



Superintendent's Report February 17, 2022

The PTO Read-a-Thon ends tomorrow. I want to thank the PTO for organizing this fundraiser which has put a strong focus on encouraging our students to read! Our District Diversity Council Action Plan has an action item this year to post to each school's website a list of books in our collections that feature characters who represent our student population and/or have the topic of diversity in their stories. Our media center specialists have created the lists. Parents and students can check the library/media center page of each school to view the books with diverse characters and stories that they may wish to read – Hillside's page is currently posted and Tenakill's page will be posted soon.

On tonight's agenda is a motion to approve the Three-Year ESL Plan for 2021-2024. New Jersey's Administrative Code (N.J.A.C. 6A -15-1.6) requires that school districts that provide a bilingual program, English as a Second Language (ESL) program, or English Language Services (ELS) must submit a plan every three years to the Department of Education for approval. The word *plan* is a bit of a misnomer because what the NJDOE requires is our responses to a survey they provide. I want to thank Ms. Soojung Kwak, our ESL Coordinator, for her excellent work in reviewing our ESL program and preparing the Three-Year ESL Plan for submission. We are proud of our excellent team of ESL teachers, Ms. Sarah Kang, Ms. Kathy Lee, Ms. Soojung Kwak, and Ms. Maggie Churchill, who provide a high-intensity ESL program to our students who are linguistically gifted to speak more than one language. Our students in the ESL program have been testing this week using the ACCESS for English Language Learners assessment. This test will provide data on the progress our multilingual learners have been making toward attaining English language proficiency according to state criteria. This information will be reported when we receive the test results.

Pandemic Update

Since Friday, February 4, 2022 (the day after my last report), we have had 7 students at Hillside Elementary School and 1 student at Tenakill Middle School test positive for COVID-19, which is .6% of our total student population. Since February 4, 2022, no staff members have tested positive. Since September 2, 2021, the cumulative number of students who have been COVID-19 positive is 246, which is 21% of the student population. With regard to vaccinations:

Hillside Elementary School

- 94% of staff are vaccinated and 35% have been boosted
- 38% of students are vaccinated (2% increase since last report); *HES students are not eligible for a booster*

Tenakill Middle School

- 97% of staff are vaccinated and 49% have been boosted (9% increase since last report)
- 26% of students are vaccinated and 6.2% have been boosted (a 1.2 % increase since last report)

The school district will be closed from Monday, February 21, 2022, through Friday, February 25, 2022, for winter break. Schools will reopen on Monday, February 28, 2022. Please enjoy the time off and be safe!

Vincent Mc Hale