

SP-F Schools Open Tuesday With New Brunner, McGinn Principals

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS – Scotch Plains-Fanwood schools open for the new year this Tuesday, September 7, with two new principals and 55 new teachers.

The new teachers were hired to replace 30 retirees, with the rest hired due to maternity and medical leaves and resignations, according to Sally Rowland, an assistant to Superintendent of Schools Margaret Hayes. Students at Brunner School will be greeted by new principal Scott Bortnick, who previously served as supervisor of science for grades K-12. Sasha Slocum, a former board of education member and assistant prin-

cipal last year at Plainfield High School, takes over as principal at McGinn School.

Other administration changes include Vincent Dionisio, supervisor of science; Diane Peneno, K-12 supervisor of special education; Ryan Miller, Scotch Plains-Fanwood High School (SPFHS) assistant principal and athletics, and Ralph Gerace, Terrill Middle School assistant principal. In addition, Joan Mast has been promoted to assistant superintendent for curriculum instruction and technology. She previously was at the supervisory level.

“We are enthusiastic about the new administrators who are coming on board to fill vacancies due to attri-

tion,” Superintendent Hayes said in an e-mail to *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times*.

Due to state aid cuts, the Scotch Plains-Fanwood district has instated a new student activity fee. The fee is \$100 for SPFHS students taking part in sports, music or co-curricular activities, as well as for middle-school students participating in the seventh- and eighth-grade instrumental music programs. Students will be charged only once for the school year.

In neighboring Mountainside, schools open for the borough’s 800 school children on Tuesday. Deerfield School will be under the leadership of new principal Kimberly Richards, as she replaces Robert Phillips, who has moved out of state. In addition, seven new teachers have been hired, mostly replacing staffers who are out on maternity leave, as well as a new director of child care, plus new part-time staffers including a guidance counselor, occupational therapist and life-skills staffer. Also coming on board is Daniel Saragnese as acting business administrator, replacing Roderic McLaughlin, who took a similar position with a regional district in Bergen County.

Chief School Administrator Jeanette Baubles told *The Times* that the state aid cut, which amounted to \$780,000 in the borough, or 94 percent of the previous year’s funding, will likely result in the district eliminating its middle-school tennis and field hockey programs, although the boys’ and girls’ soccer teams will still be funded. She said the district, at the recommendation of Union County Superintendent of Schools Carmen Centuolo, is reaching out to the borough’s recreation department to see if the department can offer these programs. The district also eliminated its summer school and enrichment programs this summer, although it did hold its summer camp program.

Westfield schools open today, September 2, with a new principal installed at Franklin Elementary School and new assistant principal at Roosevelt Intermediate School, as well as a new high school athletic director and K-12 director of guidance. Similar to Scotch Plains-Fanwood, Westfield also has initi-

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New Administrators, Supervisors Told By BOE

By JESSICA E. JASKULA
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SCOTCH PLAINS — Superintendent of Schools Margaret Hayes announced during Thursday’s meeting of the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education some new appointments in the district, including Ralph Gerace, who has been appointed as assistant principal at Terrill Middle School.

Mr. Gerace, who was a social studies teacher at Park Middle School, will replace Kimberly Richards. Also announced was the appointment of Vincent Dionisio as the district’s supervisor of science for grades K-12. He will replace Scott Bortnick, who is the new principal at Brunner Elementary School.

Additionally, Diane Peneno was appointed as the district’s supervisor of special education for grades K-12. She will replace Suzanne Flannery. Ms. Peneno has served as a supervisor in Roselle and, most recently, in Edison. Mr. Dionisio has experience as a science supervisor in Mahwah and as a science teacher in Clifton and Hillside.

Board members also approved Thursday public and private school out-of-district placements for the 2010-2011 school year, totaling \$2,332,230 for public school placements and \$2,972,779 for private school placement.

“Not only are our public and pri-



Benjamin B. Corbin for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times
MEN WORKING...Contractors for the County of Union work at a fast pace to resurface many of the county roads prior to Labor Day. Pictured above, the men are working this week on Lamberts Mill Road in Scotch Plains.

Union County Moving Ahead With Area Solar-Panel Projects

By PAUL J. PEYTON
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

AREA – Union County is moving ahead with its solar-energy program, with 44 solar-panel installations being planned in 17 of the county’s 21 municipalities, including some on county facilities, according to officials. The county will hire a private company, through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process, to act as the solar developer.

According to Sebastian D’Elia, the county’s director of communications, the Union County Improvement Authority (UCIA) has approved two installations in Cranford; seven in Hillside (city and board of education - BOE); eight in Linden; five in Roselle Park; two each in New Providence (BOE) and Roselle (BOE); one each in Garwood (BOE), Plainfield (city) and Rahway; five in Springfield; four in Plainfield; two on county buildings; one at Union County College and two at the Morris-Union Jointure Commission.

When asked about who is responsible for the \$45 million in debt to be borne for the project, Ms. DeFilippo responded that, “The bonds that will pay for the project are Improvement Authority bonds, guaranteed by the county, and this debt will be paid off by the solar developer, to be selected through the public bidding process.”

“The solar developer will be required to put up security – backing his ability to fulfill the work-performance obligations – via either cash or a letter of credit. There is no (legal)

placements within the budget, they are lower than they were in 09-10,” said board Business Administrator Anthony Del Sordi.

Additionally, board members voted to approve the Professional Development Plan for the 2010-2011 school year. The plan, which was approved by the Union County Professional Development Board, was back for final approval from the board.

Board members also approved the 2010-2011 Programs of Studies for elementary students, fifth grade and the middle schools. One example of this change is to the middle school science curriculum, said Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Instruction and Technology Joan Mast. The middle school science program will be an integrated program, she said. Students will study different areas of science each year, instead of one specific area at each grade level.

Also on Thursday, board members designated the week of September 12-18 as “Arts in Education Week,” noting in the resolution that artistic disciplines, such as dance, literature, music and theater, are “an essential element of a complete and balanced education for all students.”

Board members also approved on Thursday a contract with Complete Care for various medical care services for the 2010-2011 school year.

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David B. Corbin for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times
HASHING OUT THE DEFENSIVE SCHEME...Raider varsity football Head Coach Steve Ciccotelli discusses defensive strategies with his team during a practice session on August 27. The Raiders are set to host Westfield in the season opener on Saturday, September 11, at 1 p.m.

Governor Christie Attends County GOP Event Tuesday

By HORACE CORBIN
Specially Written for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times

SUMMIT – New Jersey Governor Chris Christie was in Union County Tuesday night at the Grand Summit Hotel, spearheading a fundraiser for the Union County Republican Party. He told the enthusiastic crowd of about 200 how the Union County Republican Convention was his first big win, something he will not forget, in his quest for Governor – eventually defeating then Governor Jon Corzine – a former Summit resident, he noted.

Several members of the crowd chanted “past resident, past Governor.”

In a largely partisan and ideological speech, interrupted several times with applause, the Governor noted that, during his seven years as U.S. Attorney for New Jersey, when he traveled throughout the country, he was always asked only two things – about political corruption in New Jersey and about “The Sopranos.” Now, he said, during his travels, the image of New Jersey has changed.

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Jonathan O’Hea for The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times
RALLYING THE TEAM...New Jersey Governor Chris Christie speaks about government reform to Union County Republicans Tuesday night in Summit. Pictured, from left to right, are: Governor Christie, his wife, Mary Pat Christie; Asw. Nancy Munoz, Asm. Jon Bramnick, County GOP Chairman Phil Morin, Sen. Tom Kean, Jr. and former Congressman Mike Ferguson.

“This infusion of renewable energy will reduce the cost of power presently being used at each location, while at the same time providing local governments with budgetary certainty for at least a portion of their overall energy costs,” Ms. DeFilippo said in an e-mail to *The Scotch Plains-Fanwood Times*. “The goal of the program is to reduce energy costs for the county, participating local governmental entities, including municipalities and boards of education, and meeting the goal of the state’s Energy Master Plan, which sets a 20-percent reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.”

“Each participant simply pays for the solar electricity generated by its installation. Energy provided by the proposed solar projects will provide for a portion of each local government’s energy needs at a guaranteed rate. The guaranteed rate is expected to be anywhere from 25 to 33 percent lower than current utility rates,” according to a county press release.

Westfield Town Administrator Jim Gildea said his town was “ahead of the curve” because solar panels will be installed on the town’s library in the next few weeks through a power-purchase agreement the library has through a private company. He said the town was not a fit, however, for the county’s program due to the type

exposure on the bonds to any of the participating governmental agencies, as they are Improvement Authority bonds,” Ms. DeFilippo said. “Participating governmental agencies will sign up for 15-year contracts, as stipulated under state law (Local Public Contracts Law/Schools Contracts Law). There will also be a mechanism included for governing agencies that may wish to opt out during the lifetime of the contract for any reason.”

“To achieve the energy savings to participating towns and school districts, the solar power provider will be able to take advantage of “federal tax incentives, economies of scale and the sale of [Solar Renewable Energy Certificates],” she said.

“The solar developer will be required to put up security – backing his ability to fulfill the work-performance obligations – via either cash or a letter of credit. There is no (legal)

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NEW TRUSTEE...Erica Needle of Scotch Plains has been named to the board of trustees at The Wardlaw-Hartridge School in North Edison. Mrs. Needle and her husband, Steven, are the parents of Haley, a sophomore, and Max, a seventh grader, at the school. All are pictured above.

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