

nbc REGIONAL NEWS

A Community Newsletter of the Northern Burlington County Regional School District

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April 2008

Facilitating School Improvement

The need to grow and stay competitive is just as crucial for educational school systems as it is for private industry. In fact, history has shown that the public demands quality and

accountability from institutions that service society's needs.

In order to maintain that *public trust*, **Northern Burlington County Regional School District** continues its involvement in a systematic process known as *Accreditation for Growth (AFG)*.

Accreditation provides a way to manage change through regular assessment, planning, implementation, and reassessment.

At **Northern**, *AFG* has provided a framework for designing and implementing efforts to *grow* student performance.

As a comprehensive school system, **Northern** is proud to be taking such pioneering steps through strategic planning.

The end result will be a seven-year improvement plan based upon the district's vision of the future with objectives for reaching that vision.



The campus of the Northern Burlington County Regional School District sits on more than 180 acres of land off Route 206 in Columbus.

Budgeting for 2009

The **Northern Burlington County Regional School District** is pleased to propose a school budget that is considerate of the taxpayers for the 2008-2009 school year.

The proposed budget for next year controls spending and maintains educational programs.

The overall result is a proposed budget that will **decrease** taxes by one half a penny *on average* in the regional school district.

The *Board of Education* and the Administration have worked

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Inside NEWS

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- Future Engineers
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Contemplative Creations

The choices we make say something about who we are and what aspirations we have for the future.

Students in Ceramics I classes at the **NBC** high school recently answered some contemplative questions about themselves in order to embark on their next artistic challenge.

Ceramics students, in grades 9-12, recently sculpted slab constructed houses by rolling ceramic clay into flat pieces and then assembling them by hand.

As part of the design, students were asked to create images as symbols of their identity and incise them onto the surface of their houses.

After the houses were constructed, they were bisque fired in the kiln to harden them.

Finally, the houses were decorated with a faux metallic finish.

The unique identity of each student was revealed in this fun and exciting art project.

Slab construction is one of three major hand building techniques that students learn in the high school's Ceramics I course.

The inspiration for this project was artist and innovator David Stabley, who was a presenter at last summer's *Clay in Mind* Winner's Workshop.

Suzanne Maruska, 2007 **Northern** graduate and her teacher Mrs. Pat Proniewski were selected to attend that workshop.



Ceramics I students had a lesson in a very individualized art project.



Sophomore Jenna Krichling proudly displays her ceramic house while junior Brianna D'Amato smiles with approval.

Aspiring Engineers Get a Start

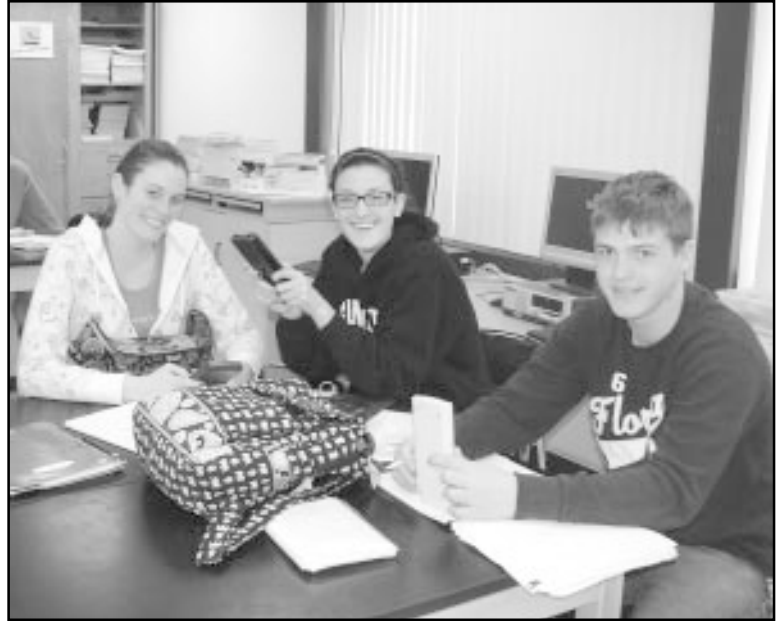
Engineering Academy Proposed

Northern will offer its first engineering principles class next fall.

A new course that will explore the different aspects of the engineering process by having students work in collaborative teams, will make its debut in September 2008.

The main objectives of the program will be to develop creative thinkers, to foster teamwork, and to explore a subject matter not addressed in other school departments.

This course is **Northern's** first step toward establishing an engineering academy. Currently, **Northern** is working with Burlington County College and Drexel University to pursue an Engineering Academy within the high school that is proposed to be in full operation by September 2009.



Students Kaitlynn Carty, Jillian Asay and Jared Morris calculate a physics problem.

Winter Sports Wrap-Up

Each sports season, **Northern** is pleased to recognize so many outstanding student athletes. This winter was no exception.

The following students received *First Team All Star* selection or were recognized for other honors.

Girls' Basketball All Stars

Jillian Asay, 12th grade
Kaitlynn Carty, 12th grade

Girls' Bowling All Star

Lindsey Webster, 12th grade

Wrestling All Stars

Phil Bowen, 12th grade
R.J. Melton, 12th grade
Jeff Townsend, 11th grade

In wrestling, senior R.J. Melton posted 100 wins during his career at **Northern**.

In basketball, seniors Jillian Asay and Kaitlynn Carty were selected to play in the Burlington County senior showcase game.

Senior Kelly Walsh was recently honored by the *New*

Jersey State Interscholastic Athletic Association at a luncheon for female athletes for National Women in Sports Day.

Kelly plays soccer and winter and spring track at **Northern**.

She was treated to a Seton Hall University basketball game after lunch.

**Congratulations to
Wrestling Coach
Jule Dolci**

100th Win this Season

BOE Holds Line on Taxes

Continued from page one

hard to hold the line on taxes for next school year.

But there's always a challenge in understanding school finance when the dynamics of a regional school system are entered into the formula.

According to Superintendent of Schools, Dr. James Sarruda, the amount of money needed to fund the school budget will actually **decrease** the school tax in North Hanover and Springfield Townships while Chesterfield and Mansfield Townships will experience only a **slight increase**.

Increase in State Aid

In response to much discussion and concern from communities throughout New Jersey, Governor Jon S. Corzine announced a new school funding

formula in December, 2007.

According to the new formula, all school districts would receive an **increase in state aid** from at least two percent to as much as 20 percent for next school year.

As in the past, this aid formula follows the basic principle that children with the greater need deserve the greater resources.

The good news is that **Northern Burlington County Regional School District** received an increase in state aid of 4.6 percent for next year.

This additional \$530,000 in revenue is a welcome addition to a heavily restricted line item budget.

In addition, the new funding formula caps **Northern's** Surplus account at 2%, Administrative

Cost Per Pupil at a zero percent increase and the increase in the local tax levy at 2.71%.

The state has offered provisions for school districts to exceed these caps where special circumstances apply.

For example, recent state legislation has capped tax levy increases to 4%.

However, the **Northern Burlington Board of Education** has opted not to pursue any waivers to this tax cap although the district is eligible to do so.

This translates to *good news for taxpayers* who are helping to fund next year's school budget.

"The *Board of Education* works hard to maintain a school budget that is sensitive to the

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2008-2009 Annual School Tax Rates
(per \$100 of assessed property value)

New Tax Rate Tables

	Chesterfield	Mansfield	No. Hanover	Springfield
General Fund	\$0.400	\$0.578	\$0.932	\$0.652
Debt Service	<u>\$0.046</u>	<u>\$0.066</u>	<u>\$0.107</u>	<u>\$0.075</u>
Total Tax Rate	\$0.446	\$0.644	\$1.039	\$0.727
Net Effect*	3.9¢	0.8¢	-0.8¢	-5.4¢

*See chart on page five to understand school tax impact based on property assessments

School Programs Intact

Continued from page four

taxpayers in the region,” said President of the **BOE**, Mr. Pat Foley.

“We are very concerned about the tax impact on the local community and have taken great strides to keep our operating costs down and control our spending,” said Dr. James Sarruda.

Over the years, **Northern** has adopted practices that have resulted in better services for its students and cost savings for the district.

Other ways that **Northern Burlington** has been able to hold the line for taxpayers is through its success in generating additional revenue to support staffing and curriculum needs.

“All of the cost savings that we have realized in transportation, insurance, energy, supplies

and equipment have been passed on to the taxpayers,” said Dr. Sarruda.

Despite the number-crunching that is needed to cap spending in a district the size of **Northern**, there is good news in the school budget in terms of programs and services for the students next year.

Budget Highlights

First, no essential programs will be eliminated next school year.

The proposed amount to be raised in taxes to support the general fund budget -- a question that will be put before the voters on **April 15th** — is \$15,461,943.

The blue box at the bottom of this page shows the local tax impact by township that taxpayers

can anticipate.

In addition, the proposed budget provides for one additional teacher to support the television/video production program that was initiated this school year.

Through the support of our local cable provider, **Northern** has gained the broadcast rights to local Channel 19 at no cost to the district. By adding a teacher to support this program, the high school will be able to host its very own cable television station.

Furthermore, **Northern** is revising its current math and science curriculum to introduce an engineering program in the high school. *(See additional details of this curriculum in the story on page 3).*

How the School Budget Impacts Your Taxes

2008-2009 Annual School Tax Increases/Decreases (per \$100 of assessed property value)

	Chesterfield	Mansfield	No. Hanover	Springfield
Tax Rate	\$0.400	\$0.578	\$.0932	\$0.652
Avg. Ass'd Home Value	\$455,284	\$333,368	\$177,000	\$320,150
Impact by Year*	\$157.69	\$24.75	-\$11.94	\$155.09
Impact by Month*	\$13.14	\$2.06	-0.99¢	-\$12.92

*Based on Average Assessed Home Value

Bus Driver Training



Director of Transportation, Sandy Hanson of Northern Burlington served as one of the co-chairs for the annual school bus driver training seminar which was hosted by Northern Burlington County Regional Middle School this winter.

Business Behind the Wheel

Bus drivers in the **Northern Burlington County Regional School District** have been known to go that *extra mile*.

Each year, many along with hundreds of other bus drivers in the state, voluntarily participate in an annual bus driver training seminar.

Simply put, it's all about caring for the children that they serve.

The seminar, which was held in February at two locations, was attended by almost 250 bus drivers throughout New Jersey.

For the last four years, **Northern** has served as a host district for participants traveling from southern points in the state. This year's presenter was Dr. Linda Bluth, one of the country's leading experts in transporting children with disabilities.

Bloustein Scholars Announced

Eleven members of the **Northern Burlington County Regional High School Class of 2008** received *Edward J. Bloustein Distinguished Scholars Awards*.

This award earns all 11 of the students a \$1000 scholarship per year for their college education provided they attend a New Jersey college or university.

This academic scholarship is given for achievement in the SAT's and/or achievement in class rank.

Congratulations to all!



Back row: Victoria Castens, Kasey Bush, Kaitlynn Carty, Ian King, Hannah Park, Kevin Hardiman: Front row: Dale Dombrowski, Molly McMenamin, Molly Cochran, Anthony Bono. Tiffany Mathers not pictured.

Noteworthy at NBC

Statewide Recognition

Congratulations are in order for Mrs. Valerie Gargus, theatre teacher at the high school.

Recently, Mrs. Gargus received a letter from the Speech and Theatre Association of New Jersey informing her that she has been selected to receive the Governor's Award in Arts Education-Outstanding Speech and Theatre Teacher of Secondary Education Award for 2008.

Bravo to Mrs. Gargus!

Artistic Achievement

Northern Burlington was well represented at the annual Teen Arts Showcase held recently at Burlington County College.

The Teen Arts Festival is a program that displays teen art throughout the state and offers teenagers the opportunity to unveil their artistic accomplishments before an audience of peers and professionals.

The **Northern** students selected for this honor were **Seniors:** Bryant Castens, Bill Kruty, Matt Palmieri, and Andrew Potts; **Juniors:** Danielle Canulli, Rachel McIntyre and Sarah Van Mater. Great job art students!

Singled Out for Excellence

Mrs. Nancy Collier has been singled out as a New Jersey educator who has demonstrated outstanding efforts in teaching the Holocaust and genocide in the classroom.

Mrs. Collier, who teaches 8th grade reading at the middle school will receive the *Honey & Maurice Axelrod Award* in June.

This award is presented through a grant to the Anti-Defamation League, in cooperation with the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education.

Mrs. Collier will receive the award at a special ceremony at Mercer County Community College.

Middle School Hoopla

Congratulations to the **Northern Burlington Middle School** Girls' basketball team which finished the season with a 14-6 overall record.

The team placed second in the Burlington County end-of-season tournament.

The following 8th graders received coach recognition for their contributions: Sherie Binns, Rachel Dortch, Casey Kotlenicki, Jacqueline Laurenti, Samantha Reinis, Shaun Stevenson, and Gabrielle Van Mater.

Special Olympics Bowlers

Northern Burlington is proud of its Special Olympics bowling team.

After recent competition, nine students will advance to compete in their divisions at state levels.

They were: Caitlyn Crawford, Douglas Evans, Patrick Embry, Chris Grant, Mary Jo Stiles, Kristen Shenowski, Cody Stokes, David Whetzel, and Alaina Giancola.

Treat the Troops

Since **Northern Burlington** is so close to McGuire Air Force Base, many of the students know someone who is, or has been deployed.

So it's easy to see why the food classes at **Northern Burlington** would want to show their appreciation to our servicemen and women.

Just before the winter break, the food classes under Mrs. Peggy Apice's direction, put on their aprons and launched *Operation T3*. Also known as *Treat the Troops*, the campaign involved baking over 100 dozen chocolate chip cookies that were packaged and sent overseas.

Vote April 15, 2008

Polling Locations

Chesterfield Township 7 a.m.- 9 p.m.

All Districts Municipal Building

Mansfield Township 2 - 9 p.m.

Districts 1, 7, 8 NBC High School Cafeteria

Districts 2, 3 Municipal Building

Districts 4, 5 Homestead Clubhouse

District 6 Four Seasons Clubhouse

North Hanover Township 2 - 9 p.m.

All Districts Municipal Building

Springfield Township 2 - 9 p.m.

All Districts Municipal Building

Candidates for the Board of Education

Mansfield

One 3-Year Term

- **Thomas Sensbach**

North Hanover

One 3-Year Term

- **Roy A. Johnson**

Springfield

One 3-Year Term

- **Paul J. Tootell**
- **John Bunce**

Postal Customer

Board of Education

Mr. James R. Foley, President

Mr. Kermit W. Pigott, Vice-President

Mr. Michael Crawford

Mr. Thomas Ferritolo

Mr. Roy Johnson

Mr. James Nucto

Mrs. Linda Pastore

Mr. William Puglia

Mr. Thomas Sensbach

Lt. Col. Ray Wagner, Ex Officio

Dr. James Sarruda, Superintendent

Ms. Kathy McCormick, Asst. Superintendent

Mr. Richard Kaz, Jr., School Business

Administrator/Board Secretary

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Northern Burlington County
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