

# OPS SPECIAL EDUCATION HAPPENINGS



The Oradell Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC) hosts several meetings throughout the school year that bring together parents of students who receive special services and school district leaders to engage in collaborative, open forums regarding special services, policies and needs. Meetings also provide parents opportunities to network and attend presentations on related topics and resources. More information about SEPAC is available on the OPS website, under the Parents tab.

On January 28, SEPAC hosted a presentation by Bergen's Promise on how families access support services in the area. Bergen's Promise is a valuable part of the NJ Children's

System of Care, which provides integrated behavioral health services via a wraparound approach to care management for children and their families. Visit [bergenspromise.org](http://bergenspromise.org) for further information.

On Tuesday March 31, at 7:30pm in the OPS Library, SEPAC will host a presentation by The Sibling Support Project about "SIBSHOPS" in general, and a presentation titled: "Supporting Siblings as They Grow: Meeting the Needs of Brothers and Sisters of People with Disabilities". Visit [siblingssupport.org](http://siblingssupport.org) for further information.

Following both presentations, parents have the opportunity to discuss special education and related topics with Linda Distler, Supervisor of Special Services.



Oradell  
Public  
School  
District

350 Prospect Avenue  
Oradell, New Jersey 07649

## BOARD OF EDUCATION

### PRESIDENT

Mrs. Dorothy Watson-Nichols

### VICE PRESIDENT

Mr. Gregory Derian

### MEMBERS

Mr. Vener J. Castro  
Mr. Jeremy Griffin  
Ms. Robin Levy  
Mrs. Katherine Norian  
Ms. Nancy Shapiro  
Mrs. Rita Walker  
Mr. John Walsh

### INTERIM SUPERINTENDENT

Ms. Barbara Longo

NON-PROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
PARAMUS, NJ  
PERMIT NO. 242  
ECRWSS

POSTAL PATRON  
ORADELL, NJ 07649

# ORADELL: Eye on OPS



Winter 2020

## Message from the Interim Superintendent

Dear Families and Community Members,

I am honored to serve as your interim superintendent this year. I have learned in a short time that the Oradell school district has a strong tradition of excellence due to the amazing educators and dedicated community.

I have seen some of the initiatives in place for our enthusiastic students and I am so impressed. Your children amaze me when I see the critical thinking and learning that is going on in the classrooms.

My mission as an interim superintendent is to continue the work of those before me and to help every Oradell student receive a rigorous learning environment allowing each one of them to grow intellectually, emotionally and socially.

With everyone working together, we can accomplish our current and future goals. I look forward to working with the students, staff, community, and board of education!

*Barbara Longo*

Interim Superintendent



### Couldn't attend the Board Meeting?

Logon to the district website @ [oradellschool.org](http://oradellschool.org), click the Board of Education tab, and go to Board Meeting Recordings.

## Keep up-to-date...

You can keep up-to-date with daily happenings at OPS by downloading the app at the iTunes and Google Play stores. Search for Oradell Public School. You can also get a glimpse into our daily life by following Oradell Public School on Twitter, Instagram or Facebook.



## Did You Know...?

- You can keep up with the latest lessons and programs of some of our staff by following their blogs. Look for "The Counselor's Corner," "Check It Out" (OPS Library Blog) and "The OPS Science Lab" on the OPS homepage. Just click to see what's new.
- The Oradell PTA continues to be a wonderful partner in education. This year, they have donated approximately \$8000 in materials and programming to complement learning. They also continue to spearhead efforts to fundraise for the renovation of the OPS Auditorium seating.
- The Oradell Kids Foundation donated over \$7,000 to Oradell Public School this year. Because of the generous donations of the Foundation, this year, students will learn about healthy eating in Kindergarten, create digital animation movies in third grade and learn more about the Lenape in fourth grade to name a few of the programs that the donations will fund.



Funded by a grant from the Oradell PTA, Weatherman John Marshall visited our 3rd graders.



Students learning about the Lenape culture during a presentation sponsored by the Oradell Kids Foundation.

- In the past five years, the number of OPS students exceeding expectations on State Language Arts and Mathematics Assessments has more than doubled.
- With the financial and logistical support of the PTA Garden Committee, every OPS student was busy planting all the beautiful flowers and vegetables in the garden. That's a lot of planting! Our garden recently won a Facebook contest and we received prizes of garden supplies which were donated by Seed Keeper Company.



# Board of Education – Reorganization

The Oradell Board of Education held its annual reorganization meeting on January 6th. Returning Board members John Walsh and Dorothy Watson-Nichols were sworn into office by Board Secretary John Marmora. Dorothy Watson-Nichols was re-elected to the position of Board President, and Greg Derian was re-elected as Vice President.

## The Board of Education for 2019 is:

### President

Dorothy Watson-Nichols (2022)

### Vice President

Gregory Derian (2021)

### Members

Vener J. Castro (2020)

Jeremy Griffin (2020)

Robin Levy (2021)

Katherine Norian (2021)

Nancy Shapiro (2020)

Rita Walker (2020)

John Walsh (2022)

### Interim Superintendent

Barbara Longo

### Business Administrator/Board Secretary

John M. Marmora



# Big School...Big Heart

So far this year, the OPS community has donated over 4700 items of food to the Center for Food Action, raised \$867.65 for breast cancer awareness and support, collected \$900 to be used to buy holiday gifts for children through the Frosty's Friends program, donated over 400 pairs of pajamas to the Pajama Program of New Jersey, and raised over \$15,000 for the American Heart Association as part of the Kids Heart Challenge (formerly Jump Rope for Heart). The students continue to give back to the community by spending time with local seniors.



Students jumped tirelessly for the American Heart Association's Kids Heart Challenge.



Sixth Grade students played board games with seniors as part of the Annual Giveback Program.



A student loading the truck with the food items collected during the 4th annual OPS Turkey Trot for the Center for Food Action.



Students and teachers wearing pajamas to school, in keeping with the spirit of Pajama Day. The Pajama Program donates pajamas and books to children in shelters and foster care programs.

# Spotlight on Students



## Altice USA Essay Contest Winner

Congratulations to Sonia Veldhuis for her achievement as the 6th grade winner and runner-up in the National Division of the Altice USA Annual Essay Contest. More than 1,000 students entered this essay contest from nearly 300 schools across 18 states. This year students were asked to name a Latino or Hispanic who inspires them to dream big. Sonia was deeply touched when the OPS administrative team was present to show their support. She shared " ...the iPad is nice but that's not what I'm excited about. I'm most excited that I got to shake Superintendent Anzul's hand!" Way to go Sonia and your dreams will come true!

them to dream big. Sonia was deeply touched when the OPS administrative team was present to show their support. She shared " ...the iPad is nice but that's not what I'm excited about. I'm most excited that I got to shake Superintendent Anzul's hand!" Way to go Sonia and your dreams will come true!

## OPS Geography Bee Winner

Congratulations to Andrew Li., OPS's Geography Bee winner. This was the 29th year for the OPS Geography Bee. Grades 4-6 compete against each other to choose a school champion. Andrew will take a digital exam to try to qualify to compete at the state level.



## Tri-Community Women's Club Spelling Bee

Congratulations to Lynn Kim who placed 2nd at the Tri-Community Women's Club Spelling Bee. This qualified her to compete at the regional competition where she placed 4th.

# Teacher of the Year Melissa Pizza



Congratulations to Melissa Pizza, OPS's Teacher of the Year. The OPS parents and colleagues acknowledge Ms Pizza's hard work and dedication while teaching at OPS for the past 20 years. In nominating her for the award, parents and colleagues have said: "She is the true embodiment of a teacher who shows great love and concern for all her students." "Melissa is there as a leader for many of her colleagues. She welcomes the new teachers to her grade level by helping to guide them in the curriculum...she is constantly researching, investigating and discussing current trends in education to ensure that not only she but her colleagues are always at the top of our game." Ms. Pizza states that, "The ultimate joy for me has been sharing the success my students have achieved as they mature." Ms. Pizza also serves as grade level chair and the OPS Education Association President. In addition, she does all this while "Her door is always open."

comes the new teachers to her grade level by helping to guide them in the curriculum...she is constantly researching, investigating and discussing current trends in education to ensure that not only she but her colleagues are always at the top of our game." Ms. Pizza states that, "The ultimate joy for me has been sharing the success my students have achieved as they mature." Ms. Pizza also serves as grade level chair and the OPS Education Association President. In addition, she does all this while "Her door is always open."



# A Day in the Life of an OPS Kindergartner



Recently, there have been several articles published in mainstream newspapers and magazines regarding the education of our youngest learners. Many express mixed feelings on the expectations being placed on young children. It was once accepted (if not expected) that children would enter Kindergarten with little academic skills and would learn to read sometime in first grade. Now, beginning reading skills are a part of the Kindergarten curriculum. There are concerns about whether, as a nation, we are pushing students too fast academically and taking away the joy of play. At Oradell Public School, we pride ourselves on creating a developmentally appropriate education for our students. Our Kindergarten day is deliberately scheduled to incorporate opportunities where kids can be kids and learn at the same time.

## The Morning

### Morning Meeting & Foundations

As our students gather together each morning, one of the first academic tasks they tackle is learning letter sounds and beginning to build their foundational knowledge of how words are made. Morning meeting also provides students the time to come together as a community; during this time they share and learn about their own lives and the lives of their peers.



### Snack & Free Play

There are many different opportunities for play during our Kindergarten day. Each morning, our students have the opportunity to use their imaginations and their bodies as they explore the playground with their peers, or during inclement weather, play a game, draw, or build with their peers.



### Writing Workshop

We utilize a workshop approach that provides our youngest authors an opportunity to write in a variety of genres. We work on moving children through the various steps of the writing process. Each lesson starts with a mini-lesson, which is a short focused lesson that gives students specifics about what we are learning and why. We work on telling a story through pictures, adding labels, generating ideas, adding details, and the mechanics of writing.



### Reading Workshop

Kindergarten is not just about developing early reading skills, it is also about creating an environment where our students can fall in love with reading. We use a workshop approach toward reading instruction, which means we focus on the skills and strategies that each student needs to progress, whether that is a student who is retelling the story by solely looking at the illustrations or whether that is a student who enters Kindergarten fluently reading.

### Mathematics

Developing an understanding of how the world of numbers works is an integral part of the Kindergarten curriculum. Students interact with the SMART-Board, more traditional workbooks, and hands-on manipulatives to help make abstract concepts more concrete. We also focus on making sure students can explain their thinking as mathematicians.



### Open Circle

Open Circle is OPS's social emotional learning program. Beginning in Kindergarten, students meet during the week to receive instruction on topics such as including one another, understanding feelings, problem solving in times of conflict, recognizing differences among people, strategies for calming down, using positive self-talk and more. The goals of the program are to create a safe, caring and consistent school environment where students are using the same language and strategies through the years.



## The Afternoon

### Lunch/Recess

Our Kindergarten students eat in their classrooms with each group having one lunch aide. Students have the opportunity to visit the playground as a whole Kindergarten class to get to see and play with friends across the grade.



### Play Centers

Play Centers allow children to make decisions about what they will play and make plans of what they will accomplish there. This may be playing in the kitchen, building with different materials or creating in the art center. It is a time when we also work on developing social skills like dealing with conflict, expressing emotions, and working cooperatively.



### Specials

Kindergarten students, like all OPS students, receive instruction in art, music, physical education, world language (Spanish), and library. These classes are taught by content experts and what children learn in Kindergarten provides a foundation to build on as they progress through the grades.

### Science/Social Studies

Students end their day with either a science or a social studies lesson. The science lesson may be in the Science Lab with the assistance of our Science Lab Instructor, or the lesson takes place in the classroom. The majority of these lessons are hands-on so students can interact with the world around them. This may include studying forces by pushing cars down ramps, learning about cultures from guest speakers, or exploring nature by observing in our school garden.