

North Schuylkill



District Newsletter

August 2016

Superintendent's Message

It is with great honor that I welcome you to the 2016-2017 school year! I hope this summer break gave you ample time to rest and enjoy time with family and friends.

Reflecting on this past year, we saw many successes and accomplishments for our schools and our community. We should be proud of these successes, but also understand that building upon them will be our starting point for the upcoming school year. We still have very important work to do in many key areas, and I look forward to the new school year for this reason.

As we look forward to welcoming over 2,000 students to our schools, we anticipate this being one of the most exciting school years in North Schuylkill. It will certainly be one filled with innovation, collaboration and learning.

As part of the Spartan Nation, we enjoy a wonderfully supportive school community. However we know that much of our success rests on the shoulders of our dedicated and talented staff. Thank you for your professionalism and commitment.

"Good is the enemy of great. And that is one of the reasons that we have so little that becomes great. We don't have great schools, principally because we have good schools. We don't have great government, principally because we have good government. Few people attain great lives, precisely because it is easy to settle for a good life. The vast majority of companies never become great precisely because they become quite good. - and that is their main problem." *-Jim Collins*

As Superintendent of North Schuylkill School District, I am not willing to accept the status of being only a good School District. I expect to be a great School District! We have an extremely dedicated staff working to ensure that this happens on a daily basis. It continues to be our mission as educators to graduate students who have a passion for learning and are empowered to be self-sufficient and successful.

The contents of this newsletter are designed to provide you with critical information about the District and the coming school year, yet it may not answer all your questions. We welcome your questions and your input as members of the Spartan community. If I personally can be of help, please don't hesitate to contact me. I am available to you at (570) 874-0466 or by emailing rackell@northschuylkill.net.

With High Expectations,

Robert J. Ackell, Ed.D.
Superintendent



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North Schuylkill Students and Teachers Travel to Costa Rica!

Mrs. Dougherty-Wade and Mr. Wolfe traveled with eight students to experience and learn about life in Costa Rica. The students were very impressive with their behavior and involvement in the activities. Both teachers were very proud of them and honored to have been involved in their trip.

They represented North Schuylkill well!!



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This summer, we placed special emphasis on the following areas of the curriculum:

- The ELA curriculum in grades 6-12 and our Social Studies curriculum grades K-8 were two of the areas of focus. There were many meetings held where the team collaborated on goals and discussed resources needed to meet those goals. Trainings for teachers on new textbooks were held in May and again in August. Throughout the 2016-2017 school year, the team will review the next cycle of textbook series upgrades for K-5 ELA and 6-12 Science.
- As a District, we will focus on measuring standards that are included in our curriculum maps K-12. Assessing the standards will be an area of focus this year, as well as, reviewing our curriculum/instructional strategies, and homework/assessment tools in order to evaluate and improve the achievement of students with different abilities as they work to achieve meeting and exceeding grade level standards.
- We want to further maximize the benefit of small group instruction and to make the best use of the vast resources from the Reading Street Program in order to enhance student learning at the elementary level, while including more small group instruction in general at the Jr./Sr. High School level.
- We will continue to collaborate with local college representatives and explore a multitude of career path opportunities in an effort to establish programs that help our students succeed and gain the career skills needed after graduation.
- We also examined the schedules and put supports in place to ensure all hours of every day are meaningful to every student as we work towards increasing achievement. In order to differentiate instruction in any classroom K-12, we will support teachers by providing monthly trainings on the PVAAS system and time to collect valuable data on individual students. It is critical for teachers to see where students have strengths or weaknesses in core subjects. Achieving proficient or advanced status is where we want to see all students be. We want to see growth in all areas.



2017 Spring Testing Dates

PSSA Tests:

Grade 3	April 3—May 5
Grade 4	April 3—May 5
Grade 5	April 3—May 5
Grade 6	April 3—May 5
Grade 7	April 3—May 5
Grade 8	April 3—May 5

Keystone Exams:

ELA	May 16—May 26
Algebra I	May 16—May 26
Biology	May 16—May 26

Standards Based Report Cards

Students in grades K-4 have a standards based report card. Standards based report cards will be sent out in trimesters throughout the year and will provide students multiple opportunities to practice, attain, and demonstrate proficiency on the PA Standards and the North Schuylkill School performance goals. An overview of the standard's based system at North Schuylkill will be presented during the October PTO meeting. The chart below is the key used when describing the performance of meeting a standard.

Academic Scale	
Adv. (Advanced)	Exceeding the Standard
Prof. (Proficient)	Meeting the Standard
Bas. (Basic)	Partially Achieving the Standard
Bel. Bas. (Below Basic)	Not Meeting the Standard

2016-2017 Report Card Dates

Grades K-4 (Three Times/Year):

1. November 21, 2016
2. February 27, 2017
3. May 31, 2017

Grades 5-12 (Four Times/Year):

1. November 4, 2016
2. January 20, 2017
3. March 29, 2017
4. Jr./Sr. HS June 5, 2017
Elem. May 31, 2017

New Faces Joining NS Faculty and Staff

The North Schuylkill School District is pleased to welcome several new staff members this fall, and encourages everyone on campus to help them feel at home.

- Maintenance Worker: **Frank Gronski**
- NSE Autistic Support: **Abby Malloy**
- NSE Computers: **Janelle Staudenmeier**
- NSE Music: **Cody Kelly**
- Paraprofessional: **Candice Montgomery**

Act 126 Training

The Act 126, Child Abuse Recognition and Reporting Training (*Section 1205.6 of the Public School Code of 1949*) will be held at the North Schuylkill Jr./Sr. High School on **Thursday, August 25th from 12:00-3:00**. The training is for new coaches, staff, parents, etc. Another evening training will be held throughout the school year at North Schuylkill. *More information will follow.*

DATA Delays

- Because of the demands from the Pennsylvania Department of Education, it is necessary that we review student data on a regular basis and make better informed decisions for the individual needs they may have. Interventions for those needs of students that are below meeting grade level standards, meeting grade level standards, or for those needing acceleration that are exceeding grade level standards. Teachers in grade K-12 are required to get a clear picture of individual students and where their needs and strengths may be. Reviewing data is going to be a focus this year at NS. In order to complete the necessary professional development needed to be successful at this, we will be eliminating a full Act 80 day, as well as, a half Act 80 day. In turn, we will replace them with nine, scheduled, 2 hour data delays to fulfill the Act 80 hours for teachers.



- You will notice on the district calendar that there will be a planned “Data Delay” on the second Wednesday of every month. The dates are listed to the right.
- To help with this transition, both buildings will open on normal hours for optional, student drop off. This was put in place to accommodate parent/guardian work schedules. Students that are dropped off will be supervised in large group settings.
- The reason NS named them “Data Delays” is because for the 16-17 school year, we will be focusing and spending a great deal of time reviewing data so teachers have the information to teach the standards at grade level, measure standards on assessments and homework, and differentiate instruction all around.

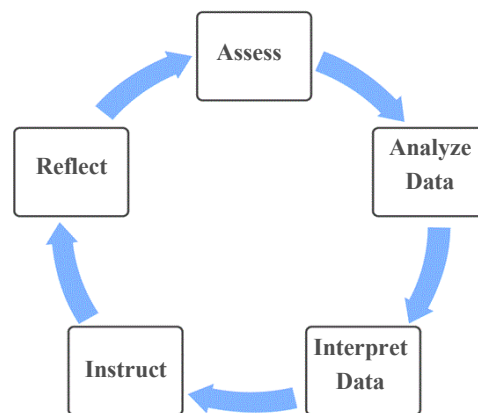
Data that teachers will use:

- DIBELS**
- OLSAT Tests**
- CDT's**
- Reading Street** (Response to Intervention)
- Classroom Data** - K-12 Standards Based Lessons and Assessment/Homework that Measures Standards
- eMetric Data**
- Study Island Data**
- PVAAS Data**



Differentiated Instruction

- Differentiated instruction and assessment is a framework for effective teaching that involves providing different students with different avenues for learning (often in the same classroom) in terms of acquiring content; processing, constructing, or making sense of ideas; and developing teaching materials and assessment measures so that all students within a classroom can learn effectively, regardless of difference in ability. Students vary in culture, socioeconomic status, language, gender, motivation, ability/disability, personal interests and more, and teachers must be aware of these varieties as they plan curriculum. By considering varied learning needs, teachers can develop personalized instruction so that all children in the classroom can learn effectively. Differentiated classrooms have also been described as ones that respond to student variety in readiness levels, interests and learning profiles. It is a classroom that includes all students and can be successful. A teacher sets different expectations for individual students.



2016-2017

Dates for Act 80 Data Delays:

September	14th	February	8th
October	12th	March	8th
November	9th	April	12th
December	14th	May	10th
January	11th		

My School Bucks—Cafeteria Services

What is MySchoolBucks?

MySchoolBucks is an online payment service that provides parents the ability to securely pay for meals with a debit or credit card, monitor student cafeteria purchases and receive email notifications for low account balances.

How do I Enroll?

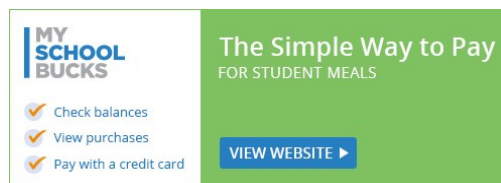
Go to www.myschoolbucks.com and register for an account.

- Activate your account and add students. You will need your student's name and school ID number or birth date.
- Provide your credit or debit card information.
- If you need assistance with the enrollment process, please call MySchoolBucks Customer Support at 1-855-832-5226. If you have any further questions, please visit www.myschoolbucks.com and select the [Help/FAQ](#) link.

Your child's account can be viewed or you can make payments through myschoolbucks web site.

Payments can also be made to the account through the cafeteria. Just send it to the cafeteria in a sealed envelope with your child's name, account number and the amount enclosed. It will be applied to their account the day it was received.

Any questions or concerns please contact the Cafeteria Food Service Director, Kim Shatafsky 570-874-0466 Ext. 2124



Breakfast Cart

- The breakfast cart, in addition to our full breakfast offered daily, was a huge success last year. We will continue using the cart as students enter the buildings each day.
- This will now be offered to all students in grades 4-12.
- Students can use their account number just as they do for purchasing a lunch.
- The cart will provide drinks and quick, healthy breakfasts on ALL regular and 2 hour delay days.



Special Education - Knute Brayford, Supervisor of Special Education

The North Schuylkill School District's Special Education Department is committed to meeting the needs of students with disabilities and helping them reach their fullest potential. North Schuylkill offers a continuum of services and placement options to meet the individual needs of each student. These services include, but are not limited to, Life Skills Support, Learning Support, Emotional Support, Autistic Support and Speech and Language Support in both schools within the District.

North Schuylkill School District continues to improve and expand these services on an on-going basis. The start of the 2016/2017 school year will bring changes to the special education services offered with the addition of a Life Skills Classroom and an Autistic Support Classroom at the Junior Senior High School. Parent training and outreach programs are held throughout the school year and will be announced on the district website.



Gifted Education - Ashley Palubinsky, Gifted Coordinator

The North Schuylkill School District's Gifted Education Program provides educational opportunities designed to meet the unique needs, abilities, and interests of our students who are identified and in need of Gifted Education Services. The professional staff utilizes multiple criteria to identify gifted students in both the elementary and high school settings. We nourish those abilities through acceleration and/or enrichment opportunities by enhancing the curriculum for those students who have a need. It is our goal to challenge gifted students by providing educational programming that meets their academic, intellectual, and specialized talents.

On May 18th, 2016, Mrs. Palubinsky organized and held the first Gifted Parents Advisory Council (GPAC) meeting. It was well attended by students, parents, and administrators. This was a meeting to get acquainted with Parents and Gifted Students. In the Elementary School, Mrs. Nancy Nestor will be providing Gifted Support to Students who are deemed mentally gifted in grades K-6. In the Jr./Sr. High School, Mr. Jamie Wagner will be providing Gifted Support Services to grades 7-12. At the meeting, discussions on updates were the focus of the meeting, along with how to best meet the needs of Gifted Students. Further meetings will begin promptly at 5:30 PM in the LGI room at the High School on October 18th, February 21st, and May 16th this upcoming 2016-2017 school year.



Spartan Baseball captures 1st District Championship in school history

The Spartan baseball team wrapped up an incredible season, finishing 21-5 on the year. This season saw the Spartans win the Russ Rothermel Tournament early in the year, claim the Schuylkill League Division 1 Championship, and win the 1st District XI title in our school's history with a 6-2 victory over Notre Dame Green Pond. The Spartans made an impressive run in the PIAA State playoffs, with wins over Oley Valley and MaST Charter, before falling to Neumann Goretti, 3-0, in the Eastern Final. Congratulations to Coach Brayford, his staff, and all of our players on a season that will be remembered for years to come!



NS sends 8 Track and Field athletes to PIAA State Track and Field Championships

Congratulations to our eight Track and Field athletes who qualified and competed in the PIAA State Track and Field Championships in Shippensburg. Pat Gownley won District gold in the 300 hurdles, Dane Tarantelli was a District Champion in the Javelin, Jadyn Anczarski captured a District gold medal in Discus, Bobby Wagner won gold in the Long Jump, and our 4 x 1 relay team of Pat Gownley, Scott Grigas, Braden Heyer, and Bobby Wagner took 1st at the District XI Championships. Our alternates for the 4x1 relay team that also went to the State Track and Field Championships were Ashton Mickatavage and Mitch Wagner. At the state meet, Jadyn Anczarski finished 4th in the Discus, Bobby Wagner finished 4th in Long Jump, Dane Tarantelli finished 9th in Javelin, our 4x1 relay team came in 18th place, and Pat Gownley placed 27th overall in the 300 hurdles! Congratulations to our Track and Field coaches and athletes on an impressive showing through districts and at the PIAA State Championships!



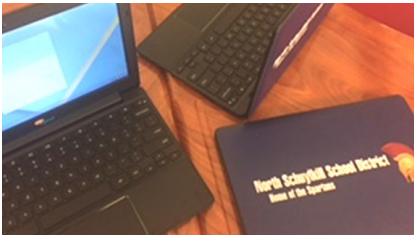
Congratulations Class of 2016!



2016 Technology Updates

The North Schuylkill School District is excited to add Chromebooks into our technology inventory for the 2016-2017 school year. We will be deploying approximately 450 Chromebooks between our High School and Elementary school buildings. Chromebooks will allow our students and teachers to better communicate and collaborate using Google Apps for Education. Student work can be saved to the cloud for access at home and school on many different devices (computer, laptop, phone, tablet, and of course Chromebooks).

We have also upgraded to a new version of ClassLink, which will allow students a single sign-on experience. Once signed in to ClassLink, a student will not need to remember any additional passwords for web apps such as, Study Island, Accelerated Reader, Moby Max, and many others. ClassLink will also integrate with Google Drive and our school's network drive to enable students to access files from anywhere with an Internet connection.



One final cloud based service will be Microsoft 365, this will allow students to access the Microsoft Office suite on the go and at home, via a free download for up to 5 home devices. Please look for how to download free Office sometime in the fall.

Last year we installed a new wireless network and piloted a BYOD (Bring Your Own Device) Program in our High School in April. This new BYOD program was a success and we will be opening it up for grades 5-12. In order to bring your own device to school, a student must have a signed permission form on file in the office. The form can be found on <http://www.northschuylkill.net/technology.html>.

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Please feel free to contact the NSSD at any time!

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