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**FEBRUARY 7, 2019**

*The following information has been collected from CSD administrative departments and reflects updates on key programs, priorities and initiatives. Items specifically related to the progress of Cheltenham's strategic plan, Five Pathways, One Destination, are noted along with specific plan pathways. To access the plan and a description of each pathway, [click here](#).*

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## **COMMITTEE UPDATES**

### **Community Conversation on Climate, Culture and Equity**

Equity, access and opportunity drive the District's work to ensure the eradication of the pervasive and inequitable outcomes in student achievement, results and performances. To that end, the Cheltenham School District hosted its second Community Conversation on Climate, Culture and Equity on Thursday, Jan. 10 at Wyncote Elementary. At the meeting, principals shared ongoing positive practices and programs that continue to improve climate and culture in all of the schools in our district. The group continued its dialogue on equity: What does it mean? How is it defined? What does it mean for our community and what is its impact?

#### **Presentations:**

[CSD Climate and Culture Presentations - Jan. 10>](#)

[Dr. Robert Jarvis Presentation>](#)

Two Climate, Culture and Equity meetings are left on the books for this school year: Wednesday, April 3; and Wednesday, May 29. These meetings are open to all Cheltenham Township residents, and are held at Wyncote Elementary from 5:30 – 8 p.m. Boxed meals are served. Please mark your calendars for these important meetings. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction] [Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement] [Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences] [Strategic Plan Pathway 5: Communication and Engagement]**

### **Calendar Committee**

CSD Administration hosted an open forum for parents and guardians on Friday, Jan. 25 to offer feedback into the creation of the 2019-20 school year calendar. The district is in the process of creating a survey, which will be finalized with input at the next calendar meeting, which is Tuesday, Feb. 26 at the Administration building. The survey will be delivered electronically shortly thereafter. The board will vote on adopting the calendar at its March 12 Legislative meeting.

### **Homework Committee**

Director of Secondary Education Charlene Collins facilitated the Homework Committee meeting on Monday, Jan. 28. Parents and administrators in attendance utilized [Rethinking Homework: Best Practices that Support Diverse Needs](#) by [Cathy Vatterott](#) to review the teacher, parent and student surveys. Collins will submit the surveys for approval to distribute to teachers and parents by Monday, Feb. 18. Collins will work with Director of Elementary Education Dr. Renato Lajara and the elementary school principals to conduct focus groups at K-6 schools. Students from seventh through 12<sup>th</sup> grade will receive an electronic survey. The next Homework committee meeting is scheduled for 10 a.m. on Monday, Feb. 11, 2019.

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## **ACADEMICS**

### **Achieve 3000's Read to Succeed Contest**

An Elkins Park fifth grade class won the [Achieve 3000](#) Read to Succeed contest, a schoolwide race toward accelerated literacy achievement. The class was awarded a gift card to spend on a celebration. Achieve 3000 received amazingly positive feedback on the impact of the contest. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction] [Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement]**

### **Project Lit @ CBK**

Director of Secondary Education Charlene Collins met with Peggy Cooper, English Coordinator and Student Achievement Leader, and CBK Principal Marcy Hockfield to discuss the CBK implementation [Project LIT](#), a national grassroots literacy movement of teachers and students committed to increasing access to culturally relevant books and promoting a love of reading in schools and communities. Cooper has applied to become one of the more than 300 Project LIT chapters in 40 states across the country. Hockfield has committed to purchasing the first series of texts. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction]**

### **Cedarbrook Social Studies**

District consultant Dr. Andy Fishman facilitated a professional learning experience with Cedarbrook Social Studies teachers about the implementation of the [Pennsylvania Core Writing Standards for History](#) aligning with the use of writing strategies CBK English teachers utilize. Director of Secondary Education Charlene Collins and Peggy Cooper, English Coordinator and Student Achievement Leader, supported the teachers during the workshop. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction]**

### **Middle School Math**

Dr. Brian Reilly, Supervisor of STEM, Brandon Lutz, Supervisor of Instructional Technology and K-12 Data, and Technology Staff Developer Lisa Rock met with Cedarbrook Math teacher Amy Thomas to discuss creating a middle school math resource website to aid students and parents seeking additional resources for review or enrichment. The team discussed building the website and the content to be included. The website will launch this school year, and will be updated on a regular basis as teachers and students produce content for Elkins Park School students, who will be transitioning to Cedarbrook next year, and Cedarbrook students. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction]**

### **Teaching Science is Phenomenal**

Seventh grade Science teachers Tracey Oliver-Davis and Corey Olmstead and Dr. Brian Reilly, Supervisor of STEM, attended day two of [Brett Moulding](#)'s workshop at the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit (MCIU) about designing and teaching Life Science across the three dimensions of:

1. Science and engineering practices;
2. Disciplinary core ideas (the standards); and
3. Cross-cutting themes (PDE's unifying themes)

During the workshop, participants engaged in a science performance and planned lessons utilizing the "Gather, Reason and Communicate" format. Dr. Reilly, Moulding and members of the MCIU concluded the workshop with a discussion regarding the implementation of the 3D model in an integrated science program, and the connections to mathematics and STEM courses at CBK and Elkins Park. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 3: Professional Learning]**

### **Freshman Writing Units**

Director of Secondary Education Charlene Collins met with the freshman English teachers to continue writing unit development. District consultant Dr. Andy Fishman worked with the teachers in the morning to review the informational writing unit and assist with the alignment of the K-8 writing units. In the afternoon, the team focused on creating the argumentative writing unit. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction]**

### **Project Based Learning**

Supervisor of Professional Learning and Gifted Education Matthew Pimental met with the deans from several schools within the Thomas Jefferson University - East Falls Campus (formerly Philadelphia University) about a potential partnership between TJU and Cheltenham's Project Based Learning program. TJU's [Kanbar College of Design, Engineering and Commerce](#) does the same type of work being undertaken by CSD PBL teachers and students, but takes it to a collegiate level, an asset from which CSD's PBL students can benefit. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction]**

### **Standards Aligned System Institute**

Dr. Brian Reilly, Supervisor of STEM, Supervisor of Professional Learning and Gifted Education Matthew Pimental and PBL teachers Brian Smith, Lyndie Dubbs, Jerome Lowery and Omar Rose presented at the 2018 Standards Aligned System Institute, [Future Ready PA: Transforming Student Pathways](#), in December about Design Thinking as a framework for implementing PBL in a fully integrated program. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 1: Curriculum and Instruction]**

## **SPECIAL EDUCATION**

### **Pennsylvania Alternative System of Assessment (PASA)**

The Office of Special Education has prepared to administer the Pennsylvania Alternative System of Assessment (PASA). The assessment is intended for students with disabilities and who meet the eligibility criteria due to cognitive and academic functioning that is significantly discrepant to that of their neurotypical peers. PASA requires digital enrollment of all participating students, as well as mandatory training for student assessors (Special Education teachers) and assessment coordinator (Supervisor of Special Education). **[Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement] [Strategic Plan Pathway 3: Professional Learning]**

### **Indicator 13 Training**

This past fall, the MCIU's assigned consultant spent his first day with Special Education staff members to provide training for Indicator 13, which revolves around transition planning for students with disabilities who receive special education services. Formal transition planning is required for all students who receive special education services who turn 14 during the ensuing calendar year. It is also important, as transition planning overlaps with current statewide initiatives related to Act 339 Career Readiness indices required for students with and without disabilities. Training for Cedarbrook Middle School and Cheltenham High School professional staff has been scheduled. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 3: Professional Learning]**.

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## **STUDENT SERVICES**

### **Foster Care Training**

In the fall, Secondary Home and School Visitor Jessica Keene attended the School District of Philadelphia's regional training "Because You Were There: Working Together for Educational Stability" about supporting students in foster care. The sessions attended included "Identifying Unique Needs of Youth in Foster Care to Facilitate Post-Traumatic Growth and Educational Stability"; "Increasing College Access and Success for Students with Experience in Foster Care"; and "Beyond the Basics: Special Education, Confidentiality and Improving Educational Outcomes." **[Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement] [Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences]**

### **District-wide Threat Assessment Team Training**

In the fall, Cynthia Marble from Sigma Threat Management Associates of Alexandria, Va., facilitated a full-day training regarding the threat assessment management process. The training included a tabletop exercise. CSD administrators, social workers, counselors, CHS psychologist, Glenside Elementary teacher, Cheltenham Township Police Department representative Jackie Hinchee and MCIU behavior specialist Shante Forrest, who provides the district behavioral consultation services, participated in the training at the Administration Building. This past March, a taskforce was created to identify strategies to improve school safety, security and preparedness, and administration began to look at threat assessment team training as a means to achieve those objectives. This training was covered under a \$20K grant it received this past fall from the Pennsylvania Department of Education for safety programming . **[Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences]**

### **Elementary PBIS Training**

Core leadership at Cheltenham, Glenside and Wyncote Elementary Schools received the first of three trainings on Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (PBIS). MCIU PBIS trainers Becky Millspaugh and Karen Stover-Perri conducted the session. Every CSD school has established leadership teams comprised of teachers, a counselor and an administrator to assist with PBIS implementation. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 4: Holistic Experiences]**

### **Montgomery County Student Assistance Program Council Meeting**

Director of Student Services Dr. Cheryl Horsey arranged a presentation by the Regional Adolescent Sleep Needs Coalition (RASNC) for members of the Montgomery County Student Assistance Program Council this past fall at the MCIU. The council is comprised of district administrators and counselors and youth service provider organizations. RASNC provided a comprehensive and compelling presentation regarding the benefits of later school start times for secondary students. Four presenters, including a retired teacher, parent and school board members from Radnor and Unionville-Chadds Ford School District, shared their perspective on the issue. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 2: Student Achievement]**  
**[Strategic Plan Pathway: 4 Holistic Experiences]**

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## **FACILITIES**

### **Athletic Partnership with Arcadia**

Members of the CSD administration met with Arcadia Athletic Director Brian Granata and VP for Marketing and Communications/University Relations Laura Baldwin in December to explore an athletics partnership. Arcadia is interested in gaining access to the high school and CBK tracks as the institution expands its cross country and track and field program. A long-term goal is to collaborate on a joint construction of a new Arcadia/Cheltenham athletic complex with an eight-lane track, new stadium and bleachers, scoreboard, concession stand, ticketing booths, lights and turf field.

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## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

### **Won Institute Event**

CBK teachers and staff participated in a special wellbeing experience provided by Glenside's Won Institute in December. One of the institute's licensed acupuncturist offered seated ear seed acupuncture (no needles) designed for relaxation and calmness. The district forged a relationship with the institute this past summer to arrange various health and wellness experiences for staff. Staff wellbeing events are designed to be moments of connection, curiosity and self-care, which are positive-psychology based and meant to recharge. **[Strategic Plan Pathway: 4 Holistic Experiences]**

### **STEM Partners**

After meeting with Cheltenham Township Commissioner Dr. Ann Rappoport to discuss local projects that could be integrated into K-12 curricula in the school district, Dr. Brian Reilly, Supervisor of STEM, is in the beginning stages of establishing a partnership with Aqua Pennsylvania, Inc., Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership, Inc., Fairmount Water Works and Cheltenham Township Economic Advisory Council. Dr. Reilly is coordinating a partnership among Longwood Gardens, Wyncote Elementary and Cedarbrook Middle schools as teachers Amy Flynn (WE) and Sean Gardner (CBK) collaborate on a “green wall” project for their students. Teams of teachers in each of the Cheltenham schools are developing projects to address local or township issues in an effort to engage students in their learning of standards-based curriculum through project-based learning. **[Strategic Plan Pathway 5: Communications and Engagement]**