

# COMMUNITY CONTACT



**September 2011**

**SOUTH PLAINFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**"CREATING A COMMUNITY OF LIFELONG LEARNERS"**

## **Welcome Letter from Dr. Gary Bowen, Interim Superintendent of Schools**

As this school year begins, I wish to thank everyone in advance for their support of our educational missions throughout the forthcoming year. This community's reputation regarding interest, inclusion, and participation in school-related programs and activities is well-known. It is also well-known that students learn and grow in direct proportion to how well we partner together as caring adults with one purpose in mind – the children. Many hundreds of people contribute the time and energy necessary to make all South Plainfield schools wonderful centers for teaching and learning. We are so very proud of the many wonderful accomplishments by our students, staff, parents, and supporters. In fact, I've had the pleasure of getting to know many individuals who serve as members of our staff, parent-school organizations, elected officials, the Education Foundation, various school volunteers, athletic, performing arts and academic boosters, and numerous stakeholders throughout the South Plainfield educational community.

As reflected in the pages that follow in this newsletter, I am proud of what our students and staff have recently achieved and look forward to even greater strides in the future. I hope you enjoy the many accomplishments shared with you in this edition of *Community Contact*.

*Gary R. Bowen, Ed.D.*

Interim Superintendent of Schools

### **4 A's.....**

- \* Academics.....**
- \* Athletics.....**
- \* Arts .....**
- \* Activities**



### **PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE**

**Sharon Miller, Chair**  
**John Farinella**  
**Carol Byrne**  
**Bill Seesselberg.**

### **ADMINISTRATION**

**Dr. Gary Bowen, Interim Superintendent of Schools**

**Dr. Frank A. Cocchiola, Jr., Interim Assistant**

**Superintendent of Schools**

**James Olobardi**

**Business Administrator/Board Secretary**

### **Board of Education Members**

**Jim Giannakis, Pres.    Debbie Boyle, Vice President**

**Bill Seesselberg    Joseph Sorrentino**

**Chris Hubner    John Farinella**

**Gary Stephenson    Carol Byrne    Sharon Miller**

Upcoming Dates of Importance

Oct. 12—Single- Session Day (Prof. Dev.)  
Nov. 8—No School (Full day Prof. Dev.)  
Nov. 15—End of the First Marking Period  
Nov. 17 & 18—Early dismissal, elementary only (Gr. K—4 parent conferences)  
Dec. 1—Early dismissal, Grant and Middle School (Gr. 5—8 parent conferences)  
Dec. 8—High School parent conferences (evening)

Back-to-School Nights (2010-11)

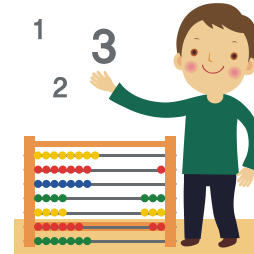
*High School* - Tuesday, Sept. 27  
*Middle School* - Thursday, Sept. 15  
*Grant School* - Thursday, Sept. 22  
*Roosevelt School* - Tuesday, Sept. 13  
*Riley School* - Monday, Sept. 12  
*Kennedy School* - Tuesday, Sept. 20  
*Franklin School* - Monday, Sept. 19



**STATE TESTING DATES 2011-12**

Grade 3 NJ ASK (Lang. Arts & Math) -	May 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 2012
Grade 4 NJ ASK (Lang Arts, Math & Science) -	May 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 2012
Grades 5 & 6 NJ ASK (Lang. Arts & Math) -	April 30, May 1, 2, 3, 2012
Grades 7 & 8 NJ ASK (Lang Arts & Math) -	April 23, 24, 25, 26, 2012
Fall HSPA (Lang. Arts & Math for retained 11 graders and twelfth graders, Adult HS) -	Oct. 4, 5 & 6, 2011
Spring HSPA (Lang. Arts & Math for all first time 11 graders, retained 11 graders, 12 graders, Adult HS students) -	March 6, 7, 8 2012
NJ Biology Competency Test—	may 15, 16, 2012

## CURRICULUM



- A revised K—12 Enrichment (G & T) Program was approved by the Board of Education for implementation in the coming year. It has an identification process and will include means of delivering these services at every grade level.
- New national standards have been adopted by NJ (Common Core State Standards) in Language Arts Literacy and Math. The initial requirement was to rewrite the K—2 math curriculum as per these Standards. This was completed and is accessible on the Curriculum component of the website.
- Curriculum revision is scheduled to continue in 2011-12 in K—12 Language Arts, Gr. 3—12 Math, K—12 Science and K—12 Phys. Ed./Health.

## NEW JERSEY STATE ASSESSMENTS

Each year NJ State Assessments are administered in math and language arts in grades 3—8 and 11. Performance is recorded on an individual student basis, by school and by district. In addition each school has 40 indicators to meet at each grade level tested to make “Adequate Yearly Progress” (AYP). This year’s AYP results are:

Franklin School	Made AYP. Passed 40 of 40 indicators.
Kennedy School	Made AYP. Passed 40 of 40 indicators
Riley School	Made AYP. Passed 40 of 40 indicators.
Roosevelt School	Did not make AYP. Passed 39 of 40 indicators.
Grant School (Gr. 5)	Did not make AYP. Passed 38 of 40 indicators.
Grant School (Gr. 6)	Did not make AYP. Passed 39 of 40 indicators.
Middle School	Did not make AYP. Passed 35 of 40 indicators.
So. Plainfield HS	Did not make AYP. Passed 39 of 40 indicators.

Details concerning this matter are available in the Asst. Superintendent’s office.

## NEW STAFF

We welcome the following new staff members to the South Plainfield School District and wish them good luck in their first year here. We look forward to adding their energy and enthusiasm to our program.

**Jan-Marie Sethman**-District Occupational Therapist Assistant. Jan-Marie is a certified occupational therapist provider and also a certified personal trainer. She has previously worked in the Center School in Highland Park.

**Michele Charney-Hulse**-Middle School L.D.T.C. Michele is a graduate of West Chester University with a Masters Degree from Rutgers. She previously worked in the Mountain-side and Cranford Public School Districts. She is also currently the gymnastics coach at Cranford HS.

**Kimberly Brancato**-High School Special Education Teacher. Kim has experience in New Brunswick, Middlesex County Commission and Middlesex County College. She is Highly Qualified in K-12 science and language arts and also certified as a Teacher of Psychology.

**Joseph Szaro**-High School Special Education Teacher. Joe is an Air Force veteran who earned his BA at Thomas Edison State college and his MA at St. Peters. He has certification in K—12 Social Studies, K—5 elementary, Special Education and Supervision. He has previously worked in Carteret and South Amboy school districts, and is a varsity baseball and basketball coach.

**Colleen Ford**-Grant School Art Teacher. Colleen has a BA in Art education with a minor in psychology from the College of New Jersey. She did her student teaching in the Manalapan-Englishtown Reg. School district. She will be the Grant School Art teacher. As an art teacher she hones her skills as a painter.

**Amy Leso**-Riley School Elementary Teacher (Grade 1). Amy has been an instructional aide in the South Plainfield school district, and filled in while other teachers were out on leave. She has a BA in Psychology from Lycoming College and earned K—5 elementary and special education certificates at Bloomfield College.

**Nicole Sutherland**-High School Social Studies Teacher. Nicole earned her BA degree in History and has a NJ certificate in K—12 Social Studies. She has been involved in marching and concert band.

**Nick Curcio**-High School Mathematics Teacher. Nick received his BS and MA degrees in mathematics from Rutgers. He has student taught in Franklin School and also taught grades 6 & 8 in Phillipsburg Middle School. He is a former South Plainfield student-athlete.

**Kyle McElroy**-High School Special Education Teacher. Kyle worked previously in Woodbridge and did his student teaching in Sayreville War Memorial HS. He has a dual certificate with the emphasis on math and special education.

**Jennifer Massaro**-High School Special Education Teacher. Jennifer did her student teaching in South Plainfield HS. She graduated from Kean University with a certificates in English (K—12) and Special Services (K—12)

**Vincent Parisi**-K-12 Supervisor of Mathematics/Science. Vincent is a new addition to the supervisory staff which is in the process of expanding as per State and consultant recommendations. He has undergraduate degrees in Engineering and English from Rutgers, an MA in School Administration and Supervision from Montclair State. His certifications cover administration, supervisions, mathematics, physical science, English and Elementary school. He has worked in the supervision field in Fort Lee, Paramus, Berkeley Heights, Elmwood Park and South Hackensack. He will be busy analyzing and revising the mathematics and science curriculums as per the national Common Core State Standards. He has been President of the NJ Science Education Leadership Association and on the steering committee for the NJ Science Convention.

**James Olobardi** joins the district this fall as the new full time Business Administrator/Board Secretary. James comes to South Plainfield with a wealth of experience in the field having worked in Alpine, Moonachie, Englewood Cliffs, East Rutherford and for the past four plus years in the Englewood School District. Jim has a BA in Accounting and an MBA in Finance from FDU.



### CONGRATULATONS TO.....

.....**Leo Whalen** on his appointment as the new principal at Riley School.

.....**Ellen Decker-Lorys** who takes over as the new principal at Grant School.

.....**Al Czech** who is returning to his former position as Director of Athletics.

.....**Tameika (Grier) Dupiche** on her recent marriage.

.....**Ralph Errico** is a new addition to the principals in the district assuming the position at Franklin School on Sept. 15. Ralph is not new to the district having served as a HS asst. principal. This is his 12th year in education after 20 years in private business. He has an undergraduate degree from Jersey City State College in Business Administration and a graduate degree from New Jersey City University in Educational Administration. He has been a middle school math teacher for five years and a South Plainfield HS Asst. Principal for the past six. We all wish him the best of luck as he assumes the leadership of Franklin School.

## **WE ARE SO PROUD OF:**

All 8 AP Calculus B students scored a “5” in the AP exam, the highest score a student can achieve!

Senior, Joseph Palozzo, appeared in an off Broadway musical, Broadway Jane.

Junior, Anthony Ashnault, placed 2<sup>nd</sup> in the Pan Am Championship for the U.S. FILA Cadet Pan Am Team. Anthony was one of ten wrestlers chosen to represent the United States, and was the only New Jersey representative.

Kennedy, Riley and Franklin Schools all achieved AYP status on the spring 2011 NJ State Assessments in all 40 indicators. Great job!

Junior, Cory Singer, has been nominated for Outstanding Youth Actor for 2011 Perry Award. Former students, Rocco Severini and Kelly Kline, have also been nominated for Perry Awards this year. The NJACT Perry Awards are presented for outstanding achievement in community theatre.



## **ANTI-HARASSMENT, INTIMIDATION AND BULLYING LAW**

On January 5, 2011 Governor Christie signed into law the NJ Anti-Bullying Bill of Rights Act, which became effective on Sept. 1, 2011. Dr. Frank Cocchiola, Interim Asst. Superintendent of Schools, has been appointed the district’s Anti-Bullying Coordinator. Each school has an Anti-Bullying Specialist and School Safety Team addressing incidents and allegations of harassment, intimidation and bullying under his direction. Any person who witnesses or has knowledge of such an incident should contact the building principal who will forward the information to the building specialist. All such allegations will be investigated and recorded. The full board policy is available on the district website <http://spnet.org>.

Dr. Cocchiola is also the board appointed Affirmative Action Officer, and as such investigates and records all allegations of workplace or school harassment.

Oct. 3-7 has been designated as a “Week of Respect”. A variety of activities are being planned in all of the district’s schools.

## DISTRICT WEBSITE

<http://spboe.org>

The district has contracted with a new website provider this year. The result is a site that has enhanced capabilities.

- Information may be translated into selected languages.
- All teachers will have the ability to design their own individual websites.
- Students with disabilities can better access the information.



Under the direction of Annemarie Stoeckel, District Supervisor of Technology, staff have been trained in each school building to act as website “managers”. They will train other staff members on how to better use the site and be responsible for entering new information. Annemarie is also working with the Asst. Superintendent in creating a data base of existing curriculum guides, required parent forms and information, and a new section focusing on sources of district pride. We are following the belief that, “There is Power in Pride” and want the community to be aware of the many great things that are going on in the district.



The beginning of the 2011-12 school year finds the district adding a great deal of technology hardware and software through a variety of funding sources.

### Hardware

Desktops: 100  
Laptops: 136  
Laser Printers: 52  
Smartboards: 19  
SMART Response interactive response systems – 7 sets of 24  
Multimedia Projectors: 26  
Elmo document cameras: 8  
iPevo point-2-view usb document cameras: 10  
video cameras: 4  
web cameras: 8  
Digital Cameras: 14

### Software

Schoolwires (K-12 website)  
Learn 360 (K-12)  
Brain Pop (K-6)  
Solo Suite 6 Literacy software (Gr. 5 & 6)

*On behalf of the board of education, administration, faculty and supportive staff I want to wish the district's parents and students a healthy, productive school year.*

*I also want to remind you that you can stay abreast of district and school activities, and access pertinent information at any time from our district website. You can also voice your opinion or just ask a question through our "contact us" link.*

*Dr. Frank A. Cocchiola, Jr.  
Interim Assistant Superintendent of Schools*



***“There is Power in Pride”***