

DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

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Bayonne Board of Education Teachers Participate In Summer 2007 Mickelson ExxonMobil Teachers Academy



Kathleen Ryan and Gerald Murphy, Philip G. Vroom teachers and ExxonMobil participants, gave a presentation regarding their Phil Mickelson Exxon Mobil Teacher Academy experience and projects at the October Board of Education workshop. Pictured (left to right) are: William Lawson, President, Bayonne Board of Education; Maryann Connelly, Principal, Philip G. Vroom School; Dr. Ellen M. O'Connor, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum & Instruction; Leo J. Hurley, Security Advisor, ExxonMobil Corp.; Gerald Murphy, 7th & 8th grade science teacher, Philip G. Vroom School, and administrator for the Mickelson Program; 4th grade math/science teacher at Philip G. Vroom School, Kathleen Ryan; and Dr. Patricia L. McGeehan, Superintendent of Schools.

ExxonMobil strongly feels that in fields like medicine, computing and energy, our nation needs more brilliant young minds than ever before. Fortunately, ExxonMobil partnered with professional golfer Phil Mickelson and his wife Amy and launched the Mickelson ExxonMobil Teachers Academy in 2005.

“As someone who uses math and science every day in my career, I recognize the importance of encouraging children’s interests in math and science and equipping educators with the tools and resources they need to succeed in the classroom,” said Phil Mickelson, one of the Professional Golf Associations most successful players since 1992. “The Academy is an opportunity for teachers to share best practices with colleagues and pick up tools to positively impact the science and math education that students receive.”

During the summer of 2007, third through fifth grade teachers from various school districts across the country participated in the Mickelson ExxonMobil Teachers Academy. The academy offered a five-day program, with camps in Virginia, Texas, and Louisiana, designed to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary to motivate students to pursue careers in science and math. A total of 600 teachers attended the three academies.

Maryann Connelly, Principal, Philip G. Vroom School, and liaison for the Bayonne

School District's partnership with ExxonMobil, states, "The following Bayonne School District teachers participated in the Summer 2007 Mickelson ExxonMobil Teachers Academy in Fairfax, Virginia from July 22 through July 27: Albert McCormick, Gerald Murphy, and Kathleen Ryan, Philip G. Vroom School; Monica Burnett, P.S. #14; Marion Mari, Danielle Nese, and Susan Rusnak, Washington Community School; Maryann Parks, Henry E. Harris School; and Samantha Chrapkowski and Jill O'Donnell, Midtown Community School."

Dr. Patricia L. McGeehan, Superintendent of Schools, states, "It is my understanding that the Bayonne School District is one of 25 school districts in the entire nation to have teachers participate in the Summer 2007 Mickelson ExxonMobil Teachers Academy. On behalf of the entire Bayonne Board of Education, I am grateful and proud that our teachers were selected for the program, and that they volunteered their time during the summer to participate in this prestigious program. I extend my sincere thanks and gratitude to Principal Maryann Connelly and Security Advisor Leo J. Hurley for their hard work in making this partnership possible."



Pictured seated (left to right) are: Kathleen Ryan, Samantha Chrapkowski, Susan Rusnak, Danielle Nese, Marian Mari, and Maryanne Parks. Standing (left to right) are: Monica Burnett, Albert McCormick, Phil Mickelson, Amy Mickelson Gerald Murphy, and Jill O'Donnell.

BHS Principal Richard J. Baccarella
Recipient of New Jersey Association of Student Councils
2007-2008 Administrator of the Year Award



Pictured (left to right) are: Dr. Patricia L. McGeehan, Superintendent of Schools; Richard J. Baccarella, Principal, Bayonne High School, with his award; and Christina Arszulowicz, BHS Student Council Advisor.

The New Jersey Association of Student Councils recognizes the important role and contribution of school administrators in coordinating and supporting student activities. Each year, the NJASC proudly awards a special individual the honor of being the New Jersey Administrator of the Year. “I am happy to announce that Bayonne High School Principal Richard J. Baccarella is the recipient of the 2007-2008 Administrator of the Year Award from the New Jersey Association of Student Councils. On behalf of the entire Bayonne Board of

Education, I congratulate Principal Baccarella for receiving this prestigious award. We are proud of this exemplary honor and all of his accomplishments,” stated Dr. Patricia L. McGeehan, Superintendent of Schools.

Christina Arszulowicz, Bayonne High School Student Council Advisor, states, “If I could choose one word to describe our principal, Mr. Richard Baccarella, it would be caring. Each September, the executive officers of the student council meet with Mr. Baccarella to discuss the events planned for the year. He attends the student council meetings, reporting any upcoming changes at BHS and fields questions from the representatives. Mr. Baccarella believes for any program to be successful, students must be involved. He believes the students are the driving force for any program and they are the heart and soul of our school.”

Principal Richard J. Baccarella, “I am both humbled and honored to receive this award. I especially would like to thank Superintendent McGeehan, Student Council advisor Christina Arszulowicz, and BHS student council members for their nomination and support.”

Principal Baccarella was honored at the fall business meeting of the New Jersey Association of Student Councils on October 22, 2007, at The College of New Jersey. Students and advisors from the entire state of New Jersey were in attendance.

NJASC, established in 1927, is the oldest student leadership organization in the country. The NJASC encourages middle school and high school student councils to be more active and engaged in their schools and communities. Throughout the school year, the NJASC works with student leaders and student council advisors to encourage participation in student government and to provide a forum for students to network and share ideas for successful projects and events.

#14 Students Experience Summer Eco-Adventure

Twenty-five eighth grade students from P.S. #14 spent a memorable week this summer at the Pocono Environmental Education Center (PEEC). The students were accompanied by #14 teachers Barbara DeBenedictis, Kim O'Connor, George Becker, and Jen Popowski. The August trip involved the students in many team-building and eco-adventure type activities. The theme for the week was "Making Connections." Students and teachers participated in activities that helped them to make connections within themselves, with others, and with the environment. These activities included daily journaling, a town meeting about the development of the MOT, and a campfire with storytelling, skits, and sing-alongs. They were also involved in team-building and group problem-solving activities. Students will continue their experience by working together to create presentations about the trip, using power point presentations, photo journals, etc. and will present these at a PTO meeting.

The funding for this trip was provided by a grant from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation. In 2006, PEEC contacted teacher Barbara DeBenedictis about applying for this grant and collaborated to write a grant proposal. Ms. DeBenedictis was invited to PEEC when a representative from the Dodge Foundation visited the site to complete their selection process. In June, #14 teachers attended a weekend workshop to help plan activities and a schedule for the trip. In 2007, the Dodge Foundation approved two additional years of the grant.

The Pocono Environmental Education Center is located in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area in Dingmans Ferry, Pennsylvania. It is a special place for students, teachers, families, scouts, birders, botanists, photographers, hikers, and anyone interested in learning about the natural world.

Bayonne High School Waksman Summer Student Scholars

Robert Dawson, Bayonne School District's Director of Science, states that Bayonne High School juniors Anh Hoang and Qurratulann Khokhar recently attended the Waksman Summer Student Scholars Program at Rutgers University.

For the eighth year, Bayonne High School Science Department has been selected to participate in this four week intensive course in which students learn and perform sophisticated genetic analysis techniques under the supervision of scientists and researchers from the Waksman Institute of Rutgers University and GE Healthcare. BHS science teacher Holly Levin teaches molecular biology research and has been the team teacher for the program since its inception. This year, juniors Qurratulann Khokhar and Anh Hoang investigated the genome of the *Artemia franciscana*, a model organism. They isolated, cloned, and analyzed its DNA in an effort to locate and identify its genes. Geneticists use model organisms to learn about biological processes in humans.

Mrs. Levin looks forward to continued success as the new school year begins. Mrs. Levin states, "It's so satisfying to see students so involved and passionate about science. They are contributing critical information to the scientific community and, at the same time, preparing themselves for a career in the life sciences. I am privileged and honored to be part of this program and extremely proud of the students who participate."

Dr. Patricia L. McGeehan, Superintendent of Schools, adds, "The Rutgers Summer Program is part of the Bayonne High School science department's continuing effort to help our high school students receive college credit while in high school. It is an exemplary partnership, and I commend Director Dawson, Mrs. Levin, and all students who participate in this wonderful educational program."

If a student is enrolled in an advanced course (chemistry, biology, or physics), he or she can earn up to (6) college credits at Bayonne High School.

Elementary Schools Participate in Hudson TMA “Walk to School” Program

In an effort to encourage Hudson County’s children with their family to walk to school, the Hudson Transportation Management Association (TMA) launched its IWalk to School initiative at Horace Mann School last school year.

Jay DiDomenico, TMA Director of Operations, states, “The Hudson TMA works at lessening vehicular traffic and reducing toxic auto emissions in the air we breathe. One program we are proud to be involved with is ‘IWalk to School.’ As part of our county-wide effort, we have extended the program to seven Bayonne schools thus far and will continue our efforts outreaching to all Bayonne families. We are encouraging parents to walk their children to school rather than drop them off by car. We can improve the health and safety of our children, as well as our own, by walking them to school as often as possible.”

The program also included a student assembly which highlighted the benefits of walking, stressed the importance of safety, and encouraged the students to think about the environment. “Buster the Bus,” the TMA’s mascot, was also on hand as Mr. DiDomenico engaged the students in a lively discussion about the benefits of walking to school.

Millions of schoolchildren from 37 countries celebrated International Walk Your Children to School Month this October. Walking to school promotes safety, health, concern for the environment and physical activity among children. It also affords families an additional opportunity to spend time together while teaching their children important pedestrian skills. Communities are encouraged to pick a day, a week, once a week or the entire month to celebrate the event and bring increased attention to these issues.

Childhood obesity rates have more than tripled in the past 30 years, while the number of children walking and biking to school has declined. According to the 2001 National Household Travel Survey, less than 16 percent of students between the ages of 5 and 15 walked or biked to or from school, compared to 42 percent in 1969.

You can form your own “Walking Bus to School” with your children’s friends and classmates. Call the Hudson TMA @ 201-792-2825 for help in getting started.

Dr. Patricia L. McGeehan, Superintendent of Schools, states, “This is an exemplary partnership with the Bayonne Board of Education and the Hudson Transportation Management Association. I commend Jay DiDomenico for his work, coordination, and dedication for making this educational experience possible.”

Mary J. Donohoe Walks With Dinosaurs

Recently, the fourth grade classes at Mary J. Donohoe School stepped back in time and enjoyed the show, “Walking with Dinosaurs” at the Continental Airlines Arena in East Rutherford, New Jersey.

The students observed magnificent creatures from the Triassic, Jurassic, and Cretaceous Periods come to life walking, running, and fighting their way through history. The students watched in awe as full-scale replicas of Stegosaurus, Utahraptor and Tyrannosaurus Rex roared their way across the beautiful staged environment of the Prehistoric Era.

The show was narrated by a very brave paleontologist who overwhelmed the students with details and accounts of life 245-65 million years ago. He began with the extinction of the Permo-Triassic Period, the largest extinction ever known in which 95% of all species and 60% of the genera died out, then through the formation of Pangaea; explaining how all these factors led way to the rise of the dinosaurs and mammals.

Upon returning to school, the students wrote stories and created pictures of their exciting dinosaur adventure to be displayed for all to see.

Family Night Out



Family Night Out is an innovative event for the Bayonne Public Schools, combining what was formerly known as Parents Night Out with the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Chamber Players. The program features many musicians from the orchestra. This year’s program was entitled “Living Soundtracks: From Opera to Musical Theater.”

Pictured (left to right) are: Robert C. Craig, Assistant Superintendent for Personnel; Dr. Joseph Ryan, Public Information Director, City of Bayonne; Richard Gonzalez, RG Bicycle Shop; Gavin Davies, instrumental music teacher, and winner of the bicycle raffle; Joan H. Rosen, Director of Art and Music; Maria Hoffman, Vice Principal, Dr. Walter F. Robinson School; and Kevin Moran, Principal, Dr. Walter F. Robinson School.

Escape School Program at Henry E. Harris School

Henry E. Harris School grades Kindergarten through 8 participated in the Escape School Program. The Dignity Memorial Escape School is a nationally recognized family safety program that provides parents and their children with critical abduction prevention escape techniques.

This program addresses practical prevention strategies in a manner that is neither frightening nor threatening. It teaches children to identify strangers not by what they look like, but most importantly how they act.

Mr. Bill Belott, an Escape representative, enlisted the aid of Harris students using role playing strategies to demonstrate possible scenarios and proper techniques to ensure a positive outcome. An interactive discussion with audience emphasized the strategies learned are a valuable lesson in today's society.

“Be Well” at Bayonne High School

A new addition to the health curriculum at Bayonne High School is a class in nutrition and fitness offered to BHS seniors and taught by Patricia Longo. The goal of the class is to educate the students on good nutritional habits and the benefits of daily exercise.

The nutritional part of the class consists of weekly challenges such as adding water to their diet, cutting out sugary and salty snacks, cutting out fast foods, adding fruits and vegetables to their diets, eating no food after 7:00 P.M., and getting at least eight hours sleep each night.

BHS physical education teacher Patricia Longo states, “As a student begins this class, they are weighed in and their height is taken. From there, they learn what is their Body Mass Index (BMI) and how to find their target heart rate. The Food Pyramid is explained and the students keep a diary of their eating habits to see how well they are doing with their diets. Students also learn how to read food labels in order to make wiser choices.”

“The class is taught in the Wellness Room which consists of treadmills, ellipticals, steppers, and bikes. These machines help the students work on their cardiovascular endurance. Students are taught the proper technique for the various strength training machines. Up-to-the-minute equipment, such as the fitness ball, tubing, free weights, and core training, are introduced for each individual's use.”

Patricia Longo adds, “While the class is only one marking period, students take with them skills that will last a lifetime.”