

Absecon Board of Education Meeting

September 26, 2023



District Update

- **Back to School!**

- Sept. 5, 2023
- Featured in [Press of AC!](#)



District Update

- **Absecon 9/11 Ceremony**

- More than 100 Attales students including NJHS, Student Summit and the 8th Grade Class attended the city's morning ceremony



District Update

- **Therapy Dog partnership with AtlantiCare continues**
 - Skye or Hope to visit with Cancer Center in EHT monthly



District Update

● COVID-19 Update

- Mandated COVID notification letter to parents (positive individual)
- No contact tracing
- School will not mandate testing upon return of illness
- District must report to the State if there are 3 incidents of COVID at the same time in either school
- COVID Positive: Recommended that staff or child stay home for 5 days (not including the first day of symptoms). Also recommended that staff or students wear a mask for 5 additional days after they return.



[CDC COVID-19 hospital admission levels](#) are the primary surveillance indicator to help guide individual and community decisions related to risk and preventative measures.

The number of new COVID-19 hospital admissions for every 100,000 persons in the past week is used to classify county risk levels as low, medium, or high as follows:

New COVID-19 Hospital Admissions per 100,000 population	
Low	<10
Medium	10.0 – 19.9
High	≥ 20.0

In addition to new hospital admissions, the percentage of inpatient beds and ICU beds occupied by COVID-19 patients are important metrics for monitoring COVID-19 activity. Table 1 includes current values for these metrics and a comparison from the previous week.

Many individuals have immunity against COVID-19 due to vaccination and/or prior infection. Immunity, in addition to treatments, have greatly reduced the risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19. In the meantime, immunocompromised individuals and persons with certain underlying health conditions continue to be at higher risk for severe illness. The following table includes recommendations for protecting yourself, your family, and communities. Additional information can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/your-health/covid-by-county.html>.

District Update

- **Regular Operating District (ROD) Grant of \$332,800**

- The Absecon School District was notified Sept. 12, 2023 of approval of its ROD Grant based on preliminary eligible costs of \$832,000.
- The improvement is for the replacement and related duct work of four (4) HVAC units at the Emma C. Attales Middle School.
- The cost share on this grant is 60% local (equaling \$499,200) and a state share of 40% (equaling \$332,800).



Security Update

- **Exterior security upgrade: September 2023**
 - 8mil material from 2019 was replaced by 20mil in all areas accessible by the outside
 - Based on the latest security recommendations
 - Material stops glass from breaking and shattering
 - Improves security and safety for students and staff
- **First Atlantic County School Safety and Security Roundtable of the 23/24 SY**
 - Will take place on Tuesday, Oct. 3, chaired by the Absecon Safety and Security Specialist, Mr. Brian Kehoe, along with the NJDOE and Office of School Preparedness and Emergency Planning



PTO Update

- **PTO Fall Book Fair - Oct 4-13**
 - Family Night Wednesday, Oct. 11
- **PTO Trunk or Treat - Oct. 20**
 - 6:30-8 p.m. in all front loops
 - Car registration underway
 - Rain date Oct. 27
- **APD Haunted Hallways - Oct. 20**
 - 7-9 p.m.
 - Entrance in rear of building
- **PTO 8th Subcommittee underway**



District Goal 1: Completion Of A Long-Term Strategic Plan Including Involvement Of All Stakeholders Within The School Community

- **Identify 3-5 broad district goals intended to guide decisions and allocate resources to best serve the children of Absecon**
- **Stakeholder engagement with committees comprised of: Board of Education, PTO/Parent, Community Leaders/Members, District Administration, Certificated Members, Students, Support Staff, and Public Comment**
- **District PDP and goals will outline yearly strategies and efforts being made toward achievement of goals/intentions at the district level**



District Goal 1: Cont.

- **School PDP and administrator goals will outline yearly strategies and efforts being made toward achievement of goals/intentions at the school/department level**
- **Individual PDP will outline yearly strategies and efforts being made toward achievement of goals/intentions at the individual level**
- **Efforts being made are all in support of the district goals/intentions and are strategically put in place annually at each level**
- **Presentation of Completed Strategic Plan to be presented during annual budget meeting**



District Goal 2: Identifying And Implementing Best Practices To Remediate Educational Gaps Within English Language Arts And Mathematics, And Maintain Levels Of Growth Through Ongoing Best Practices In Instruction

- **Utilizing student performance data (formative assessment, benchmarks, state testing) to identify instructional needs of individual students and target delivery of content utilizing specific data points**
- **Continued improvement and refinement of small group instruction in ELA and Math**



District Goal 2: Cont.

- **Specific and most relevant professional development offered throughout the year for continuous and consistent delivery of support and enhancing instruction for diverse students from G&T to most at-risk learners**
 - Arts Integration
 - Integrate arts into classroom instruction providing multiple pathways for learning and assessment of NJSLs
 - Yearly summer training at the Arts Integration Institute facilitated by NJPSA/FEA with team members comprised of the Curriculum Supervisor, two (2) Visual and Performing Arts teachers, and two (2) classroom teachers with the support of an appointed Arts Integration coach
 - The team will implement their training by piloting integration of the arts into the content areas of two classrooms with four (4) arts-integrated lessons per marking period followed by a quarterly reflection meeting, and a culminating activity in the spring



District Goal 2: Cont.

- **Use of Fountas & Pinnell Benchmark System, IXL Language Arts Benchmark, Writer's Workshop Benchmark and iReady Math Diagnostic**
 - Three (3) times per year



District Goal 2: Cont.

- **Curriculum Supervisor**

- Duties and responsibilities:
 - Oversee implementation of the district curriculum and implementation of best practices in Math and ELA instruction
 - Plan and implement professional development addressing staff needs based on evaluation data and staff feedback, as well as data identifying student instructional needs
 - Develop and oversee programming for targeted instruction for at-risk students, including after-school intervention, small group classroom instruction, and instruction provided by district interventionists
- Outcomes and accountability
 - Completion of two After-School Interventions Programs running for 8 weeks each session
 - Skill based with pre- and post-assessments to identify growth
 - Increase in targeted areas in 80% of students



District Goal 2: Cont.

- **Building Principals**

- Through the understanding of best practice and consistent communication of expectations from the Curriculum Supervisor, our building principals will ensure fidelity and best practice through accountability within our evaluation model.

- **Director of Special Services**

- Through the understanding of best practice and consistent communication of expectations from the Curriculum Supervisor, the Director of Special Services will coordinate curricular and instructional supports to remove the barriers to education as a result of special education disability.

- **4 FTE Interventionists within the district**

- Identifying individual students levels
- Creation of programs that differentiate instruction based upon student's needs



District Goal 3: Continued Emphasis On Promoting Safety And Positive Culture And Climate Through Best Practice And Equitable Opportunities For Growth

- **Targeted SMART goals developed from climate survey data**
- **Professional development for staff**
 - Example: Stand Tall Steve
- **Programs and initiatives for students**
 - Example for Marsh: MegaStars
 - Example for Attales: Family Time Fridays, Sledgehammer
- **Disciplinarian**
 - Monitor referrals by teacher and by student
 - Implement restorative strategies to remediate students with multiple referrals
- **Early childhood support (Social Worker, Counselor)**
 - Parent workshops
 - Home Visits
 - Celebrations and Events
 - Parent Advisory Committee
 - Early Childhood Advisory Council



District Goal 3: Cont.

- **Safety**

- School Safety Specialist will continue to lead the Atlantic County Safety and Security Committee
- Implementation of 20 mil security film (2023) to cover entire exit doors and windows/this is up from the 8 mil previously installed (2019-2021)
- New Swipe Entry System that aligns to new cameras
- Continued discussions and partnership with Absecon Police Department



Curriculum Update

District Goal 2

**Identifying And
Implementing Best
Practices To Remediate
Educational Gaps Within
English Language Arts And
Mathematics, And
Maintain Levels Of Growth
Through Ongoing
Best Practices In
Instruction**



Identifying Educational Gaps

- **Benchmark Assessments given three times a year**
 - Math
 - iReady Diagnostic
 - Aligned to NJSLs and correlated to NJSLA
 - ELA
 - IXL Diagnostic Assessment:
 - Aligned to NJSLs and correlated to NJSLA
 - Fountas and Pinnell Reading Assessment
 - Identifies student reading levels and reading strategies to teach at each reading level



What do we do with this data?

- **Math**

- iReady diagnostic data drives My Learning Path and identifies prerequisite skills students need to access grade-level learning

- **ELA**

- IXL diagnostic data also provides data on prerequisite skills needed to access grade level standards
 - Data is used to create skill-based groups
 - Provides opportunities to practice grade level learning and remediate skills
- Fountas & Pinnell data provides data to create guided reading groups focusing on strategies that students need to progress through the literacy continuum

- **NJSLA data in Math and ELA**

- Provides an opportunity for teachers to reflect on areas of strength and weakness
 - Where do we need to strengthen instruction? Do we need to modify resources? Do we need to adjust pacing?



Professional Development on Using Data to Drive Instruction

- **PLCs**
 - Corresponding data points are identified in the agendas and guide collaboration on planning for targeted instruction
 - Identify skills or strategies to target across grade level disciplines
- **Professional Development (Oct. 6)**
 - *How to Analyze Data to Drive Instruction* (benchmark and NJSLA)
- **K-4 with Dr. Richards**
 - Using data to plan guided reading instruction using intensive coaching cycles
- **PD Workshop Series to be held monthly**
 - Held internally during lunches and preps
 - Topics reflect current and relevant PD needs
 - *Teaching Phonemic Awareness*
 - *Phonics 1st Assessments to Drive Instruction*
- **Reading Strategies 2.0 Book Club and Serravallo's presentation on Oct. 26 at Rutgers University**



Monitoring Student Progress

- **Benchmarks (Summative Assessments)**
 - Three times a year (September, January, and May)
- **Between benchmarks (Formative Assessments)**
 - iReady monitor personalized instruction plans
 - IXL can be used assess target skills
 - Running records monitor student growth along the Literacy Continuum
- **Recognized by the NJDOE in a formal letter to Absecon Public Schools from the Commissioner of Education in Recognition of Best Practice (June 29, 2023).**



Additional Supports for Student Learning

- **After-school Intervention**
 - Two sessions (Oct. 17-Dec. 14 and Feb. 6-March 27)
 - Math and ELA
 - Benchmark data as progress monitoring
- **Tier 3 instruction provided by interventionists at ECA and HAM**
 - 2.5 Interventionist at HAM
 - 6 additional periods of intervention support per day in ECA
- **Arts Integration Initiative through NJPSA/FEA**
- **Title I Committee and Parent Events for each school**
 - *ECA - 3 p.m. Oct. 18, Attales Tent*
 - *HAM - 3 p.m. Oct. 25, Marsh Tent*



Additional Opportunities for Student Learning

- **Mrs. King will continue with Gifted and Talented instruction this year with pull-out services on a weekly basis for grades 4-8.**
 - We welcomed 3 new students into the program as 4th graders and are looking forward to another year of creative learning.
- **Continued expansion of special area courses at the middle school to include Spanish for Native Speakers and Early Childhood Education Immersion**



New for 2023-2024

- **Dance & Theater Program**
- **Absecon Green Team**
- **Intramural Sports (Grades 3-5)**
 - Fall- Flag Football
 - Winter- Basketball
 - Spring- Soccer
- **Swimming at Brigantine Aquatic Center (Grades 1-8, Oct.-May)**
- **Monthly field trips/assemblies**



Marsh Update

- **Back to School Night**
 - Thursday, Sept. 28 at 6 p.m.
 - Session in Spanish begins at 5:30 p.m.



Marsh Update

- **First Marsh Mix-up held Sept. 25, 2023**
 - Classes split and paired with different grade levels



Attales Update

- **Sledgehammer Award**

- First Sledgehammer [awarded to J.J. Son \(8th Grade\)](#) from Mrs. Witmer during Family Meeting Sept. 8, 2023



Attales Update

- **Back to School Night**
 - Sept. 21, 2023



Attales Update

- **Hispanic Heritage Month**

- 8th Grader Sherlyn Gonzalez spearheaded second year of recognition at Attales with daily Quote of the Day during morning announcements

**“Para hacer realidad
un gran sueño, el
primer requisito es
una gran capacidad
para soñar; el
segundo es la
persistencia.”**

César Chávez

To make a great dream come true,
the first requirement is a great ability
to dream; the second is persistence.



Attales Update

- **Fall sports underway**
 - Cross Country
 - Field Hockey
- **High School Open House**
 - Thursday, Oct. 12 at 6 p.m.

ATTALES' 8TH GRADE HIGH SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

6 PM
THURSDAY,
OCT. 12, 2023
IN THE ATTALES GYMNASIUM

Meet with some of our area high schools where 8th Grade Attales students have the option of applying. Ask representatives questions, receive informational packets, and more!

The logos represent the following schools: The Palomar Academy, Pleasantville High School, Holy Spirit High School, Attalese City Public School, ACS Atlantic Christian Schools, ACTS by Maxwell, St. Ignace High School, Our Lady of Mercy Academy, and CharterTech.

FOR QUESTIONS, CONTACT COUNSELOR MRS. COOPER AT 609-641-5375. EXT. 1023 OR MCOOPER@ABSECONSHOOLS.ORG

*PLEASE NOTE, WHILE WE INVITE ALL OF OUR AREA HIGH SCHOOLS, NOT ALL OF THEM ARE ABLE TO ATTEND.

Special Services Update

- **New placements**

- Transfer Students: In the month of September, 5 students transferred into district requiring specialized education programs in a self-contained setting with potential need for an aide
 - 3 of the students are considered general education and an administrative referral was processed upon arrival
 - General education status was a direct result of specific students never having exposure to school prior to entering our doors.



Preschool Update

- **Grandparents Day**

- POD 1 - 9/20; POD 2 - 9/21; POD 3 - 9/22
- 84 grandparents participated



Preschool Update



**JOIN THE ABSECON PRESCHOOL
PARENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY,
SEPT. 28**
5:30-6 PM

**MARSH OUTDOOR DINING AREA
(WEATHER-PERMITTING)**

- Communicate with school staff
- Learn about and plan parent involvement activities
- Support students' needs
- Promote positive school culture and climate

For more information contact
Mrs. Beth Ewart, LCSW
(609) 641-5375

- **Preschool Parent Advisory Meeting**
 - 5:30 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 28



Facilities Update

- **PreK Playground turf upgrades complete**
- **Security fencing installed on Marsh playground area**
- **Golf carts for school coaches, nurses, and student access**
- **Continued repair of sprinkler valve box**
- **4 HVAC repairs completed internally**
- **Professional Development through Peterson for internal HVAC monitoring system**
- **Glass and locks installed on 5 internal doors**



THANK YOU!

