

PMSD CONNECT ON



Our Mission: To Prepare All Students for Tomorrow's Challenges and Opportunities

Pocono Mountain School District 2017-2018 Issue 1

News Bits

First Day of School for 2017-18 School Year: The first day of school for students for the 2017-18 school year is September 5, 2017. The 2017-18 school calendar is available on the PMSD website at www.pmsd.org

Full-Day Kindergarten Registration Continues for 2017-18 School Year: Contact the Student Registration Center at (570) 839-7121 ext. 40400 to schedule an appointment. Children must be 5 years old on or before September 1, 2017.

New immunization requirements: The Pa Department of Health is changing the school immunization regulations beginning August 2017. The new requirements go into effect for the start of the upcoming 2017-18 school year. See article on page 4.

Free immunization clinic: The PA Department of Health offers a free immunization clinic for the uninsured and underinsured on the first and third Thursday of every month from 9 a.m. to noon at the Monroe County State Health Center, 1972 W. Main St., Ste. 102, Stroudsburg, PA 18360. To schedule an appointment, community members should call the PA Department of Health at 570-424-3020.

2 Mill Tax Decrease: The Pocono Mountain School District Board of Education approved a 2 mill tax decrease for District property owners at the School Board meeting on July 26, 2017. The Board has reduced property taxes for five consecutive years by a total of 12 mills.

Certificate of Excellence: Congratulations to the Pocono Mountain School District Business Office for earning the Association of School Business Officials International Certificate of Excellence in Financial Reporting for its Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for the third consecutive year.

District Attendance Policy changes due to new law

The Pocono Mountain School District Board of Education approved revisions to the District's Attendance Policy (#204) at a meeting on July 26, 2017. The changes made to the policy were needed to ensure the policy is consistent with the new guidelines outlined in PA House Bill 2017, adopted by the Commonwealth in November 2016.

The policy changes include requirements for the District/Schools to provide written notice of multiple unexcused/unlawful absences, hold a Student Attendance Improvement Conference (SAIC) and create a Student Attendance Improvement Plan (SAIP).

For habitual truant students, defined in the law as students who have more than six school days of unexcused absence during the same school year, who are age 15 and older, the District is now required to refer students to a school-

See **POLICY CHANGES** on Page 3



Performing Arts Camp: Eight Pocono Mountain students participated in a Performing Arts Camp sponsored by the Pocono Mountains Music Festival. Congratulations to PM East High School students Jamie Agins, Mary Bolan, Brianna Chiavetta, Jason Lopez, Athena Rajnai, McKenzie Valderrama and Megan Wescott; and PM West HS students Sam Bozic and Jeremiah Maldonado. The students presented an amazing musical and theatrical Camp Showcase to the public on August 6, 2017. (Photo by Wendy Frable, Director of Public Relations)

PMSD expands its Cyber Program! Now registering students in grades K-12

Enrollment still open for 2017-18

Building on the success of Pocono Mountain School District's Secondary Cyber Program, the District is excited to announce the expansion of its PMSD Cyber Program to include a half-day, hybrid Cyber Program for students in grades K-5.

"The hybrid Cyber program will provide personalized learning to all enrolled students," said Dr. Catherine Sweeney, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction. "Personalized learning encompasses differentiated and individualized learning, and goes one step further, adding elements of student involvement and choice."

Students may enroll in the District's cyber program for Mathematics and/or English Language Arts and attend their traditional, "brick and mortar" school for the remaining courses. Parents will have the option of choosing either half-day AM or half-day PM, depending on their preference. Within this model, students

will take Science, Social Studies, and Related Arts (Art, Music, Library, Health/Physical Education) with students in their home school building while taking Mathematics and English Language Arts at home, through the District's superior Cyber Program.

"What we like about the hybrid cyber program for grades K to 5 is our students still get to be part of their school, while parents still have the control of their education at home," said Dr. Jessica Loverdi, Principal of PMSD Cyber Program. "We also like that our teachers in the program to customize the program to meet the individual student's needs."

Students enrolled in the half-day AM program may take the bus to school and be picked up after their classes are completed, while students in the half-day PM program will need to be transported to school and may take the bus home.

The PMSD Cyber Program strives to engage students in a highly motivational, student-

See **CYBER-CHARTER...** on Page 3

From the Superintendent...

By Dr. Elizabeth Robison
Superintendent of Schools

As we prepare for the upcoming school year, I would like to take a moment to encourage all parents to accept the challenge of becoming actively involved within our schools. Strong academic success is correlated with a talented staff, dedicated leadership, a devoted Board of Education and active parent involvement. I need you to be part of our team as we work together with a common mission – “Preparing our students for tomorrow’s challenges and opportunities.

Research on parent involvement in schools consistently shows that when parents are involved in schools, children do better. These research studies found that children with parents who are involved in their schools are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades
- Perform higher on tests
- Pass their classes
- Attend school regularly
- Have a more positive attitude toward school
- Complete homework assignments
- Graduate and continue with post-secondary education
- Demonstrate better social skills

Each year our school administrators hold team meetings with their faculty and staff to discuss and plan for the many events they will offer for



children and parents the following school year. They critique the events they held the previous school year to determine what type of events parents want for their children and families and how to get more parents to come to afterschool events and be actively engaged in their children’s learning.

I’ve challenged my administrative team again this school year to work hard to increase parent involvement in our schools. Our school administrators have accepted that challenge and are planning many wonderful activities for you and your families to participate in throughout 2017-2018.

As a former reading support teacher, I am especially excited about the family reading nights and other reading-focused events and activities that will be offered in our schools. I am reading a book that will be offered to parents in one of our intermediate schools for the school’s new *One School, One Book* program. The title of the book is a surprise and will be unveiled by the school at a future date, so all I can tell parents is that I know they will love reading this book with their children.

This year, several of our elementary and intermediate schools will be participating in the *One School, One Book* program. Soon after the start of the school year, parents will receive more information on the program and how they can be involved in and share this learning process with their child and their school.

One School, One Book is just one example of the many, many exciting activities and programs our schools have planned for our students and their families for 2017-2018. A snapshot of some of those activities is available in the Back-to-School section of this District newsletter. More information on events at our schools will be posted to the District and school websites at the start of the school year.

Let’s change the discussion our school administrators have at the end of this school year from how do we get more parents to attend programs in our schools to how are we going to accommodate the overwhelming interest and support of parents at our school programs next year.

Each of you is a powerful tool that can reinforce the mindset of a child to view school as an integral part of the entire family’s life. Please watch a short video on Parent Involvement by *PTO Today* through the link on our PMSD website (www.pmsd.org), under the Announcements Section.

Together, let’s build a stronger school-parent partnership in 2017-2018 and make PMSD the strongest family possible. Thank you for helping to make our students the greatest!

DRIVERS: Don’t run the RED

Annually, more than 1,000 motorists do not obey the PA School Bus Stopping Law and some of those incidents occur right here in the Pocono Mountain School District.

District officials would like to remind drivers to please watch out for children waiting at District school bus stops and to stop for school buses that are loading or unloading passengers beginning September 5, 2017, the first day of school for Pocono Mountain SD.

The Pennsylvania School Bus Stopping Law requires all drivers to take the following actions:

- When you meet or overtake a stopped school bus with red signal lights flashing and stop arm extended, you MUST STOP.
- When you approach an intersection where a school bus is stopped with red signal lights



flashing and stop arm extended, you MUST STOP.

- You MUST STOP at least ten (10) feet away from the school bus.
- You MUST WAIT until the red lights have stopped flashing and the stop arm has been withdrawn before moving.
- DO NOT MOVE until all the children have reached a place of safety.

Let’s make the 2017-2018 school year the first school year in which no such dangerous incidents occur at District bus stops!

Tips for Involved Parents

1. Talk to your child daily about school activities and experiences.
2. Talk with teachers regularly – even when no problems exist.
3. Broaden your child’s understanding of the world by visiting malls, museums, parks, zoos, universities, sports stadiums, theaters, transportation facilities, farms and local landmarks.
4. Make learning relevant by encouraging activities that use what kids learn at school. Encourage kids to count money; make shopping lists; calculate costs, sales prices and taxes; read menus and newspapers; and write letters.
5. Designate a specific time and place for homework.
6. Read to your child every day and encourage independent reading. Make frequent trips to the public library.
7. Set goals that are challenging but attainable.
8. Visit the school regularly and become involved in school activities as often as possible.
9. Become familiar with your child’s curriculum and its required skills and goals.
10. Be aware that your attitudes about school – and teachers – influence your child’s attitudes.

(From Education World)

Policy Changes continued from Page 1

or community based attendance improvement program or file a citation in a magisterial district court.

For habitually truant students who are age 14 and younger, the District must refer the students to a school- or community-based attendance improvement program or refer the students to Children and Youth Services. After a CYS investigation is completed, the District may file a citation against the student or parent in a magisterial district court.

Research shows attendance is the single most important factor

in school success. A student who is 10 minutes late every day will miss 30 hours of instruction during the year. There are legitimate reasons for children being absent. However, many students are absent for reasons that are considered unexcused absences.

Overall, regular, punctual attendance is extremely important for a student's success in school and later in life in the world of work. Pocono Mountain School District administrators seek the support of parents to ensure all students attend school regularly and arrive to school on time.

Snapshot of Attendance Policy changes

- Students who arrive more than 120 minutes (2 hours) late to school will be considered absent for one half day.
 - The school must receive a note within THREE school days of the child's return to school OR after 10 consecutive days of absence.
 - Students may not leave the school before dismissal time UNLESS THE SCHOOL HAS RECEIVED A WRITTEN PARENTAL GUARDIAN REQUEST that they be allowed to do so.
 - Excuses for all absences for medical, dental or other health care appointments must include a note from the physician and/or dental professional verifying the appointment.
 - A written request for all religious absences must be made at least two weeks in advance of the proposed date(s) of absence.
 - Approval of Educational Trips will not be granted during the first or last five days of the school year OR during the administration of achievement tests or statewide assessment tests.
- Additional, minor changes have been made to the policy as well. The Attendance Policies (204 and 204.2 Truancy) can be found in the Policy Manual on the PMSD website at www.pmsd.org, under the Our District dropdown menu.

Cyber-charter students make the switch now to PMSD Cyber continued from Page 1

centered educational program that relies on strong basic educational principles. It continues to incorporate the latest information and communications technology to promote student achievement and to foster higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills. Students have the opportunity to master essential content skills and to build a strong foundation enabling them to be successful throughout school.

The PMSD Cyber Program for all grades (K-12) offers students so much more than what is available to them with outside cyber charter schools.

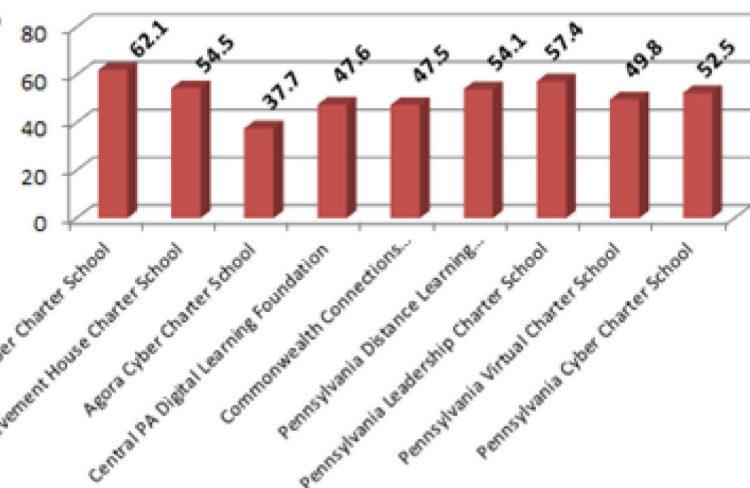
“The teachers in our program customize the program specifically to meet each individual student's needs,” said Dr. Stephen Spengler, Director of Instructional Technology. “You will not find a cyber program that is as geared toward the individual educational needs of each student as our program. We are using our PMSD curriculum and our highly qualified teachers combined with an excellent cyber program platform, Edgenuity.”

PMSD Cyber provides an integrated, team-based system of instruction that includes dedicated classroom teachers and fully integrated and meaningful content. The District offers 360 degree student support engineered specifically for the students' educational success including:

- Dedicated highly-qualified Pocono Mountain School District teachers
- Ongoing communication and access to students' home schools
- Enrichment and remediation opportunities
- Opportunities to learn from home, in school, or a combination of both
- Access to all the instructional resources of the Pocono Mountain School District
- The program is free and there are no additional



Academic Score



Outside cyber-charter schools continue to show lower academic achievement than traditional public schools.

costs to enroll in the PMSD Cyber Program or receive any of its services.

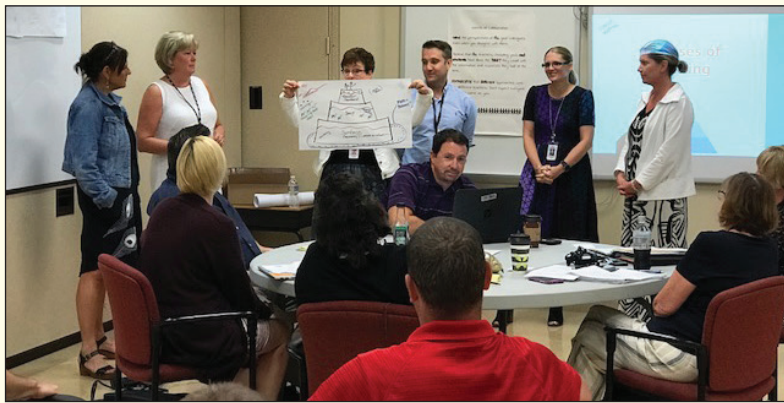
- Keep your hard-earned tax dollars local by enrolling in the PMSD Cyber Program and not in a charter or cyber-charter program.
- The program is flexible and is tailored to the unique demands of today's online students.
- PMSD Cyber students attend a well-established school system that has existed for more than 50 years.
- Students can earn their Pocono Mountain School District public high school diploma upon successful completion of the program.
- PMSD Cyber students have opportunities to socialize with students in their school communities and have full access to district resources and facilities, including guidance and library services.
- Students can join district-sponsored extracurricular activities, including Band and Chorus, clubs, and sports.

- Participate in related arts, field-trips, assemblies, and special events at school.

The District sets high standards for all students attending its Cyber Program. Supports and services under Chapter 14, 15, and 16 include a full-continuum are offered and are in compliance with all federal and state laws. Exceptional students attending the PMSD Cyber Program are provided access to the general education curriculum with specially designed instruction or accommodations/modifications based on the student's individual strengths and needs.

It is not too late for students enrolled in outside cyber-charter schools to choose the PMSD Cyber Program.

District residents interested in learning more about the PMSD Cyber Program or wishing to make the PMSD Cyber Program their school of choice; please contact Dr. Jessica Loverdi at 570-839-7121, ext. 51266 to set up an appointment.



Learning is always a priority at Pocono Mountain School District. Administrators attended a two-day professional development session in August 2017 on Teacher Effectiveness taught by Dr. Stefani Hite, Educational Consultant. (Photo by Dr. Mary Beth Gustafson, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education)

High school program of studies a must read for Gr 9-12 parents

By Dr. Catherine Sweeney
Assistant Superintendent
for Curriculum & Instruction

The Pocono Mountain School District, in partnership with the home and community, is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment in which each student will attain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to become a productive citizen and life-long learner.

The job of the Pocono Mountain School District is to graduate students who are college and career ready. Our goal is to provide students with an educational experience that best matches their skills and interests while stretching students to become the best they can be.

The path to success is as varied as the individual students we serve. By aligning coursework to students' post-secondary goals, students see the relevance in what they are learning and are more likely to achieve at higher levels.

In the 21st Century, high school is about more than just the acquisition of credits. We are partners in each student's educational experience. Providing each student with a flexible, personalized learning plan will ensure success beyond high school. Student should begin planning for their post-secondary success even before they enter high school.

For example, as students begin

the scheduling process for their ninth-grade year, counselors will work closely with students to chart a path that, if successfully completed, will give students a competitive advantage when applying to the college or career of their choice.

The 2017 -2018 High School (Grades 9 – 12) Program of Studies continues to reflect the offerings of rigorous courses designed to maximize each student's educational experience. For those students who wish to accelerate their high school experience and graduate from high school with some college credits in hand, the Pocono Mountain School District offers 19 Advanced Placement (AP) Courses in major content areas and the Fine Arts (Music and Art) as well dual enrollment opportunities.

Students wishing to participate in a more challenging curriculum but who do not wish to acquire college credits may choose from a number of honors courses in each of the major content areas. Some students may wish to begin their career training while still in high school at the Monroe Career and Technical Institute (MCTI), which offers students' industry-benchmarked training in high-priority occupations. Depending upon their college and career goals, students' may follow a flexible path that is a combination of those described above.

Don't wait, Vaccinate

The Pennsylvania Department of Health is changing the school immunization regulations beginning August 2017.

The regulations are intended to ensure that children attending school in the commonwealth are adequately protected against potential outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases.

Here are the new PA school immunization requirements for the start of the 2017-2018 school year:

Children in ALL grades (K-12) need the following immunizations for attendance:

- 4 doses of tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis* (1 dose on or after 4th birthday)
- 4 doses of polio (4th dose on or after 4th birthday and at least 6 months after previous dose

given)

- 2 doses of measles, mumps and rubella**
- 3 doses of hepatitis B
- 2 doses of varicella (chickenpox) or evidence of immunity

Seventh through 12th Grade ADDITIONAL immunization requirements for attendance:

- 2 doses meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV). Note: First dose is given 11 - 15 years of age; a second dose is required at age 16 or entry into the 12th grade. If the dose was given at 16 years of age or older only one dose is required.

- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (Tdap)

* Usually given as DTaP or DTP or DT or Td

** Usually given as MMR.



Congratulations to PM East Cardinal, 2017 graduate Khyasia Caldwell, who won her third straight PIAA State long jump championship with a jump of 19 ft.,9.75 in. at the state meet at Shippensburg University on May 27.

Students excel through activities/athletics

By Rob Melosky
Coordinator of Co-Curricular &
Athletic Operations

The start of a new school year offers students in elementary to high school a new opportunity to get involved in the many fantastic, challenging and rewarding co-curricular and athletic opportunities available in our schools throughout Pocono Mountain School District.

Our District offers 95 co-curricular activities and 114 athletic and intramural teams for students.

In the remaining time before the start of school I would ask our parents to please talk to their children about the many wonderful opportunities offered to student through our co-curricular

and athletics programs. Please encourage your children to get involved in their schools and to take advantage of the activities offered to them in their schools.

Co-curricular and athletic activities not only teach children teamwork, determination, the value of practice and hard work, how to expand their interests, how to refine their talents, time-management, but they also build self-confidence. Activities are also a lot of fun too, and a great way for students to make new friends through shared interests.

To help start that important discussion between our parents and their school-aged children about which activities to join when school

See Get Involved...on Page 5

Get involved!

starts, here is a list of the many opportunities offered in our schools. Please note, our schools offer activities based on student interest and support, so activities offered vary by school.

Co-curricular

High School

- Band
- Chess
- Chorus
- Dance Team
- FBLA - Future Business Leaders of America (East)
- Indoor Color Guard
- Jazz Ensemble
- Junior Academy of Science
- Marching Band
- Pep Band
- Mock Trial
- Newspaper
- Peer Support (East)
- SADD
- Scholastic Scrimmage
- Science Olympiad
- Show Choir
- Speech and Debate
- Student Government
- Yearbook
- Musicals
- National Art Honor Society
- National Honor Society
- National Music

- Honor Society
- National French Honor Society
- National Spanish Honor Society

Junior High

- National Junior Honor Society
- Newspaper
- Student Government
- Yearbook

Elementary through High School

- Odyssey of the Mind
- Student Government (CRIS, SIS, TEC)
- School Plays

Athletics

High School

- Baseball
- Boys and Girls Basketball
- Cheerleading
- Cross Country
- Field Hockey
- Football
- Golf
- Soccer

- Softball
- Swimming
- Tennis
- Track
- Volleyball
- Wrestling

Junior High

- Baseball
- Basketball
- Cross Country
- Cheerleading
- Field Hockey
- Football
- Soccer
- Track
- Volleyball
- Wrestling

Intramurals

High School

- TV Studio
- Psychology Club
- Knitting and Crochet Club
- Reading Competition
- Anime Club
- Step Club
- Academic Assistance Club
- CSI: Classics Club
- Poetry Club
- Reading Olympics
- Broadcast Studio Club
- Human Rights Club
- Leo Club

Continued from Page 4

- Envirothon
- Project Purple
- Aavidum
- HYPED Digital Magazine Production

Junior High

- Grade 8 Spanish II Club
- Cardinal Club
- Walking/Fitness Club
- Science Club
- Project Purple
- Academic Assistance Club
- Reader's Theater
- Novel to Film
- Anime Club
- West Junior HS Live
- Reading Olympics
- Crochet Club
- Broadway Appreciation Club
- Fitness Club
- Computer Coding Club
- Envirothon

Intramural Co-Curricular

High School & Junior High

- Aavidum

Intermediate Schools

- Technology Club
- Destination Fit
- PMSD Wellness Zone
- Helping Hands
- Dancing into Fitness
- STEAM Club
- Chorale Outreach
- Poetry with Pizzazz
- Envirothon
- Morning News
- Chess Club
- Green Club
- Academic Assistance Club

Elementary Centers

- Authors in Training
- Health Zone
- Prop Crew/ Costume Club
- Stage Crew Club
- Community Helpers and Positive Students (CHAPS)
- Folk Dancing
- Little Cardinals

- Book Club
- Recycling Club

Intramural Athletics

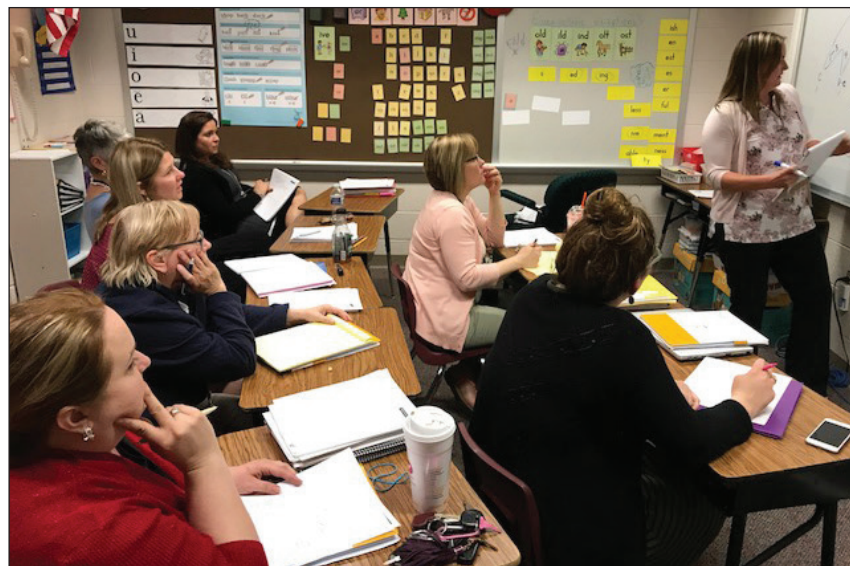
- Swimming (Grades 7-12)
- Basketball
- Weight Training/ Conditioning
- Baseball Strength and Conditioning
- After School Study Club
- Baseball (Grades 7/8)
- Softball
- Track and Field Conditioning
- Volleyball Conditioning
- Field Hockey
- Swimming
- Indoor Soccer
- Golf
- Lacrosse (Grades 7/8)
- Weight Lifting/ Conditioning

So as parents begin the new academic school year with their student, please take the time to explore the vast array of activities and programs that PMSD has to share with District families.

The benefits of students being involved far out weight the benefits of not being involved at all. All students can benefit from teamwork, leadership, independence, fair play and acceptance of others.

See you after school!

PMSD Teachers earn Wilson Reading certification



Congratulations to teachers Mair Luchetti, Amanda Johnson, Bernadette McDaniel, Jody McSwegan, Suzette Cardamone, Jennifer Peer Albert, and Eve Stachnik who are now certified Level I Wilson Reading Teachers. Jamie Schweppenheiser, Special Education Teacher and Certified Wilson Reading Teacher who recently became a Wilson Reading Trainer, trained the teachers and assisted in the certification process.

By Dr. Mary Beth Gustafson
Assistant Superintendent
for Special Education

Seven teachers in the PMSD recently completed The Wilson Reading System® (WRS) Level I Certification program.

This program is designed to prepare teachers to effectively implement WRS Steps 1-6 with students who are reading and spelling below grade level as well as those diagnosed with a language-based learning disability, such as dyslexia. It consists of two components: the WRS Intensive Instruction: Online Course (Steps 1-6) and the WRS Level I Steps 1-6 Practicum.

The WRS Level I Certification Program provides a course that deepens teachers' content knowledge while providing a supervised practicum that allows teachers to apply and practice skillful use of research-based strategies.

Considerable time, effort, and study are required for the WRS Certification program. Each trainee is expected to acquire a very sophisticated working knowledge of the sound-symbol system of English (phonology) and its structure (morphology), as well as the use of specific diagnostic techniques in teaching decoding and encoding, and strategies for vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.

Back to School 2017

CREC: New approach to Holiday Shoppe & new partnership

By Heidi Donohue &
Karen Doughton

Principals

Clear Run Elementary Center

Auntie Claus's Closet

This year CREC is taking a different approach with how they will be providing a Holiday Shoppe for their students in December.

As a child, most of us have memories of shopping in elementary school for members of our family in the days leading up to the holidays – a coffee mug that says “Greatest Dad,” a ring with a fake gem in it that resembles that of a diamond for your mom, a potholder for your grandmother, etc.

Elementary Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO) historically contract out with companies to provide these types of small items that range from \$1 - \$20 for this annual tradition. Unfortunately, the price of these items is typically

disproportionate with the quality. Similarly, even the cheapest items to buy are often not attainable for all students.

This year, with donations from the staff/faculty, local businesses, and the community, CREC is looking to restore the joy of giving as a true

equal opportunity. Rather than buying items with money, students will use paw passes to purchase gifts for their friends and families. For members of the community not familiar with a “paw pass,” this is the currency used with our School-Wide Positive Behavior Support Program that reinforces our school-wide motto - Caring Kids at CREC are Respectful, Responsible, and Trustworthy.

In order to accomplish such a memorable initiative, we are asking the community for assistance. If you, or someone you know, would

like to donate new or gently used items, please contact CREC secretary, Jennifer Sapienza at 570-839-7121 ext. 28416, or

jsapienza@pmsd.org. Donated items can be dropped off during business hours in the main office at CREC.

You could be the reason behind a smile on a child's face and the warmth felt in one's heart as he/she watches a loved one open that present for the holidays.

CREC Partners with PSFC

Administration and teachers from Clear Run Elementary Center, as well as Pocono Services for

Families and Children (located at The Mountain Center, formerly Coolbaugh Elementary Center), attended a conference together at The Governor's Institute this summer. The goal of the Governor's Institute is to build collaborative relationships between early learning (0-5 years of age) and primary school-age (K-3) programs.

The Mountain Center, as well as other agencies and organizations throughout the area, already have many resources that are available to students and their families. Throughout the 2017-2018 school year, CREC and PSFC will be providing events and workshops to raise community awareness and empower families to utilize available resources which will ultimately promote stability and school readiness. **Our first community event will take place on Saturday, October 14, 2017!**



CRIS rolls out new initiatives for 2017-18

Welcomes two new assistant principals to the team

By Regina Schank

Principal

Clear Run Intermediate School

New This Year

Clear Run Intermediate School is welcoming two new assistant principals this year, Mr. Walter Pawlowski, who was previously a teacher in East Stroudsburg area school district and Amy Haynes, a teacher from SEC. Collectively, they bring 22 years of experience to the district and look forward to serving the staff and students here at CRIS.

We are also very excited to begin use of the ClassDojo operating system. The ClassDojo initiative being launched at CRIS for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year will help to reinforce the values of our school community and work hand in hand with the positive behavior incentives and restorative practice techniques currently in place.

ClassDojo will specifically assist teachers



in creating a positive classroom culture by allowing them to provide immediate feedback on a daily basis regarding student performance (both academic and behavioral) in the classroom.

This information can also be shared with parents as means of an effective communication tool, helping to bridge the gap between school and home and encouraging students to take more responsibility for their behaviors in the classroom and at school.

In addition, we will be participating in the program, “One School, One Book™” under the guidance of the literacy committee. As a community we will be engaged in reading a book together.

Stay tuned for the rollout of the title of the

book at Open House.

What Sets Our School Apart

We have a strong foundation in Positive Schoolwide Behavior Support and are in the second year of implementing Restorative Practices which focuses on building relationships and community.

A Challenge We Face

We have a very high rate of absenteeism and will be collaborating closely with parents to increase our attendance rates.



SEC hopes for “Young Cardinals to FLY IN EARLY”

By Krislin Ofalt &
Tammy Toleno
Principals
Swiftwater Elementary Center

Swiftwater Elementary Center is looking forward to another successful school year ahead. We have begun to implement more programs for the upcoming 2017-2018 school year that allow for SEC families to be part of our school community.

One program in particular has been extremely successful: “P-3 Governor’s Institute.” SEC staff partnered up with several county agencies and the Colonial Intermediate Unit 20 to form a “P-3 Committee.” P-3 Governor’s Institute is designed to bring together teams that serve families in the prenatal to 5-year-old and Kindergarten through grade 3 schools.

The Colonial IU 20 North Team consists of SEC administrators, SEC teachers, CIU 20 staff and local agency personnel who attended the Governor’s Institute in June 2016. The team created the following mission statement:

To provide children with high-quality learning opportunities through collaborative efforts in the early years to decrease the need for



Young Cardinals participate in story time at the Fall 2016 Fly In Early Event, which focused on literacy.

special education services, improve school readiness and increase academic success.

The P-3 Committee was awarded a \$4,000.00 stipend to fund programs so that parents may find resources before their child starts school. The programs will also allow for SEC to act as a center for community outreach and coordinating services and host family events providing parents with information to support parents as students are becoming ready for school.

The goal is for parents to be their child’s “first teacher” and as a result have students be better prepared physically, emotionally, behaviorally and academically for a life of learning.

So far, SEC has hosted two events, one in the fall 2016 and one in the spring 2017 that were very well attended by our school families with children ages 3-4.

Parents and “future Cardinals” were able to participate in: literacy activities, fine and gross motor skill games and activities, developmental and vision screenings, receive door prizes and goodie bags, complete family surveys and visit information tables at our SEC Resource Fair from the following agencies: CIU 20, CMP-MH/DS, Pocono Alliance, Parent to Parent, Kids Power Library, PA cruise to K, Early Intervention Tech Assistance On Line Learning Portal, CHIP, Head Start (Pocono Services for Children and Families), Monroe Public Library, ECD Connections, Provider 50 Services, and Chartwell’s Food Services.

Each event proved to be enjoyed by our kids and families and provided a wealth of information for parents with children who are getting ready to become “Young Cardinals.” Swiftwater Elementary Center is looking forward to improving upon our programming to assist parents as their children look forward to attending school within our school district.

TEC provides unique learning environment

By Dr. Anastasia D’Angelo, Principal &
John Kevra, Assistant Principal
Tobyhanna Elementary Center

The administrators and teachers at Tobyhanna Elementary Center (TEC) are always searching for imaginative and fresh ways to enhance our students’ learning experiences. Everyone at TEC strives to create a stimulating environment that is based upon challenging curricula and staff members willing to try innovative approaches to learning. Consequently, when approached by a West High School senior, Michael Scardigno, Jr., asking to build an outdoor classroom to fulfill his Eagle Scout project requirement, we jumped at the opportunity.

Research has shown that outdoor classrooms have numerous benefits for students and teachers alike.

In our case a small piece of the play area outside the fifth grade pod is being transformed into a dynamic center for teaching and

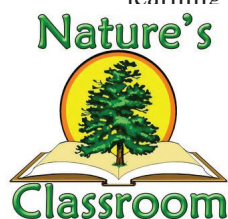
learning. Our students will feel one with nature as they experience the trees, the birds, the clouds and the fresh air as they learn about everything from weather patterns to water conservation.

This environment has been shown to relieve stress, improve health, increase motivation, and promote a better attitude about school and learning. Of course, improved behaviors and grades are likely results from those benefits as well.

Although quite a bit of work needs to be completed over the next few months, we expect the project to be finalized by mid-November of 2017.

When finished, it will be a source of tremendous pride for everyone at TEC as well as the local community. Our outdoor classroom is so much more than just a place to teach.

It will stand as a testimony to the obligation we feel to our students and the community to expand the minds and imaginations of all our students for years to come.



EHS expands its PRIDE initiatives, Plans more parent communication

By Dan Higgins
Principal
PM East High School

PM East High School is excited to start year two of our PRIDE framework for the 2017-2018 school year.

Within the PRIDE framework expectations are clearly established, the use of a common language is in place, and our efforts are to recognize all the good that goes on...

This year we have expanded

our initiatives to include staff subcommittees. One significant area of focus will be increased communication with parents, students, and the greater community using platforms such as social media, mail and Parentlink.

We are looking forward to a more student driven approach as we welcome over 40 students to our Student Leadership Committee, Team EPIC (East Pride Initiative Committee).

See EHS...on Page 8

SIS embarks on new reading project for the whole family

By Kristine Kunsman

Principal

Swiftwater Intermediate School

Swiftwater Intermediate School will be embarking on a special project, an all-school book club called One School, One Book™. Every family interested will receive a copy of the same book - *the title is a secret and will be revealed at the Open House* - and will be asked to read it together at home.

Reading aloud at home is valuable because it better prepares your child to be an effective reader, and it is also a fun, worthwhile family activity. With the One School, One Book™ program, we aim to build a community of Readers at our school. Everyone – students, parents, teachers, even administrative staff will all be following along together.

Along with the book, families will receive a reading schedule so they can keep up at home. Generally, families will be asked to read about 15 minutes each night. In school, students will be invited to answer daily trivia questions to encourage and reward attentive listening.

One School, One Book™ is a novel program in that children of all grade levels will all be listening to their parents read the same book. Strange or daring as that may seem, it actually makes sound educational sense.

Reading professionals recommend reading material out loud that is beyond a child's own reading level. We also believe that you can and should continue reading chapter books with your older children, even when they are able to read by themselves.

We have selected a title that can be followed and understood and enjoyed by younger students, but will still captivate and stimulate older children. Our goal is to build a Community of Readers at our school.

Parent Involvement

Parent involvement is strongly encouraged



at Swiftwater Intermediate School. There is a strong correlation between parent involvement and a student's age. Parent involvement tends to decrease as a child's age increases.

At SIS we believe children of all ages would benefit if their parents would stay involved. While it is certain that the first few years of school are arguably the most important, the other years are important as well.

Children are smart and intuitive. When they see their parents taking a step back in their involvement, it sends the wrong message. Most children will start to become less engaged. The parents who do attend are the ones that teachers often say don't need to, but the correlation to their child's success and their continued involvement in their child's education is no mistake.

Every parent should know what is going on in their child's daily school life. A parent should do the following things every day:

- Ask your child how their school day went. Engage in conversation about what they learned, whom their friends are, what they had for lunch, etc.
- Make sure your child has time set aside to complete homework. Be there to answer any questions or assist when needed.
- Read all notes/memos sent home from the school and/or teacher. Notes are the primary form of communications between a teacher

and parents. Look for them and read them to stay up-to-date on events.

- Contact your child's teacher immediately if you have any concerns.
- Value your child's education and express the importance of it every single day. This is arguably the single most valuable thing a parent can do when it comes to their child's education. Those that value education often thrive and those that don't often fail.
- We encourage parents to come in and spend some time in the classroom (Classroom Visitation), join the PTO and volunteer for activities. SIS has family events throughout the year. For 2017-2018, we have the following activities planned:
 - Literacy Night/Reading Under the Lights
 - PTO Faculty vs. Student Basketball
 - Musicfest (chorus and band programs and an Art show)
 - Learning Disabilities Awareness evening
 - Family Sports and Fitness Challenge
 - Student of the Marking Period program
 - Night of Excellence

PRIDE

This will be Swiftwater Intermediate's school second year of the implementation of School-Wide Positive Behavior Program, PRIDE.

Our challenge this school year is to build in more rewards for students making good decisions.

Currently, SIS has school-wide rewards. We are looking to incorporate team-based monthly rewards into the program.

The committee has worked on a PRIDE menu of rewards for students to choose from and will begin a PRIDE school supply cart where students can "purchase" items in exchange for "PRIDE" coupons. SIS is also starting a PRIDE art club. Students will be painting and decorating areas in the building to show school PRIDE (spirit).

EHS fosters student-driven approach with Leadership Committee continued from Page 7

Many have been working diligently to create a presentation for the entire student body during Grade Level meetings our first week back. Team EPIC has also designed t-shirts to further promote this framework.

Our winter and spring incentive shave taken on a new form that will continue to address students who demonstrate PRIDE but include more student and staff input.

Overall, as the year progresses we hope that the East High School, and community stakeholders, will

be able to become more involved.

This fall we are looking forward to East Athletic programs making use of our new athletic facilities. We plan to continue the tradition of tailgating on occasion prior to a Friday home football game.

We encourage all members of the community to support our student-



athletes by attending sporting events held on the East campus...

We have a caring and talented staff of educators that are committed to servicing our students and their needs.

The teachers at the East HS are involved in the education of students and committed to providing the best experience possible from 9th to

12th grade. They are involved in the building beyond the classroom by supervising/advising/coaching numerous co-curricular activities.

This year, we look for continued improvement in our Keystone testing results, college and career readiness and athletic accomplishments.

Mark Your Calendar!
EHS Open House
August 29, 2017
at 6:30 p.m.

Pocono Mountain Academy selected for school bike program grant

The Pocono Mountain Academy has been selected to receive a grant from The Specialized Foundation to begin the Riding for Focus cycling program, starting in the 2017-2018 school year. The Riding for Focus curriculum is based off of medical research that integrates cycling into physical education classes as a means to help students better perform in the classroom.

The PM Academy is the district's Alternative program, which provides supports for students in grades 7-12. "The difference between ordinary and extraordinary is that little extra. We are delighted to have the participation of the Pocono Mountain Academy that has demonstrated exemplary teamwork and drive to want to bring a pioneering program into their school," said Ted Theocheung CEO, The Specialized Foundation. "The spirit and commitment from these new schools this year is incredible, and we look forward

to seeing the positive impact the program has on each of the students, their families, and communities that will inevitably benefit from this partnership."

The PM Academy is one of 20 schools that will be participating in the Riding for Focus curriculum this fall. This will include curriculum training at the Specialized Headquarters for the Program Champion, as well. Upon completion, the school will receive a fleet of bikes, helmets, maintenance equipment, as well as support and maintenance from Strive Multisport. The goal is to establish a sustainable school cycling program that lasts in the community for multiple years.



Principal, Dr. Jessica Loverdi credits teacher, Alaina Dietz, with spearheading this exciting initiative at the Academy. "We are fortunate

to have a riding enthusiast on our staff. Alaina's support in assisting with the grant application and program development at the Academy made all the difference in securing this awesome opportunity for our kids."

Riding for Focus is designed to introduce middle school students to cycling's positive effects on academic performance, health, and wellbeing. The curriculum was developed based on studies conducted by a third-party research organization that investigated the impact of cycling on middle school students. Students that

follow the curriculum have seen improvements in standardized test scores, as well as increased physical activity that leads to lifelong habits for exercise, fitness, and wellness. The program has been found to be an inclusive experience for all students, regardless of demographic and geographic context, and is flexible enough to deploy in all types of schools with class sizes from 10 to 50.

Mike Sinyard, Specialized Founder and CEO, stated, "At Specialized we are a company built of riders and have each been transformed through cycling in one way or another. The Specialized Foundation and Riding for Focus program is our way to contribute to future generations and do our part to create a healthier world for our children. We believe in the power of the bicycle and its ability to transform lives, we get to start here."

Mentoring is big at PM West High School

By Dr. Mark Wade
Principal
PM West High School

What Makes West Unique

What others should know about the West High School is we instituted two excellent Mentoring Programs in the 2016-2017 school year.

These programs are the Check and Connect Mentoring Program and the Big Panther Little Panther program.

Check and Connect Mentoring is a structured mentoring program used at West High School (WHS) that brings together faculty volunteers and identified students. The mentoring program is used in connection with West High School's school-wide positive behavior framework and has demonstrated an ability to help students succeed in school.

Preliminary data from the 2016-2017 school year has revealed that participating students have shown marked improvement in the areas of attendance, academic growth and a decline in discipline referrals.

Faculty volunteers receive training and then meet with their mentees on a regular basis with a focus placed on developing and fostering positive relationships that promote academic achievement and social emotional learning.

The Big Panther/Little Panther program pairs

up chosen students from the West High School with students at Clear Run Intermediate School (CRIS) who need some extra support.

The high school students visit CRIS once a month and the

big panthers are able to shadow and spend the day with their little panthers.

This includes attending classes, eating lunch together and often attending restorative intervention sessions with them. The big panthers have gone through a restorative intervention mini-training to assist them in responding to challenging behaviors.

Oftentimes the big panthers assist their little panthers in improving their academics and behaviors.

The big panthers are truly invested in this program and have gone above and beyond to show their little panthers how much they care about their success.

Some big panthers have gotten their little panthers special gifts, others have gone to their athletic events and some have taken the time to visit them at school on their own time.



PM West HS Big Panthers will continue their mentorship of their Little Panthers at Clear Run Intermediate School throughout the upcoming school year.

Also, the big panthers have done additional special activities, including sending the little panthers Valentines and working on an art mural at CRIS with the WHS National Art Honor Society.

The culminating activity for the year was a visit by the little panthers to the WHS, where they were able to shadow their big panthers to class and ended with some planned fun activities together.

Another highlight of our program is when the big panthers ride the buses at the end of the day with their little panther. In just the short year that these programs have been in existence, they have had a very positive impact and an overwhelming experience for all those involved.

These mentoring programs will continue and expand during the 2017-2018 school year.

EJHS promotes student involvement & success

By Dr. Kathy Fanelli

Principal

PM East Junior High School

The PM East Junior High School is staffed with a team of energetic professionals whose sole purpose is to guide and assist our students in taking their first steps into secondary education and provide them the necessary tools to succeed socially and academically.

Our staff focuses on the lifelong skills of time management, self-responsibility, self-management of behavior, and doing the right thing, both academically and behaviorally, simply because it is the right thing to do, regardless of what peers may say.

We offer a wide array of classes designed to challenge every student and teach them how to be successful in those challenges. EJHS offers high school level classes in Algebra I, Spanish I and II and French I and II. EJHS

students have consistently met the state established goals for academic growth – in fact, EJHS was recognized by the Department of Education in 2015-2016 with the Keystone Award for Academic Excellence.

At the EJHS, it is our belief that keeping students involved at our school promotes and encourages academic success. Some of the extra-curricular opportunities that are available for students include: National Junior Honor Society Club, Pennsylvania Junior Academy of Science, membership in PMTV Live (EJHS's televised morning announcements team), Student Government, Reader's Theater, Cardinal Club, Aavidum,



The entire PM East Junior High School student body shows their pride in their school. The school offers many programs and activities to help student achieve academically and socially.

and Project Purple.

In the athletics department, students can participate throughout the year in football, basketball, lacrosse, soccer, field hockey, cross country, track, baseball and softball, golf, tennis, swimming, wrestling and cheerleading. Each year, more and more Cardinal sports are open to our 7th and 8th graders.

We encourage our students to be creative and we celebrate their creativity and accomplishments as

a school community.

Our biggest challenge for the past few years has been teaching students to utilize safe and responsible social media practices.

Through partnership and communication with parents we hope that our students will learn responsible use of social networking websites and become aware of the dangers of the internet.

We hope to educate our students and prepare them for any challenges they may encounter.

WJHS plans to add student leadership teams for PRIDE

By Kevin Kearney

7th Grade Science Teacher

PM West Junior High School

As the summer comes to an end, the excitement of another school year is upon us as staff and students alike prepare to return to the WJHS.

This year we are proud to announce our continued implementation of WJHS PRIDE, which is the framework utilized to promote school-wide positive behaviors and offer

interventions and supports to the students of the WJHS.

Moving forward into the 2017-2018 school year we are planning to build upon the success of PRIDE in a variety of ways.

One of the exciting elements that we will be bringing to PRIDE is the introduction of a

student leadership team. The student leadership team will be comprised of 7th and 8th grade students who will collaborate with our core staff team to enhance our PRIDE model.

The purpose of developing the student leadership team is to provide students with more opportunity and stake within the school

community as we continue to promote and demonstrate a positive, healthy, and safe school culture.

The WJHS is committed to providing students with a safe and healthy school climate that promotes positive learning experiences each day.

Our PRIDE framework is designed to not only instill positive behavior, but also provide incentives, interventions, and supports to students when obstacles and challenges arise.

We look forward to welcoming both our new 7th grade students and our returning 8th grade students as we begin another amazing year at the WJHS.

Tab Collection Fundraiser

We are ALMOST there! Back in November of 2011 a world record of 2,783,788 for the most aluminum can tabs recycled was set.

Currently, with an estimated 1,800,000 tabs, PMSD looks to not only shatter that record, but also raise funds for the Ronald McDonald House in Danville, Pa.

The WJHS is honored to be the central



Community members are encouraged to save their can tabs and donate them to the PM West Junior HS. Tabs can be dropped off during normal school hours.

location for the soda tabs collected, where they are proudly displayed in our main office display case. We would like to remind parents and community members throughout the district that you may contribute soda tabs at any of our schools, and we thank you for your support.

PMSD Annual Public Notice on Special Education

Special Education (CHAPTER 14): The Pocono Mountain School District, either directly or through various other education agencies including Colonial Intermediate Unit #20, provides special education services which may be required by children with special needs.

In compliance with state and federal law, notice is hereby given by the Pocono Mountain School District that it conducts ongoing identification activities as a part of its school program for the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of special education and related services (eligible students).

If your child is identified by the school district as possibly in need of such services, you will be notified of applicable procedures. Individualized services and programs are available for children who are determined to need specially designed instruction due to the following conditions:

1. Autism
2. Deaf-blindness
3. Deafness
4. Emotional disturbance
5. Hearing impairment
6. Mental retardation
7. Multiple disabilities
8. Orthopedic impairment
9. Other health impairment
10. Specific learning disability
11. Speech or language impairment
12. Traumatic brain injury
13. Visual impairment, including blindness

Evaluation Process: Pocono Mountain School District has a procedure in place by which parents can request an evaluation. If you believe that your school-age child may be in need of special education services and related programs, you may request screening and evaluation at any time whether or not your child is enrolled in the district's public school program. Child Find federal regulations also apply to highly mobile children, including migrant children.

Requests for evaluation and screening are to be made in writing to the building principal or to Dr. Mary Beth Gustafson, Assistant Superintendent for Special Education for the Pocono Mountain School District, at 570-839-7121 ext. 10181.

Consent: School entities cannot proceed with an evaluation, or with the initial provision of special education and related services, without the written consent of the parents.

For additional information related to consent, please refer to the Proce-

dural Safeguards Notice which can be found at the PaTTAN website, www.pattan.net or the Pocono Mountain School District website, www.pmsd.org. Once written parental consent is obtained, the district will proceed with the evaluation process.

If the parent disagrees with the evaluation, the parent can request an Independent Education Evaluation (IEE) at public expense.

Program Development: Once the evaluation process is completed, a team of qualified professionals and parents determine whether the child is eligible.

If the child is eligible, the individualized education program team meets, develops the program, and determines the educational placement. Once the IEP team develops the program and determines the educational placement, a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP)/prior written notice is issued. Written consent is required before initial services can be provided. The parent has the right to revoke consent after initial placement.

Preschool Children with Special Needs (Age 3 to School Age): Parents whose child has a developmental delay or one or more conditions as listed in the Special Education (Chapter 14) Notice above, and/or who have questions regarding their child's seeing, hearing, learning, talking, moving about, manipulating objects, understanding, showing emotions, getting along with others, playing with toys, taking care of himself/herself, should telephone Colonial Intermediate Unit #20 (CIU #20) at 610-252-5550, which offers Early Intervention, a preschool program for children with special needs. CIU #20 can provide information, screening, evaluation, programs, therapy, parent support, and referral to community agencies at no cost to the parent.

For further information, call CIU #20 at 610-252-5550 or Dr. Gustafson at 570-839-7121 Ext. 10181.

Protected Handicapped Students (CHAPTER 15): In compliance with state and federal law, the Pocono Mountain School District will provide to each protected handicapped student, without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities.

In order to qualify as a protected

handicapped student, the child must be school age with a physical or mental disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program. These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" are distinct from those applicable to all eligible or exceptional students enrolled (or seeking enrollment) in special education programs.

For further information on the rights of parents and children, provision of services, evaluation and screening, and rights to due process procedures regarding protected handicapped students, you may contact, in writing or by telephone, Dr. Gustafson, at 570-839-7121 Ext. 10181 or any building principal.

Gifted Education (CHAPTER 16): The Pocono Mountain School District provides gifted education services to school-age students identified as gifted who require these services to reach their potential. In compliance with state and federal law, notice is hereby given by the Pocono Mountain School District that it conducts ongoing identification activities as a part of its school program for the purpose of identifying students who may be in need of gifted education services. If your child is identified by the school district as possibly in need of such services, you will be notified of applicable procedures.

If you believe that your school-age child may be in need of gifted education services, you may request screening and evaluation at any time, whether or not your child is enrolled in the school district's public school program.

Requests for evaluation and screening are to be made in writing to the building principal or Dr. Gustafson at 570-839-7121 Ext. 10181.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All information gathered about your child is subject to the confidentiality provisions contained in federal and state law. The school district has policies and procedures in effect governing the collection, maintenance, destruction and disclosure to third parties of this information. Parents have the right to see and obtain a copy of their child's records. Personally identifiable information relative to an exceptional student will only be released with the permission of the parent and/or in accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Pennsylvania Rules, Regulations, and Standards.

For information about policies and procedures, as well as rights of confidentiality and access to educational records, you may contact in writing or by telephone, Dr. Gustafson, at 570-839-7121 Ext. 10181 or any building principal.



Summer 2017-2018 Open House Dates

WJHS: Monday, August 28, 2017 at 1pm and 6pm

EJHS: Monday, August 28, 2017 at 1pm and 6pm

EHS: Tuesday, August 29, 2017 at 6:30pm

WHS: Tuesday, August 29, 2017 at 6:30pm

**CREC/CRIS: Wednesday, August 30, 2017 at 4-6pm (CREC)
and 5-7pm (CRIS)**

**TEC: Wednesday, August 30, 2017 at 4-6pm (Grd 4-6)
and 5-7pm (Grd 1-3)**

**SEC/SIS: Wednesday, August 30, 2017 at 4-6pm (SEC)
and 5-7pm (SIS)**

Kindergarten only

SEC: Tuesday, August 29 2017 (KDG only) at 4-6pm

CREC: Tuesday, August 29, 2017 (KDG only) at 4-6pm

TEC: Tuesday, August 29, 2017 (KDG only) at 4-6pm

HYPED up!



We're off to a great start with an UPbeat response to East & West first edition HYPED magazines sharing the tremendous talent, opportunities & what's UP in Pocono Mountain School District.

Thanks to the UPlifting support of sponsors, our 2017-2018 school year is really looking UP...signsUP that is! With recognition UPwards & out across both campuses applauding outstanding achievements & really rallying that all around school spirit.

SignUP by August 24 & get an UPgrade to your magazine ad

Contact PMSD's HYPED Program Liaison
 Jeanine Hofbauer c>>570.517.1792
 e>>JHofbauer.HYPEDucation@gmail.com



+ **HYPED**

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

