



Superintendent's Report

To: Board Members

From: Dr. Leah M. Christman

Date: October 12, 2015

- U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan recently recognized 335 schools as National Blue Ribbon Schools for 2015 based on their overall academic excellence or their progress in closing achievement gaps among student subgroups. Lower Milford was one of those schools and was awarded in the category of Exemplary High Performing Schools. In 2014, 47 Lower Milford students took the PSSA exam and 100% scored proficient or advanced in Math with 93.4% scoring proficient or advanced in English Language Arts. This compares to 78.4% in math and 80.4% in ELA the prior year. You may see our school on the National website by clicking on this link:

http://nationalblueribbonschools.ed.gov/.../15pa435pu_lower_m...

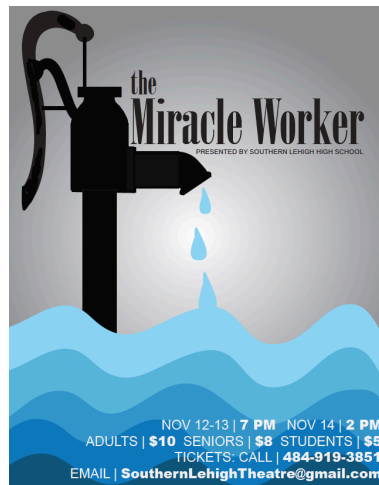
We are very proud of our students and faculty and excited to share this award with the district as it exemplifies that the curriculum, programs, teaching and community in the Southern Lehigh School District are of excellence.



- Last week was National Fire Prevention Week. Upper Saucon Twp Fire Co. shared Fire Safety and Prevention tips with Hopewell students and allowed them to tour their bucket truck. HW Principal Limpar and custodian Jeremy Stoneback should have asked how high Chief Castetter would be taking them up before they so willingly jumped into that bucket. Attached are aerial shots of the new building from over 100 feet!



- The *Colorful China* performance on October 7 proved to be an exceptional evening for everyone involved. We had a packed auditorium of children, adults, and senior citizens and the costumes were exceptional. We were presented with a “Friends of Colorful China” plaque, tea with a tea set, and the calligraphy poem created during the dance which states “Flying Dragon.. Dancing Phoenix”. The feedback from host families was very positive as cultures were shared, gifts exchanged, and fond memories made. Language was no barrier as most utilized electronic translation or simple sign/body language. There were exchanges involving campfires with s’mores; traditional Chinese tea ceremonies; music, the Russian language, sharing on Chinese Muslims and much laughter. Overall a very nice experience for our school and community.
- The HS fall play production of *The Miracle Worker* by William Gibson will be presented on November 12- 14 . Tickets will go on sale soon to the general public.



- Teachers and Instructional Assistants had two very productive in-service days on Friday, Oct. 9 and today. They spent both days revising and writing curriculum, pacing guides, and /or common assessments – or – in specific training with new resources or related to their content are in regional meetings. Teachers across grade levels met at the Intermediate School for their work and many expressed appreciation for having this valuable time to collaborate with colleagues within their department or grade level and across grade levels to ensure a logical progression on knowledge and skills for our students. Many new curriculum documents will be posted to the website Curriculum page as they are reviewed and finalized.
- Mrs. Siegfried and I visited Johns Hopkins School of Education in Baltimore with the Lehigh Study Council Study Tour, last week that focused on *equity and excellence*. We learned about a 20-year research project focused on the impact of family, community, gender, race, and poverty on students and transitions to adulthood. <http://www.amazon.com/The-Long-Shadow-Disadvantaged-Sociological/dp/0871540339> . We also heard speakers working on STEM projects in schools and gender bias; the complexities of dealing with poverty- both in and out of schools; the superintendents of Baltimore City and Baltimore County schools and their work; and visited a school designed and run by Johns Hopkins. The trip raised many important issues for our work at Southern Lehigh and what we can do to ensure equity in our schools for *ALL* students. *Equity in schools* is the focus of the Lehigh University School Study Council for this school year.