachers certified in Early Childhood Education who follow a standard preschool curriculum and teach to the Delaware Early Learning Foundations. There is a fee for both programs.

Applicants will be screened in the spring. This process consists of a developmental screener as well as a trial period in one of our current classrooms.

If you are interested in this program please call Linda Davis at 697-4145 to apply.





Perrington Appointed Assistant Superintendent

**Lykens new Director of
Instruction; Thompson new
Director of Student Services**

At January's monthly meeting of the Caesar Rodney School District's local school board, it was announced that Mr. David Perrington has been appointed as the district's Assistant Superintendent. Mr. Perrington replaces Dr. Lou Ann Carlson who retired on January 31st after more than 23 years



with the Caesar Rodney School District.

Mr. Perrington, currently the Director of Human Resources for the district, will continue to work in that position as well. With more than 31 years in education, Perrington has spent 22 years in the Caesar Rodney School District as a social studies teacher, dean of students and as an assistant principal at Caesar Rodney High School.

Also, Scott Lykens, Ed.D., was chosen by the school board to become the district's Director of Instruction, replacing Dr. Carlson. Dr. Lykens has spent 26 years in the Caesar Rodney School District as a science teacher, science chairperson, assistant principal at Caesar Rodney High School and Supervisor of Instruction.



Additionally, Mr. Kevin Thompson has been chosen by the school board to become Director of Student Services, replacing Janella Newman, who retired last month. Mr. Thompson has been in education for 18 years, with the past nine years in the Caesar Rodney School District. He has served as a paraprofessional, special education teacher, Supervisor of Facilities Management, principal at

Allen Frear Elementary School, Kent County Intensive Learning Center Coordinator and as Administra-



Newman Retires After Distinguished 33 Year Career

Janella Newman, Director of Special Education for the Caesar Rodney School District, retired January 1 after a distinguished 33-year career in education.

Beginning with the Colonial School District in 1976, Janella would also work in several northern school districts before coming to Caesar Rodney in 1998 as Director of Special Education.

In her letter of resignation to Dr. Fitzgerald, Janella stated, "Special education will always hold a special place in my heart. I have always been a Rider and am proud that I have been able to contribute to the district's tradition of excellence."

We wish Janella well in her retirement!



GO RIDERS!

“Spotlight” on Caesar Rodney’s Finest

Thanking Those Who Help Others



Sisters Raise Nearly \$1100 for St. Jude Children’s Hospital

Fourth grader Aspen Caldwell and second grade sister Caydance recently teamed up at Welch Elementary School to raise money for children suffering from catastrophic illness.

At Welch’s annual Math-A-Thon, sponsored by St. Jude Children’s Hospital, Welch students look for fellow classmates, friends, parents and family members to sponsor them after completing booklets of math problems for three different grade levels. Prizes are given to students when they reach certain levels of pledges.

The two sisters raised \$1087 for St. Jude. Overall, Welch Elementary raised \$2168. Both Caldwell girls then donated all their prizes to the children at St. Jude.

“In the 15+ years of raising funds for St. Jude, Welch Elementary has raised \$37,930,” said paraprofessional Angel O’Connor, and Math-A-Thon coordinator. “Those funds have helped several of Delaware’s children who are suffering from cancer and other life-threatening diseases.” Thank you, ladies!



Aspen Caldwell, left with sister Caydance.

Volunteer at McIlvaine Library “Loves Working With ‘Littlest Riders’”



Laurel Meres
Community Volunteer

Laurel Meres works at a library, but not just any library. She works at the McIlvaine Early Childhood Center (MECC) where on any given day, hundreds of the more than 500 of Caesar Rodney School District’s ‘Littlest Riders’ come in to check out a book, return a book, ask a question or sit down with classmates to read about their favorite character or adventure. However, Laurel is more than “just” a volunteer. She is an integral part of the success of the library. “She reads my mind,” said school librarian Ruth Fuchs. “She easily anticipates what needs to be done next, she knows when to fill the gaps, she knows how to interact with the children and help them with their questions. She is just so invaluable to me and especially to the children at McIlvaine.”

Laurel has been working at MECC for the past 18 months. Prior to that, she served as a missionary working in Haiti, the Dominican Republic and Nicaragua; in June, she will leave for Honduras. When asked how many hours a week she volunteers at the library, staff members began laughing aloud saying “She has a cot in the back!” Says Laurel, “I usually come in at 8:30–9:00 in the morning and sometimes leave the same time at night.” Laurel also works full time in the summer getting the library ready for the next school year. “I started doing missionary work about five years ago, going to orphanages, hospitals and homes to pray with those who could use spiritual support,” said Laurel. Prior to missionary work, Laurel taught in a Christian school and also at the Woodbridge School District. “I do what I do because the Lord leads the way and I go. Also, my daughter Victoria works here, but as importantly, I love working with the ‘Littlest Riders.’ I just absolutely love working here, I really do!” Says Mrs. Fuchs, “It’s a wonderful relationship working with Laurel. It’s heaven sent!”



Race To The Top Work Continues in Second Year

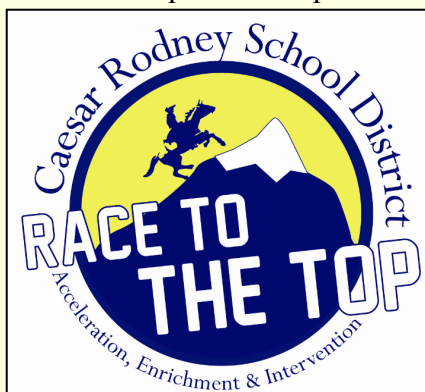
Race To The Top (RTTT) is a Federal grant program awarded to the State of Delaware and all districts beginning in the 2010-2011 school year. Delaware was one of the first states to be awarded this grant funded as part the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act in a highly competitive and rigorous application process.

Each year of funding for the state and for districts is contingent on successful performance through increases in student achievement and other sources of data. RTTT is our district improvement plan. As we enter our second year and are implementing everything that has been written in the state and district plans, we want to celebrate the positive changes we have made and recognize the hard work of our dedicated staff who are rising to the challenge to support our most valuable asset – our children.

However, we must also acknowledge that we cannot rest on our success. There is more work to be done as we work towards even more successful schools, with better teaching techniques and higher achieving students.

Change is difficult and it requires all of us as a community, a district, a building, or even as individuals to look within and commit to a course of continuous improvement. Additionally, we must realize that great work can only be accomplished by teams of people, working in collaboration, dedicated to a single vision for excellence.

Change is a unique thing – some of us feel that we are part of it and some of us feel that it is happening to us. To counter this feeling and take an active role in this process, we have prioritized the things that are truly important to RTTT as identified by our “needs” and will continue to place the Caesar Rodney School District as one of the top performing districts in the state. In fact, the same priorities we have now are the same priorities we started with 18 months ago and which we will continue into the future.



Priority 1: Implement Professional Learning Communities for grades k-12

Implementing Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for every school is potentially the most powerful change to ever occur in our district. These PLCs are where groups of teachers set common goals and work collaboratively to discuss teaching, assessing and supporting all students based on individual need and data.

The goal of PLC's is to put time in the hands of groups of teachers as a form of job-embedded training to share "best practices." The single goal is to ensure that there is consistency and quality in the planning, instruction, assessment for ALL students in the same grade or content specific course. PLC's now occur for all teachers across the district and we continue to train, develop, support and refine these practices.

Recently, on our last in-service day on January 13th, Dr. Richard Dewey, a consultant from Solution Tree© worked with both Fifer Middle School and Caesar Rodney High School to support PLCs. Through this work, the advantages of teachers working in PLCs became clear. They include:

- Data informed decision making to better individualize instruction.
- Gains in student achievement and increased confidence among staff.
- Decreases in student behavior problems classroom management issues from better instruction.
- The ability to maximize their strengths and minimize weaknesses as a team of professionals.
- The ability to test new ideas and be innovative.

Furthermore, the research is clear: there is no research that working in isolation leads to increases student achievement.

For more information on Race to the Top, please contact Ryan Fuller at ryan.fuller@cr.k12.de.us / (302) 697-2173 or visit: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/rttt/default.shtml>



Dr. Dewey makes a point during his presentation at Fifer Middle.



24 CR Students Earn Michael Ferguson Scholarships

Twenty-four CR students are this year's recipients of the Michael C. Ferguson scholarships of \$1,000 each for attaining high scores on the 2011 Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) reading and mathematics tests. One student earned two scholarships.

The program, administered by the Delaware Higher Education Office (DHEO), is authorized to award a maximum of 300 scholarships annually (\$1,000 each) to eighth and 10th graders who attain the highest scores on the DCAS in the content areas of reading and math.

The law states that up to 150 of the Ferguson scholarships will be awarded to students who participate in the free and reduced lunch (FRL) program. Of the maximum 150 scholarships awarded in the FRL program and the 150 not in FRL, up to 75 scholarships will be awarded to eighth graders and 75 awarded to 10th graders.

Students can use their scholarship once they begin their postsecondary education; however, they must enroll at an institution within five calendar years after graduating from high school or the scholarship is forfeited. Payments are made directly to the institution after the student notifies DHEO.

Each recipient will be contacted with instructions for setting up an online account where they can keep track of their scholarship funds, update contact information as needed and identify what colleges they plan to attend. The Ferguson Scholarship recipients are:

Caesar Rodney High School

Billings, Andrew 10th Grade Math \$1,000
Hart, Tina 10th Grade Reading \$1,000
Howell, Zachary 10th Grade Reading \$1,000
Leonard, Elizabeth 10th Grade Reading \$1,000
Lust, Shannon 10th Grade Math \$1,000
Mihok, Jacqueline 10th Grade Math \$1,000
Norris, Alaunra 10th Grade Reading \$1,000
Papen, Zackary 10th Grade Math \$1,000
Peugh, Ryan 10th Grade Reading \$1,000
Scruggs, Karina 10th Grade Reading \$1,000
Taylor, Michael 10th Grade Reading \$1,000
Whitaker, Kirbie 10th Grade Reading \$1,000

Postlethwait Middle School

Booth, Emily 8th Grade Math, \$1,000
Brown, Ashley 8th Grade Math, \$1,000
Hartley, Cameron 8th Grade Reading \$1,000
Hartley, Cameron 8th Grade Math \$1,000
Johnson, Jasmine 8th Grade Reading \$1,000
Kessler, Alexandra 8th Grade Reading \$1,000
Leczner, Jessica 8th Grade Reading \$1,000
Patel, Akil 8th Grade Math \$1,000
Purcell, Caitlin 8th Grade Math \$1,000
Satterfield, Clay 8th Grade Math \$1,000
Vicere, Marisa 8th Grade Reading \$1,000
Wirick, Jeremy 8th Grade Reading \$1,000

Fifer Middle School

McQueen, Isaac 8th Grade Reading, \$1,000

Riders Are Writers At McIlvaine

The McIlvaine Early Childhood Center recently recognized its second group of "Riders are Writers" students. Every classroom completed a school-wide writing prompt about favorite winter activities. Students recognized as a part of the "Riders are Writers" program drew a detailed picture about their favorite winter activity and wrote ideas to match their illustration. Mrs. Kijowski and Ms. Castillo, McIlvaine's principal and assistant principal, told the students that their writing represents their hard work and creativity. All students recognized as a part of the Riders are Writers program received a t-shirt and pencil for their efforts. Congratulations on a job well done!





Allen Frear Renovation Well Ahead of Schedule

The ongoing renovation of Allen Frear Elementary School continues well ahead of schedule. From the moment students and staff left school to began summer vacation, work has been non-stop to keep the massive renovation on task to be ready for the 2012-2013 school



year. From removing most structures, installing new electrical and mechanical systems, and completely overhauling both interior and exterior surfaces, work continues to upgrade Allen Frear to a state-of-the-art school for CR Riders.



Class of '72 Reunion Planned

The Caesar Rodney High School Class of 1972 is now in the planning stages for their 40th anniversary reunion. For information, contact Jeff Brown at (302) 492-0766 or ntprz@dmv.com.

CR District Photos Now Online

More than 1200 print-ready photos of students, staff and community members are online at: <http://www.cr.k12.de.us/photos/photos.htm>

Six CR Schools Named Title 1 Distinguished Schools

The Nellie Hughes Stokes Elementary School in Dover has been named by the United States Department of Education as a National Title 1 Distinguished School, while Star Hill Elementary School in Dover has been named a State Title 1 Distinguished School. Additionally, W. Reily Brown Elementary School, Allen Frear Elementary School, J. Ralph McIlvaine Early Childhood Center and W.B. Simpson Elementary Schools have all been recognized as State Title 1 Distinguished School Honorees.



The National Title I Distinguished Schools Program provides an opportunity for Title I schools from every state to be publicly recognized for their positive educational achievements. Each state may select two schools for national recognition; one from each of the following categories:

Front Row L to R: Student Council President Morgan Brown, Student Council Vice President Abbie Wright. Back Row: Secretary Lillian Lowery, Board President Kathleen Haynes, Superintendent Dr. Kevin Fitzgerald, Principal Corey Miklus, Governor Jack Markell.

Category 1: School that has exceeded its adequate yearly progress for two or more years

Category 2: School that has significantly closed the achievement gap between student groups

Selected schools must have a poverty rate of at least 35% for the selected year and have met or exceeded state standards for making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two or more consecutive years.

As a National Title 1 Distinguished School, Stokes will receive a \$10,000 award and a banner from the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) while Star Hill will receive \$5,000 and a banner for their distinction as a State Title 1 Distinguished School. The four State Title 1 Distinguished Honorees will receive a banner from DDOE.