



Newsletter

ABOUT YOUR SCHOOLS

Vol. 34 Number 2

January 2009

Academics and Social Skills - Priorities at Lorane School

Deborah Dawson, Principal

The 2008-09 school year has gotten off to a great start at Lorane. Our students in third and fourth grades achieved AYP (adequate yearly progress) on the spring 2008 PSSA testing in both math and reading. As a staff, we continue to focus on both the academic development of our students as well as their social development. Our students continue to make progress in both of these areas.

To enhance our academic program, we have implemented Response to Intervention (RtI) focusing on language arts. The staff has received training in providing learning opportunities to enable all students to fully develop their academic potential. We began the school year by assessing all our students and using the assessments to group students for instruction de-

signed to meet their individual needs. Each day 30 minutes of language arts instruction is devoted to Response to Intervention and we call it "Tier" time. For some students this time is for reinforcement, extension and enrichment of the curriculum, while for others it is time for intensive intervention. As the year progresses, we will closely monitor student progress to assure that each student makes adequate gains.

Lorane adopted a school-wide behavior management system with the beginning of the 2006-07 school year. A committee researched and designed a system that would meet the needs of our students, parents and staff. The program is designed to create a caring community that teaches our students the principles of respect and responsi-

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Learn More About the ETSD Alumni Association

Learn all about the revitalized alumni association. Go to the district website www.exeter.k12.pa.us click on "Community" and scroll to "Alumni Association." The website includes alumni news, a photo gallery, upcoming reunions and events, like the Bowling Party in February and a Corvette Show in the spring. Don't miss this opportunity to learn how you can stay in touch with classmates and participate in numerous activities.

Board Reorganizes for 2009

The Exeter Township School Board reorganization meeting was held on Tuesday, December 2. Jack Linton was re-elected president and Russell Diesinger was re-elected vice president. Mr. Linton is beginning his tenth year on the board and served seven years as vice president. Mr. Diesinger is beginning his eighth year as a board member and his second term as vice president.

In September Andrea Sandusky was appointed to the board to fill the unexpired term of Dr. Michael Gambone, who resigned in August. Ms. Sandusky is the mother of four children and an Exeter resident for 15 years. She has had at least one of her four children in five of the Exeter Schools for all 15 years as a resident! Andrea is a business owner and has previously served as an APT officer on the Lorane and Reifflon School APTs.

The public is welcome to attend board meetings, which begin at 7 p.m. and are held in the administration building. In most months, the first Tuesday is dedicated to committee meetings, the second Tuesday for a workshop session, and the third Tuesday for the voting meeting.

Celebrating School Director Recognition Month



The 2009 Board of Education includes: (seated left to right) Mary Walker, President Jack Linton, Vice President Russell Diesinger, Andrea Sandusky, (standing left to right) Dr. David Bender, Kenneth Smith, Carole Kutscher, J. Ken Hart, and Robert Quinter, Jr.

What Snow Means to the Grounds & Facility Staff

Ken Pitts,
Buildings and Grounds Supervisor

Students love snow days! At the first flake their eyes will drift from what they are learning to watch what they hope will soon be happening. But those flakes mean something different to the administration, transportation department, and grounds/facility decision makers. Student safety, graduation schedule, and young children home alone just scratch the surface of what a few flakes set in motion.

So what goes into a snow day for the grounds/facilities staff? Every storm is evaluated individually. We look at what the forecasters are predicting, when the event will occur, type of precipitation, duration and likely outcomes. It's always a guess, but we try to plan for the event ahead of time to keep as many options open as possible. The worst case is an ice storm, the best case is the storm misses us, but an average school closing day looks like this . . .

It's 5 a.m., the eighteen or more people assigned to clearing the snow have arrived after an early cup of coffee and a slippery ride into work before most of the roads have even been touched. The shovels are ready, plows were attached the previous day, and this group knows where to start and how to get the job done. Trucks, tractors and shovels get to work not knowing yet if school is closing or if there will be a 2-hour delay. That decision won't come for another half or full hour, so you start with the quick and dirty – bus routes, main walkways and a fast clear of parking lots. If you don't do this first and it's just a delay you won't finish in time. It won't be thorough to do it this way, but the job gets done. Then around 6 a.m. the word trickles around (or it's the sound of 4,400 children cheering) that schools are closed. Everyone sighs in relief and gets set for some serious snow pushing.

For an eight-inch, moderate snow storm, the district will use a small dump truck, six pick-up trucks, seven tractors, a lot of elbow grease, and

From the Desk of Dr. Beverly Martin, Superintendent "Exeter - A Great Place to Learn and Live"



Dr. Beverly Martin

Happy 2009 to everyone in the Exeter Township community!

In an economic environment where we must look for alternatives to tax revenues to fund special events and opportunities for our students that enrich our curriculum and promote school spirit and pride, I'd like to highlight the importance of the Exeter Community Education Foundation and our partnerships with local businesses.

This past summer, the Foundation sponsored a very successful golf outing at the Reading Country Club. The main reasons for its success were the tireless efforts of a great group of people who are dedicated to helping the Foundation meet its goals, and the sponsorship and participation of many of our area businesses. In fact, many business owners have really worked with the district to forge a partnership, and have demonstrated their commitment to education and to the children of Exeter Township.

what will be almost 200 man hours of work by the time it's all done. Then by the end of the day these winter warriors get to go home and most likely get to finish their own drives and walks, the whole time thinking "spring is just around the corner!"

One of those business owners who has generously supported both the school district and the community is Hamid Chaudhry, owner of the Exeter Dairy Queen at 5710 Perkiomen Avenue. For the past three years, Dairy Queen has donated ice cream for our younger children at Lausch, Lorane and Jacksonwald Elementary Schools to celebrate the end of the school year. Reiffton School and the Junior High School have also received ice cream donations for special events for their students. Dairy Queen has also assisted to sponsor our DARE program, which is an educational program provided in partnership with the Exeter police designed to teach children about avoiding drugs, alcohol, and tobacco, and resisting peer pressure. If you have indulged in a treat at Exeter Dairy Queen with your family, you may have seen a four by six foot mural on the wall, completed by 7th and 8th grade students from Exeter Township Junior High School, under the direction of art teachers Kim Lopez and Michele Miskovitz. In addition, Mr. Chaudhry has provided door prizes and coupons for free Dairy Queen treats to many of our booster clubs, the education foundation, and school fundraisers.

In addition to supporting our district, Dairy Queen also contributes to township recreation activities such as Little League teams and the Exeter Community Library.

I'd like to thank Hamid Chaudhry and all the business owners in Exeter Township who are eager to help and support our schools and community. It is more evidence that this community is not only a great place to live, but it is also filled with caring and generous people.



M.L.Lausch Elementary School Community Report

Joseph J. Schlaffer, Ed. D., Principal

The Lausch Elementary School continues to provide a wonderful education to the community it serves. With an enrollment of just under 400 students, we are still able to maintain the community school atmosphere that has proven in research to benefit children and parents. However, like all other schools in this district and those surrounding us, we face the educational challenges posed by No Child Left Behind. We continue to train and develop a mixed group of experienced and newer educators to meet the rigors outlined by the Department of Education.

Our children are being held to high academic standards. Third and

fourth grade students continually achieve well beyond the benchmarks set forth by the state board of education for reading, math, and science. Our primary grades are not assessed using the state developed standardized testing process.

Finally, M.L. Lausch has a group of hard working teachers who are child-centered, professional, and conscien-

tious; not to mention frugal. The Lausch building budget has actually decreased by 15% during the last five school years. We recognize and appreciate the support of the taxpayers and the School Board of Directors in sustaining our efforts to provide a great education for the students in the Exeter Township School District.

Welcome Two New Elementary Assistant Principals

Two new elementary administrators were welcomed to the district this fall. Tara Ricci became the assistant principal at Jacksonwald and Christy Haller was named Reiffton Assistant Principal.

Ms. Ricci comes to the district from the Pennsauken, New Jersey Schools where she taught grades 6-8 language arts and served as an administrative intern and literacy coach. Prior to that she taught math and language arts at St. Christopher School in Philadelphia. She earned a BS from Penn State and a MS and principal certificate from Drexel University. Tara lives with her husband, Patrick, and their four children in Gilbertsville. She said, "Jacksonwald students and all of the students of the Exeter Township School District are so fortunate to have such caring and dedicated teachers, as

well as, parents who are involved and supportive."

Ms. Haller arrived at the Reiffton School after working in the Reading School District for 10 years. She taught sixth and eighth grades at Southwest Middle School, taught second grade and served as a reading coach at Amanda Stout Elementary School, and was an instructional supervisor at Northwest Elementary School. Ms. Haller earned a BS from KU and a MS and principal certificate from Alvernia. Ms. Haller commented on her impression of Reiffton after working there for two months, "Reiffton is a beautiful school to work in every day, however, it is the students and staff that make it a very special place." Christy and her husband, Christian, are the parents of a son and daughter.

Lorane School *(cont. from page 1)*

bility. We have instituted consistent rules and consequences. A key component of our system is the teaching of the social skills of cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy and self control. We continue to strive to create a welcoming climate that is safe for all and foster the belief that our social curriculum is as important as our academic curriculum.

Our students and staff participated in "Hats on for Habitat," in November. The purpose of this event was to raise funds so Reading-Berks Habitat for Humanity can help families who endure enormous hardships realize the dream of owning their own home. By donating \$1.00, students and staff were able to wear a hat of their choice on November 21. Lorane School raised a total of \$439.44. The Lorane community continues to show empathy for others who are less fortunate.

The Lorane APT is a vital part of our school community. They do many valuable things for our students and staff. They provide some materials for classrooms, activities and assemblies for our students, staff and parents. We are grateful for their dedication and support.



Jacksonwald Asst. Principal Tara Ricci and Reiffton Asst. Principal Christy Haller

SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Berks County Community Foundation administers more than 100 scholarship funds for Berks County students. Most of the scholarships have very specific eligibility criteria. The complete list of scholarships administered by Berks County Community Foundation is available online at www.bccf.org. Interested students should review available scholarships online now. With a few exceptions, most applications will be accepted beginning January 15, 2009 through April 1, 2009 for the 2009-2010 school year.



Fourth graders are happy to participate in the Jacksonwald School Walk for Diabetes held in November. The students and staff raised over \$4,300 for the American Diabetes Association.

What is the Student Assistance Program (SAP)?

Alycia Lenart, Senior High SAP Coordinator

Exeter Township School District's Student Assistance Program (SAP) is designed to identify issues including alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, and mental health issues which pose a barrier to a student's success. The primary goal of SAP is to help students overcome these barriers in order that they can academically achieve, remain in school, and advance. The student assistance process is based upon state guidelines, professional standards and policies, and procedures adopted by the local school board of directors.

SAP is a systematic process using techniques to mobilize school resources to remove barriers to learning. The core of the program is a professionally trained team, including school staff and liaisons from community alcohol, drug and mental health agencies. SAP team members are trained to identify problems, determine whether or not the presenting problem lies within the responsibility of the school, and make recommendations to assist the student and the parent. When the problem lies beyond the scope of the school, the SAP team will assist the parent and student so they can access services within the community. The student assistance team members do not diagnose, treat or refer to treatment; but they may refer for a screening or an assessment for treatment.

There are four phases to the student assistance process. They are:

- (1) **Referral** - Anyone can refer a student to SAP when they are concerned about someone's behavior - any school staff, a student's friend, a family member or community member. A student can also go directly to the SAP team to ask for help.
- (2) **Team Planning** - The SAP team gathers objective information about the student's performance in school from all school personnel who have contact with the student. Information is also collected from the parent. The team meets to discuss the data collected and to develop a plan. A team member then calls the parent and together they discuss the plan. The plan includes strategies for removing the learning barriers and promoting the student's academic and personal success to include in-school and/or community-based services and activities.
- (3) **Intervention and Recommendations** - The plan is put into action. The team assists in linking the student to in-school and/or community-based services and activities. The team might recommend an integrated behavioral health assessment.
- (4) **Support and Follow-Up** - The SAP team continues to work with and support the student and his/her family. Follow-up includes monitoring, mentoring, and motivating for academic success.

It is the parent's right to be involved in the process and to have access to all school records under the applicable state and federal laws and regulations. Involvement of parents in all phases of the student assistance program underscores the parent's role and responsibility in the decision-making process affecting the child's education and is key to the successful resolution of problems.

If you would like to learn more about Exeter Township School District's Student Assistance Program, have concerns about your student, or need help accessing resources in school or outside of school, please feel free to contact SAP coordinators Alycia Lenart at the Senior High, Rachael Yudt at the Junior High, or your student's school counselor.

The BEST DEAL AROUND – School Meals!

Gloria Clay, Food Services Supervisor

The Exeter Township School District recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are essential to a student's physical well-being, growth, development and readiness to learn. All ETSD schools serve nutritious meals which follow the National School Programs regulations and are under the Supervision of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and Nutrition Services.

When planning school menus a computerized analysis is used to make sure the menus meet the required key nutrients including calories, fat, saturated fat, iron, protein, calcium, and vitamins A and C. Meals include vegetables, salads, fresh and canned fruit, whole grain bread and low fat milks. Entrees and potatoes are baked and not fried, helping to reduce the fat. Lunch-eon meats and hot dogs are turkey based, which also helps in fat reduction.

We all know that food prices have increased considerably and school lunch prices, while they have risen slightly, are still a great value. A comparison of prices follows:

- For \$1.75 in the elementary schools a chicken nugget meal (with five nuggets) can be purchased. It includes a whole wheat dinner roll, mashed potatoes,

mixed vegetables, vegetable sticks with dip, pineapple and orange sections or fresh fruit, and choice of reduced fat milk.

- For \$1.95 in the secondary schools a chicken nugget value meal (with six nuggets) can be purchased and includes a whole wheat dinner roll, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, vegetable sticks and dip, peaches or fresh fruit, and a choice of milk.
- In a fast food restaurant a meal of Chicken Nuggets (six nuggets), small french fries and milk costs \$5.26 plus tax.
- A Lunchable cold meal pack can be purchased in a grocery store for \$2.69. It includes pizza or ham and cheese with crackers, a juice pouch and candy snack.
- A lunch packed at home that includes a ham and cheese sandwich on white bread, chips, two cookies, banana and juice box is estimated to cost \$2.14.

As you can see nutritious School Meals are, by far, the best buy! Nutritious breakfasts are also available in all schools. The cost at the elementary schools is \$1.00 and \$1.55 at the secondary schools.

Exeter Community Education Foundation's

Gift with a Future Program

Show your appreciation to someone who is a special mentor in your child's life. This can be your child's teacher, coach, librarian, bus driver, family member or daycare provider. It could simply be to honor your child for excellent academic performance, service achievement, positive attitude or ANY accomplishment. Whatever the reason, your donation will help the foundation's efforts to enhance and enrich student programs throughout the Exeter Township School District. This is a great ANYTIME gift to show that you care. Printed notification informs the honoree that a donation has been made to ECEF by the donor. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. ECEF is a 501(C)(3) entity. Visit

www.ExeterEducationFoundation.org for a "Gift with a Future" form.

The Exeter Community Education Foundation (ECEF) is a non-profit organization dedicated to enhancing the education of students in the Exeter School District. ECEF is an independent public charity dedicated to encouraging community-wide participation and philanthropy, including post-secondary scholarships, in order to enhance and expand enrichment opportunities of all students. The mission of the Foundation is to secure resources for our students to support programs for which sufficient funds are not available from federal, state, and local public sources. These programs will promote excellence in learning and mobilize community support for enhancing the quality of education in the ETSD.

Board of Directors include: President Kenneth P. Levan; Vice-President Nicholas J. Corbo, Ed.D.; Treasurer Daniel W. Fanelli; Secretary Anne C. Guydish; Jeffrey D. Bukowski, Esq.; Glenn S. Corbin, O.D.; Debra R. Franklin, Esq.; Lance W. Hettinger; Bradford L. Kissam; Carole A. Kutscher; Harlan A. Kutscher, MD, FACS; Jack A. Linton, Esq.; Bonnie L. Lutz; Linda M. Misterkiewicz; Kenneth A. Smith; Joseph R. Staub; Roy S. Underhill; and Beverly A. Martin, Ed.D.

JHS Red Cross Club Members Serve as Hosts & Helpers



In November senior citizens were treated to a free breakfast and a special performance of the ETJHS musical. Members of the Red Cross Club (pictured above) served as hosts and helpers for the event. Resident senior citizens are invited to the senior high on Wednesday, March 11 for a breakfast and the senior high all-school musical performance of "Beauty and the Beast."

Do You Know a Child Who Will Turn Age 5 Before September 1, 2009?

In order to plan for the 2009-2010 school term, the district needs to determine an accurate number of incoming kindergartners. Initial information and registration packets will be mailed to all families that the district is aware of who have preschoolers turning age 5 before September 1, 2009. If you have a child who is age appropriate for kindergarten and do not receive this information before mid-February, please phone Thelo Thomas at 610-779-0700 (ext. 1029) or e-mail her at: tthomas@exeter.k12.pa.us

Completed forms are turned in at Preregistration which is scheduled for Wed., Feb. 18 and Thurs., Feb. 19 at the K-4 schools from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. The average time necessary to preregister is 15 minutes and it is not necessary for a preschooler to accompany his/her parent.

Homestead/Farmstead Applications

The Homestead/Farmstead application is a requirement of the Taxpayer Relief Act (Act 1) of 2006. Approved homestead/farmstead owners may be eligible for property tax relief on the July 1, 2009 school real estate tax bill if the Secretary of the Budget authorizes the Pennsylvania Department of Education to provide school districts with property tax reduction allocations.

In December 2008, Homestead/Farmstead applications were mailed to those district taxpayers who did not have an approved application on file according to the Berks County Homestead Office's database as of November 1, 2008. If your property has already been approved no further action is required. If you received an application, it must be completed and returned to the Berks County Assessment Office by the March 1, 2009 due date. If you did not receive an application by mail and your property has not been approved, you can stop in at the Exeter Township School District Business Office, 3650 Perkiomen Avenue, Reading, PA, 19606 to get a form or call the Business Office at 610-779-0700, ext. 1001 and request an application be mailed. Any questions regarding whether your property has been approved can be addressed by the Berks County Homestead Office at 610-478-6263.

2009-10 Preliminary Budget Information

Information about the preliminary 2009-10 budget will be presented and discussed at the January 13 Board Workshop. The public is invited to attend this meeting at 7 p.m. in the Administration Building.

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Exeter Township School District

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Warren Mata, Ed.D., Assistant Superintendent

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Questions, suggestions, and/or information concerning the NEWSLETTER should be directed to Don W. Cramer, Editor, in the Instructional Support Services Office.

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