

SUPERINTENDENT REPORT

Sussex County ESC held its' annual audit report at our February BOE meeting. Great news- for the 3rd year in a row there were zero audit comments. Congratulations to Business Administrator Erin Siipola for her leadership within the district. In addition, SCESC has a healthy fund balance that allows SCESC to provide additional opportunities for students.

Strategic Planning Session 1 was extremely successful!!! Huge thank yous to BOE members who showed up to help and support our future planning. In addition, we had several member district personnel attend, 2 members of the Sussex County Prosecutor's Office, 1 Freeholder and a parent. The evening session was amazing and full of great brainstorming ideas.

So many strengths as a district came out easily. These included: quality programs, highly qualified certified staff, strong leadership, excellent financial position, knowledgeable on diverse areas of education, professional development of own staff/Sussex County staff opportunities and so many more.

Some challenges included: transportation, changing regulations from NJDOE, lack of space for gym/library, staff turnover and marketing, in the sense that we are a hidden gem in Sussex County and not many people know who we are or what we do..

The Administrative team has had a significantly busy month. Second set of Stronge evaluations have been completed for about 90% of staff by the administrative team. This process entails a pre-observation conference, an evaluation and a post-evaluation conference. With multiple locations for teaching staff and related services staff, the schedule has kept both Principal Jennifer Cook and Superintendent at a variety of locations.

Mid-Year meetings have occurred at all but one school district for Non-Public programming. The NJDOE has approved additional security funding and the Non Public schools have until June to encumber the additional funds. SCESC and the Public School Districts conferred on the amount of funding remaining for Chapter 192/193/Nursing and IDEA. Several Business Administrators from the Public Schools also attended the meetings.

Our Warren County Non Public program at Good Shepherd Christian Academy will be closing their doors in June 2019 due to lack of student enrollment. We will be working with both Washington Township Elementary School District and Warren Hills Regional School District to close the program. Students and staff were notified in early January about the closing. SCESC staff will work to return all materials to districts and ensure all student documentation is updated prior to June 2019. SCESC will act as a liaison with NJDOE and the public school districts.

Although our scheduled In-Service Day was cancelled, staff still participated in the Strategic Planning discussion. SWOT Analysis was electronically distributed and staff shared their input. Healthy discussion ensued regarding SCESC strengths, opportunities and threats. Weaknesses were reviewed for internal discussions and procedural analysis. In addition, the administrative team met with 8 students during a lunch and learn. Students had so much information to share. Our Mom's Group, led by Social Worker Sara Klejmont also participated in strategic planning. The Administrative Team worked with the Mom's to hold an open discussion regarding the opportunities, the weaknesses, opportunities and threats. About 15 mom's participated in the discussion. All information has been documented and electronically communicated to Executive Committee and Kathleen Helewa, NJSBA.

A very successful partnership has been secured with both Project Search and Atlantic Health Services. Superintendent has been designated as the Newton Medical Center Project Search Committee Chair and meetings have been set for the next 3 months in anticipation of the program beginning in September 2019.

A successful partnership has been secured with Dispenzaries & Associates for annual fundraising opportunities. Two meetings have been held to discuss how NHA students can engage in the Golf Outing on May 9th and to increase our student prevocational skills through tasks in their office. We hope that our staff, Board members, families and vendors will participate as sponsors, golfers and/or purchase tickets to the dinner portion of the event.

The Winter Ball was held the last weekend of January at NHA. The school was transformed into "Bright Lights, Big City" theme and looked amazing. A subway station with metro cards and the cafeteria outfitted as a disco held the students attention for 3 hours on a Saturday. Several classrooms were set up as areas where students could watch a movie, utilize sensory activities and/or engage in more hands on activities. Students were treated to an Italian dinner inclusive of an assortment of pastas and chicken fingers. A pretzel machine offered snacks all evening and then dessert rounded out the night. Dancing and much laughter was had by all. The opportunity to see another side of our students is such a wonderful opportunity for all of our staff.

Northern Hills Academy

January was busy at NHA! Our January themes were: A Healthy You: Body Systems, Biomes: Tundra and Taiga, Our Rights and Freedoms, and New Year's Goals. We had our monthly Pet Therapy as well a Scouting Pack meeting about Communication. NHA Clubs took place and some groups started a 100th Day of School collection in collaboration with Connect for Community. We are collecting toiletries to donate to this organization. NHA's Technology Committee under the guidance of Teacher Ms. Alyssa Summer, has started a Used Smart Device Collection. If you have any used smart devices please think of donating them to NHA for students to utilize for educational and indoor recess purposes.

Our 3rd Annual Winter Ball was on January 26, 2019, from 4:30pm-7:30pm. What a Success!!! We had many staff and students participate and everyone looked amazing! Thank you to all the parents and staff for making it happen for the 3rd year in a row!!!

Even though it has been a cold and snowy month, we have been able to build in some creative use of time for Professional Development. Ms. Jenny Cook worked with paraprofessionals during a training on Touchmath. Teachers and therapists all submitted their Mid-Year SGOs. Several staff have also been able to complete webinars from the coziness of the school's conference room.

Sussex County ESC is looking for the following positions:

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST - FT immediate opening

PHYSICAL THERAPIST - FT July 1, 2019 opening

SPEECH THERAPIST FT- immediate opening

PT- TOSD/TOH- EXPERIENCE WITH BEHAVIOR DISABILITIES - immediate opening

SCHOOL NURSE- immediate openings for PT positions/substitutes

6 PT – PARA-PROFESSIONALS – up to 28 hours

CUSTODIANS- SUBSTITUTES

TOSD with SLE EXPERIENCE- immediate opening

Interested candidates should email jcook@sussexesc.org

Board of Education Updates

Next BOE Meeting : March 4th, 2019

Budget Presentation and Full Representative Assembly

7:00pm Northern Hills Academy Cafeteria

MISSION STATEMENT

The Sussex County Educational Services Commission is a public agency that seeks to create partnerships with public and nonpublic schools and local communities. The Sussex County ESC develops and provides meaningful programs for young people with unique challenges and their families. Our goals are designed to shape our students into productive independent adults. Sussex County ESC provides opportunities for the professionals in our communities to stay current with their educational practices while supporting districts with both cost effective programs and a wide array of services.

STRATEGIC PLANNING SESSION 2

**Sussex County Educational Services Commission
Northern Hills Academy**

~ Celebrating our 40th Anniversary of Working with Students ~

STRATEGIC PLANNING: SESSION 2

DATE: Monday, 11, 2018

Time: 7:00 pm – 8:30 pm

LOCATION: Northern Hills Academy, 10 Gail Court, Sparta, NJ