

# Advocate

Connect Unite Succeed



The newsletter of the  
Owen J. Roberts  
School District

May 2015

*Inspiring Each Student for Success Today and Greatness Tomorrow*

## Message from Superintendent Michael Christian and the Board of School Directors

With the challenges of another unpredictable winter behind us, we look enthusiastically to a spring season full of wonderful activities and continued student development. The themes of evolution and renewal surround us. Progression is also evident in the work of the Owen J. Roberts Board of School Directors. Grounded in a history of providing rich educational opportunities for youth, the district has been deeply involved in consideration and forward-planning which address educational equity, aging buildings, and facility needs of school populations in rise and flux. The decision-making process has included many public meetings over the years as well as feasibility studies and Pennsylvania Department of Education PlanCon procedures. The board has been ever-mindful of striving for sound financial decisions in a fluctuating economy.

To understand the context on the progression of our district, consider that on February 13, 1954, Vincent Townships Joint Elementary School (East and West Vincent Townships) was officially dedicated in a ceremony addressed by the Honorable Supreme Court Justice Owen J. Roberts where he spoke of how "young children's lives will be so molded that their later life may be rich and full". The school, which evolved from a one-room schoolhouse, opened to 355 pupils, grades 1 through 8.

Today, 61 years later, there are two schools serving that same basic geographical region: the new West Vincent Elementary School, opened in 2008-09, with a current population of 579 students and the existing 1954 East Vincent Elementary School, which now houses about 529 students in grades K through 6. Our older school buildings, although retrofitted over the years, were not built for handicap accessibility, medical facilities, technology, individualized educational programs, interactive learning, summer programs or the full spectrum of after-school activities which are now part of today's opportunities for inquisitive youth. Today's student enrollment, academic expectations, and extracurricular programs have exceeded what may be provided within the existing facilities at East Coventry and East Vincent.

The Board is committed to addressing facility needs in full consideration of evolving educational strategies and 21st century standards of design, safety codes, and energy efficiency. After careful consideration of all pros and cons, on Monday, November 17, 2014, at the Owen J. Roberts Board of School Directors regular business meeting, the board voted to proceed with new construction for both East Vincent and East Coventry Elementary Schools.

We anticipate that new East Vincent and East Coventry Elementary School facilities will serve our students and their families well for another 60 plus years and will yield energy and educational efficiencies unobtainable with another round of remodeling. The cost of the new facilities will be funded without adding to the District's debt or

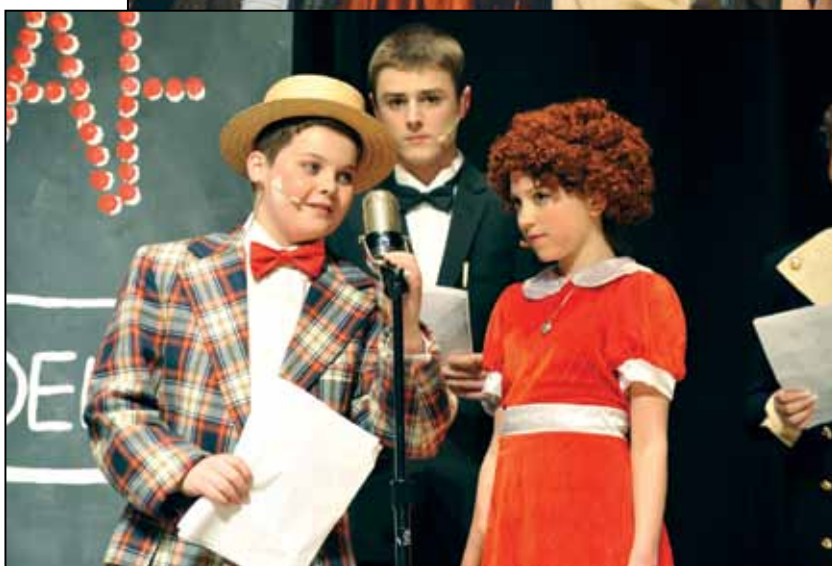
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## Arts are Alive at OJR!

It seems as though audiences never tire of hearing "Tomorrow". In February, Owen J. Roberts Middle School performed the family-friendly hit "Annie" selling out every performance as well as the "preview". "Annie" worked well bringing out the talents of over 100 cast and crew and, in addition a well-trained dog, as Sandy. Dual-cast lead roles (including "Annie") gave many students opportunities to shine.

Ten student crew members worked a "backstage ballet" moving set pieces and props under the direction of student stage managers. Students worked a minimum of ten hours of rehearsals a week from October to February with week-end rehearsals and community outreach activities.

Over 50 parent volunteers served behind the scenes on various committees and a two-man build crew constructed the entire set logging over 70 hours each both on and off-site! More than ten gallons of paint and 300 railing spindles were used on the set. Both professional and student musicians were featured in the pit orchestra. The community was amazingly supportive and gracious with donations. But most of



all, Director Mattie Moran, Assistant Director Katie Schollenberger, and Music Director Cheryl Markofski agreed, "There were countless smiles, laughs, and memories that will last for years to come for one-eighth of our middle school student body."

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## Best Community for Music!

The NAMM Foundation has recognized Owen J. Roberts School District for its outstanding commitment to music education with a Best Communities for Music Education designation. Owen J. Roberts School District joins approximately 388 districts across the nation in receiving the prestigious distinction for 2015.

Now in its 16th year, Best Communities for Music Education affirms school districts that have demonstrated exceptional efforts toward maintaining music education as part of schools' core curriculum. The NAMM Foundation is a nonprofit supported in part by the National Association of Music Merchants and its nearly 9,200 members around the world.

At the District Elementary Band, Jazz Band and Chorus Concert on Monday, May 4, a representative from Menchey Music presented the Owen J. Roberts Music Department with a certificate recognizing the distinction as a "Best Community in Music Education."



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# Unit Earns “Outstanding”

At 0800, 18 March 2015, Inspecting Officers arrived to meet with NJROTC cadets and begin the review process. During the ceremonial phase of the inspection, Commander Eric Humphries commended the Owen J. Roberts program for its strength and strong leadership. He mentioned that Master Gunnery Sergeant Worley is a role model among other commanders reporting, “He is highly respected among his peers”.

Superintendent Michael Christian acknowledged the cadets’ hard work and the strong leadership in Master Gunnery Sergeant Worley. High School Principal Richard Marchini spoke appreciatively of what the NJROTC program brings to the culture of the high school and what the cadets bring to our school and community with their leadership and thousands of hours of community service.

Commander Humphries also recognized Executive Officer Laurel Wynn for admittance into the prestigious United States Naval Academy,



Annapolis, MD. Laurel was honored to be nominated by Congressman Jim Gerlach for consideration into a service academy and is thrilled to join an esteemed class of about 1000 cadets understanding the acceptance rate is about four percent. Her appointment into the academy includes a scholarship

worth \$400,000.00 and job placement after graduation. According to Master Gunnery Sergeant Worley, Laurel worked extremely hard on her academics, physical fitness and public speaking to qualify.

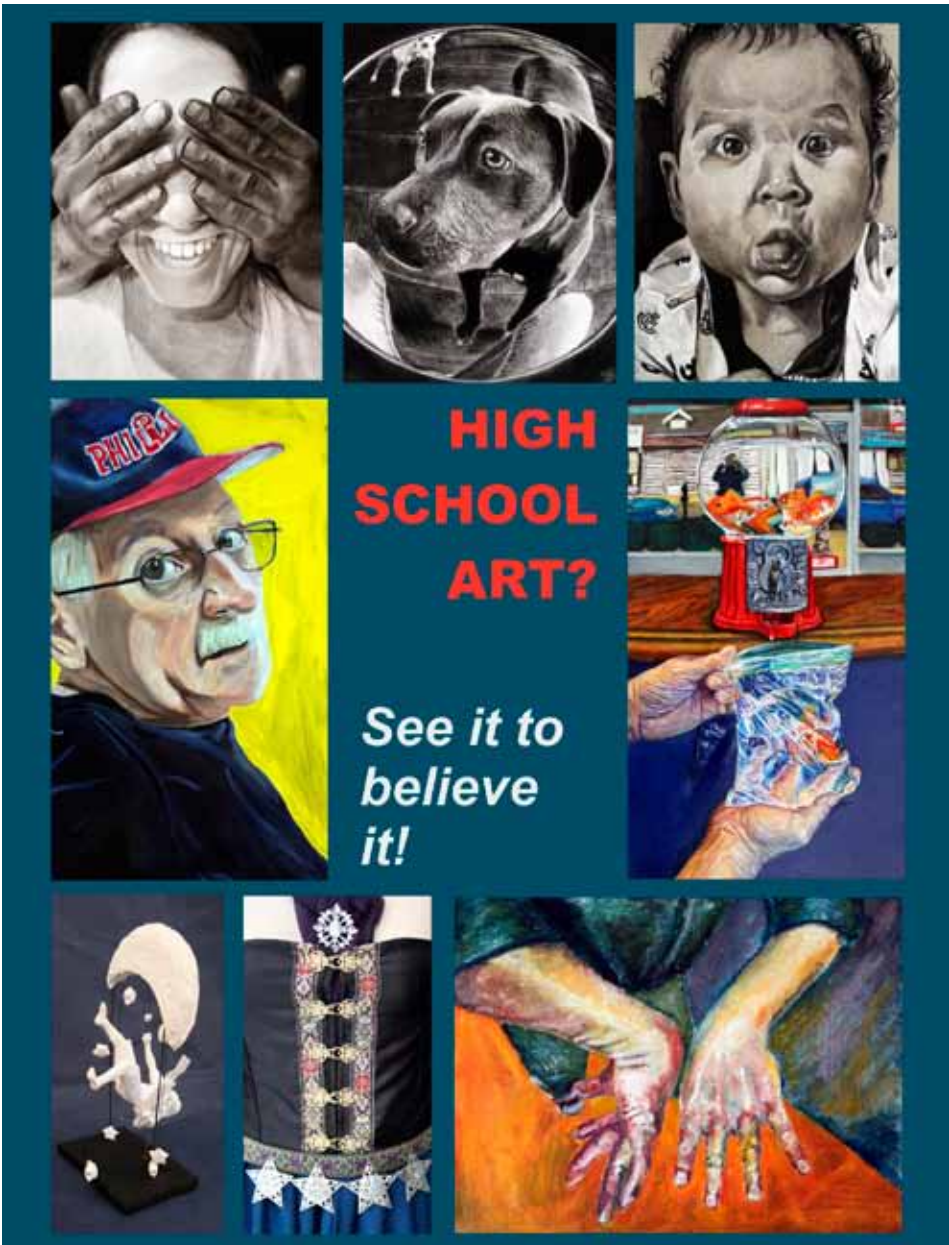
The ceremonial phase of NJROTC

inspection included march-on colors, the national anthem performed by high school choir members under the direction of Mrs. Sheila McIntyre, and pass-in-review. The Owen J. Roberts Unit earned a grade of “outstanding” for the inspection.

## Summer Enrichment



Owen J. Roberts School District offers a variety of enrichment opportunities open to our students June 22–August 6, 2015. From fun and games to serious academics, there are plenty of exciting programs and camps from which to choose. Sports, fishing, healthy living, science and even college application boot camp are all options. Check out the brochure at [www.ojrsd.com](http://www.ojrsd.com). Our summer programs offer students of all ages a place to come together to play, learn, and grow. For more information e-mail Missy Walton or Heidi Lehmann at [mwalton@ojrsd.com](mailto:mwalton@ojrsd.com) or [hlehmann@ojrsd.com](mailto:hlehmann@ojrsd.com), or call 610-469-5196.



## Unparalleled Odyssey Outcomes

Odyssey of the Mind has been an Owen J. Roberts tradition for nearly three decades and results continue to break records with more schools and teams competing and succeeding. Congratulations to the 11 Owen J. Roberts Odyssey of the Mind teams, who on Saturday, March 14, competed at Millersville University in the East Central Regional Odyssey of the Mind Competition. Of our 11 competing teams, eight moved on to the state finals contest in Berwick, PA on April 11th.

Three of our high school Odyssey of the Mind teams earned two first place finishes and one second place, which move them onto the state finals. Two of our middle school teams will move on in the competition through their achievement of one first place honor and a second place finish at regionals. Additionally, French Creek, West Vincent, and East Vincent Elementary all were first place finishers, qualifying them to move onto states.

In Owen J’s nearly three decades of competing in these problem solving contests, this is one of the finest outcomes in our history. Three teams advanced to be crowned state champions and qualify for World Finals to be held at Michigan State in May: the high school, middle school and East Vincent Elementary engineering teams.

## 38 Scholastic Awards

Owen J. Roberts art students hit it out of the park with the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. Since 1923, the Scholastic Art & Writing Awards have recognized the vision, ingenuity, and talent of our nation’s youth, and provided opportunities for creative teens to be celebrated. Each year, increasing numbers of teens participate in the program, and become a part of a community of young artists and writers, filmmakers and photographers, poets, and sculptors, along with countless educators who support and encourage the creative process. Submissions are juried by luminaries in the visual and literary arts, some of whom are past award recipients. Panelists look for works that best exemplify originality, technical skill, and the emergence of a personal voice or vision. Students across America submitted 255,000 original works during the 2014 program year. Owen J. Roberts students won 38 awards at the regional level with six works moving on to national competition.



# Strong in Science

Our elementary school students excelled again in science research. During the month of March, 85 students participated in the Chester County Science Research Competitions. These students were selected from their individual school competitions, and did a wonderful job representing our district at the county level. At the county level, each of our five schools received awards; our students collectively earned 13 awards with three students moving into the next round.

In the Salk competition, Owen J. Roberts sent 50 students claiming 25 awards from students in grades 4 and 5—many of the top awards. Each of our schools received awards; these awards were balanced among the areas of Biochemistry, Engineering, and Physics. There was no further competition for this level.

At the Delaware Valley Science Fair for middle and high school students, Audrey Farnham (MS) earned 3rd place in the Medicine and Health category for the middle school division. She was also invited to participate in the Broadcom MASTERS competition. Zoe Zabrenski (EC) earned 3rd place in the Zoology category for the middle school division, received the Future Scientist Award sponsored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, and was invited to participate in the Broadcom MASTERS competition. The Broadcom MASTERS competition is often described as the “middle school version of the International Science Fair.”

# Call to Action

NOPE (Narcotics Overdose Prevention and Education) Task Force of Chester County provided an educational presentation on the dangers of substance abuse for parents and community members on April 7, 2015. The high-impact presentation was delivered to high school students in grades 11 and 12 earlier in the day.

The message was delivered graphically and emotionally from several perspectives. First, from a professional who describes the interaction of drugs on the developing brain; then from a law enforcement official who has the grim task of making death notifications to distraught families; and finally, from two family members who have suffered the loss of a child to a drug overdose. Throughout the presentation, compelling local stories of students who have lost their lives to drugs and alcohol are shared. The audience learned that the most common way children obtain drugs is from a family medicine cabinet.

The call to action at the community presentation was to lock up prescription medicines and dispose of any not being used. Within our district, North Coventry Township Police Department and West Vincent Township Police Department both have permanent medication collection boxes. NOPE urges each of us to discard unused medicines in a timely and responsible manner.

# Fine Display

Owen J. Roberts students had a strong showing of inspiring pieces of art of various mediums walking away with 6 of the 15 awards given at the Montgomery County Community College 2nd Annual Tri-County High School Art Show January 20 to February 27, 2015. The show was held in the Fine Arts Studio, housed in the former Kiwi Shoe Polish Factory.

Students from public, parochial and private schools throughout the tri-county area were invited to participate in the exhibition. The artwork featured a variety of subjects and styles in an array of media. College art faculty members judged the artwork.

OJRHS art teacher Miss Tracey Schiavello was moved by the level of work the students have produced thus far this year. “I say it every year,” exclaimed Schiavello, “but I truly am amazed and inspired that the bar continues to go up on the quality of work our students produce--gallery level work!”



# Science Kits



Homegrown Science Discovery Kits are being used in our elementary centers. Developed by teachers at East Coventry Elementary School, the kits put students in charge of hands-on learning and guide them toward skill-mastery through inquiry.

# Read Across America



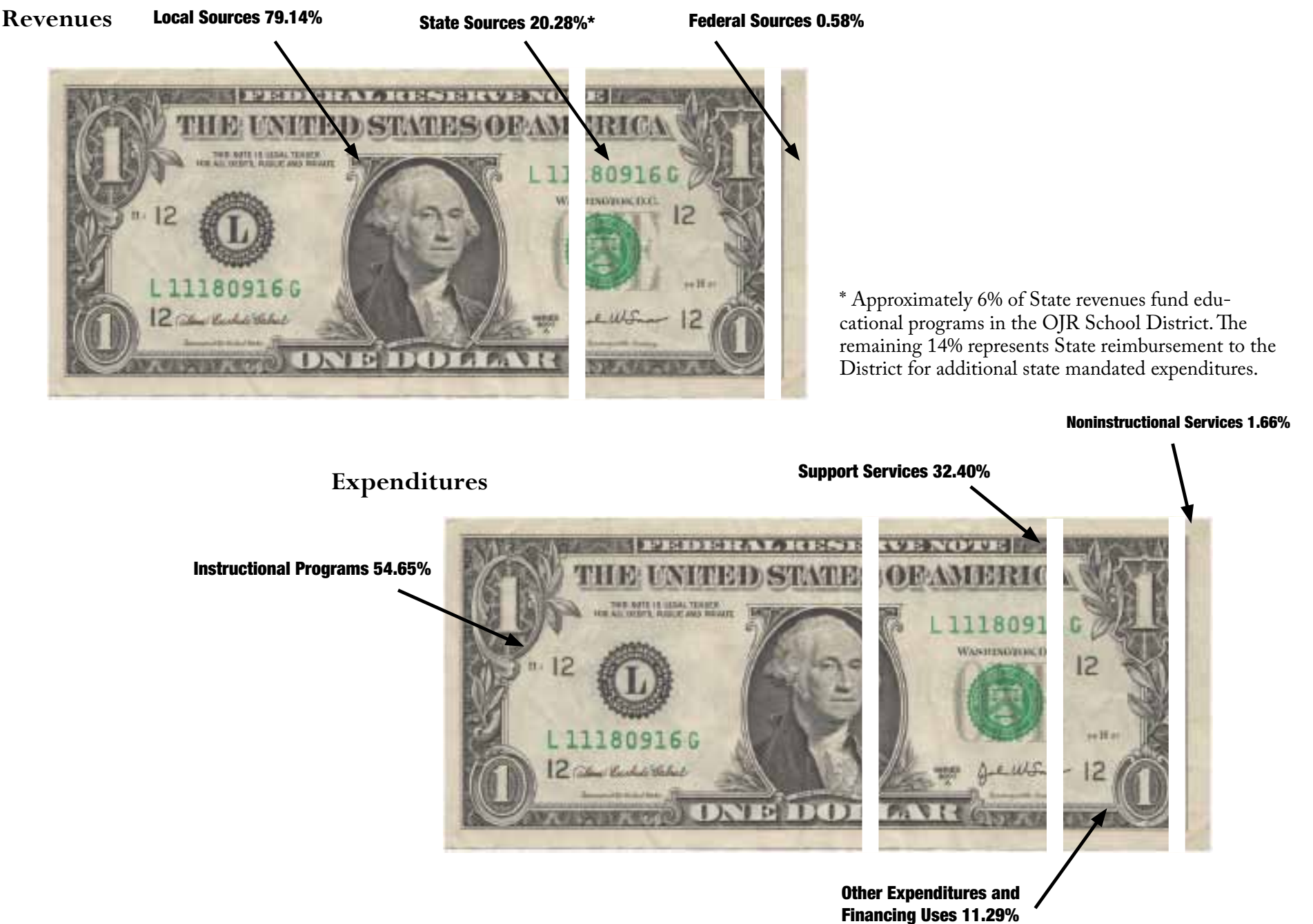
Read Across America Day is a nationwide reading celebration that takes place annually on March 2—Dr. Seuss’s birthday. Across the country, thousands of schools participate by bringing together students and books. OJR students celebrated reading throughout the week—experiencing the joy of a good story.



# Summary General Fund Budget 2015-16

Although State and Federal support for education has consistently declined over the last two decades, sound financial planning has enabled the Owen J. Roberts School District to keep tax increases at or below the Act 1 Index for the last nine (9) years (1.9% for 2015-16). The 2015-16 Proposed General Fund Operating Budget is \$94,474,708, which maintains all current educational programs and provides additional opportunities for high school students to engage in several blended on-line learning experiences.

For additional details regarding the District’s 2015-16 Proposed Budget please visit the District’s website at <http://tinyurl.com/ojrbudget>



## Smashing Fundraiser



The High School Leo Club has a few fundraisers throughout the year to support various philanthropic efforts. A recent success was the Mario Super Smash Brothers Tournament which attracted 26 teams to stay after school and compete with all their favorite Nintendo characters. Players battled each other in 13 different stations with scores projected on a large screen. The event was a great mixer bringing student Mario-lovers together for an afternoon of fun and good cause.

## Adventures in Black History



Students at West Vincent Elementary School had an opportunity to meet some of the most significant black Americans of the last few hundred years! In a fast-paced 45-minute adventure, “William’s Adventure in Black History” led students through the remarkable people and events that have shaped 400 years of black history in America. Nearly 20 historical figures and events unfolded in this production; while audience volunteers joined the actors on stage to do everything from helping Mae Jemison travel into space to encouraging Rosa Parks to forever change America by not giving up her seat. “William’s Adventure in Black History” was performed by Bright Star Touring Theatre.



# Arts are Alive at OJR!

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In March, Owen J. Roberts High School presented Little Shop of Horrors, a comedy monster-hit rock musical, about a hapless florist who raises a plant that has questionable ambitions. The show was full of upbeat 1960's style music: rock and roll, doo-wop and Motown. The talented cast included 30 students under the leadership of Director Justin Damm, Musical Director Jessica Potts, and Choreographer Lauren Paravis. Little Shop was also supported by countless volunteers stitching costumes, building sets and more. The high school would like special thanks to go out to the many advertisers and supporters.

At French Creek Elementary School, 62 students participated in their

drama club beginning in October. The parent-run club gives students skills in theater. The play actors performed "Porridge" on March 27, another Craig Hawes musical (last year was "Pirates of the Curry Bean). "Porridge" is about a crime wave which hits Happy Valley with a caseload of mysteries to be solved. The audiences followed students through sparkling song and dance to unravel such mysteries as what dirty secret Papa Bear was hiding behind his Porridge Empire. Costumes were top notch and audiences were said to be left wanting second helpings.



## Go for the Greens

In March, Owen J. Roberts Wellness Council held its annual "Go for the Greens" celebration ran from March 16-23 in partnership with parent volunteers and Chartwell's food service. The program is made possible by a Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation grant to improve nutrition choices.

This year, students celebrated broccoli learning all sorts of fun facts. Chef Rick prepared stir-fry broccoli for elementary students to sample and all sorts of tasty broccoli dishes for middle and high school students to enjoy. It is hard to believe, but even with stickers, broccoli costumes and fun songs, the most excitement generated was for actual eating of the freshly prepared broccoli! Kids loved the splash of lemon and used their inquisitive nature to understand why the broccoli tasted so good and "sweet." We are still hearing from parents that students are asking for more broccoli at home.



## Student Poets Published

Christina Fluharty, Grade 11, has entered and won several writing contests. Below is her poem printed in a Kutztown University literary magazine.

*You gazed up into the abyss of the dark night sky, and wondered how insignificant you were compared to the rest of life; you truly wanted be one with the world around you.*

*You've been criticized for being a dreamer, but you'd never be perfect for anyone*

*You've always been too much of something: too loud, too edgy, or too abstract.*

*But if you rounded out your edges you'd lose your edge; you'd lose your creativity that set you apart from the rest; you'd lose yourself somewhere in all the darkness.*

*And you asked to stay grounded despite what your heart said; you wanted to keep your thoughts straight and 'normal' and you wanted to get your head out of the clouds.*

*So you ran barefoot through fields of grass, felt the wind rush through your hair, watched the fiery sunsets burn up the sky, and bathed in cool rivers during summer to become one with Her.*

*Your time on earth never seemed long enough to you; you tried to outrun fate and destiny.*

*Your final goal was to become one with Her – to dig your heels into the ground without fear.*

*You begged to keep the ground below your feet, but was it only because you were terrified of having six feet of earth above you someday?*

Owen J. Roberts has many talented poets at the elementary level as well. 77 West Vincent Elementary fourth graders wrote poems accepted for publication in the Young American Poetry Digest. Schools around the nation are invited to participate in the National Schools Project by submitting their students' most creative poetry to be reviewed by a panel of educators reviewed for creativity, sensory/figurative images, structure, and poetic techniques. West Vincent will be provided a free book with the selected poetry for their library.

## Students Join 15 Million Programmers

Last year more than 15 million students across the world participated in the Hour of Code. Participation across the Owen J. Roberts School District grew this year. OJR students participated in tutorials on PC's, laptops and tablets; and even with no computer at all. Code.org's own tutorial features Angry Birds, Plants vs. Zombies and video lectures from Mark Zuckerberg and Bill Gates.



## Superintendent Message

Continued from page 1

tax burdens as a result of sound financial planning and dedicated capital savings.

The board is striving with determination and conviction to afford thousands of future youth the same opportunity for which this community has always expected and supported. Our goal is for every student to realize excellence in education toward the full and rich lives which Justice Roberts spoke of as well as an eye on what that means for the 21st century. With our focus on the future we have borrowed from our past. We invite all to be part of the process by attending meetings and visiting our district website, [www.ojrsl.com](http://www.ojrsl.com), under About Us/Construction.



# Heart of Learning

Middle School teacher, Mr. Brad Creswell, was awarded Citadel Heart of Learning Finalist for Owen J. Roberts School District. The Citadel Heart of Learning Award was developed by Citadel and the Chester County Intermediate Unit 14 years ago to recognize, reward and thank the outstanding teachers we have in Chester County. The program has grown in such popularity that Citadel receives thousands of heartfelt nominations each year. This year nearly 2,700 nominations were submitted. Mr. Creswell will receive a \$500 award to purchase supplies or other items for his classroom. Mr. Creswell accepted the award on behalf of the entire Middle School staff, commenting, "This is probably the best group I have ever worked with and this award is a reflection of the entire staff." 114 Owen J. Roberts' teachers were honored with nominations. A list of all OJR Citadel Heart of Learning nominees may be found on the district website.

# Fun with 24



Chester County Intermediate Unit is sponsoring a 24 Challenge® Math Tournament and many Owen J. Roberts players are excited to be a part of the educational initiative. This tournament hopes to provide students from all backgrounds with a common ground for learning, communicating, and embracing the spirit of competition. Playing the 24 Challenge® Math game, children may develop skills such as pattern sensing, problem solving, and mental math. The object of the game is to make the number 24 from the four numbers on a game card. Players may add, subtract, multiply and divide. Math enthusiasm, risk taking, and pattern discovery were evident throughout the tournament areas at French Creek, East Coventry and East Vincent Elementary schools as well as positive sportsmanship among the students. Each school sent four finalists to the county competition on May 1, 2015.

# THON Exceeds Goal



Mini-THON is a year-long, student-run philanthropy effort raising money to fight pediatric cancer. The event is a twelve-hour dance, no-sit, no-sleep marathon held in high schools across the country. Students make a conscious choice to stand for those who cannot. A smaller version of Penn State University's event, the mini-THON raises money to support the Four Diamonds Fund, an organization that provides financial support to families affected by pediatric cancer. The first year, the mini-THON at Owen J. Roberts High School raised \$8,571.25. Last year students raised \$16,788! This year's February 28 event broke all records by bringing in \$32,717.

# Hands-on Study

Dr. Heidi Lehmann, Science Coordinator, reported that close to 100 students, parents, and teachers from East Coventry Elementary School experienced a hands-on industry tour of manufacturing practices provided by the Omega Design Corporation. This was the second annual "Simple Machines" tour the company hosted for East Coventry. Third grade students studied the six simple machines as part of their Forces & Motion Science unit. The professional staff at Omega Design demonstrated scientific principles and provided hands-on exploration to students as they rotated through stations highlighting how various simple machines could be combined to produce complex machines used in manufacturing. Omega Design Corporation specializes in a variety of manufacturing functions serving pharmaceutical, personal healthcare, cosmetic, food & beverage, and household chemical markets. Omega Design hosted a tour for Owen J. Roberts High School students in April highlighting a wide range of career opportunities in the manufacturing industry.

# Exemplary World Languages

Once again, Owen J. Roberts High School World Language Program has become part of a very elite group of exemplary foreign language programs as recipient of a 2015 Golden Globe Award. Exemplary PA world language programs are recognized at four levels: PSMLA Golden Globe, Silver Globe, Bronze Globe, and Globe Awards. Owen J. Roberts World Language Program is one of nine programs in the state to receive the highest Golden Globe distinction. The PEP Awards Showcase may be found at [www.PSMLA.org](http://www.PSMLA.org).

According to their website, the Pennsylvania State Modern Language Association (PSMLA) annually seeks to identify and publicly recognize excellent foreign language programs across the state. The PSMLA Exemplary Program (PEP) Awards are given to schools with well-designed, sequential programs that enable students to attain world language standards, as demonstrated by documentation of 11 different criteria described on the PSMLA PEP Rubric.

One outstanding World Language program is the after-school Language Academy where high school students teach elementary students French, German, Latin and Spanish once per week for eight weeks. More than 150 elementary students were bussed to the high school after-school to participate in the program this year.

The high school World Language Department also maintains chapters of language honor societies for French, German, Latin and Spanish. On March 26, they held their annual induction ceremony inducting 100 new members. Senior members were presented their honor cords which they will wear with pride at the senior awards ceremony and graduation in June.



# Spring Concert Dates

- May 4 ..... Elementary District Band and Chorus at HS Auditorium  
NAMM Best Community in Music Award Presentation
- May 5 ..... 8th Grade Chorus Concert at MS Auditorium
- May 6 ..... EC , FC and NC Spring Chorus Concert in EC/FC/NC AP Rooms
- May 7\* ..... High School Band Concert at HS Auditorium  
Guest Conductor Alumnus Richard Wells
- May 12 ..... MS Band Concert at HS Auditorium
- May 13 ..... WV Spring Concert in WV All Purpose Room
- May 14 ..... High School Chorus Concert at HS Auditorium
- May 19 ..... EC Strings at HS Auditorium
- May 20 ..... EV Spring Concert at MS Auditorium
- May 21 ..... High School Orchestra Concert at HS Auditorium
- May 26 ..... Elementary Senior and Junior Band- HS Auditorium

\*The annual spring band concert will feature OJR Alumnus Richard G. Wells as guest conductor. Mr. Wells was the former OJR Band Director (1961 – 1968). He graduated from Warwick High School (before it became the Owen J. Roberts school system). After leaving OJR in 1968, Mr. Wells went to Kutztown University where he was an associate professor in the department of music. Mr. Wells taught 29 years before retiring in 1997, influencing scores of students and graduates to aspire to excellence in music performance and remain loyal to the ideals and benefits of music and education. OJRHS Band Director Todd Mengel shared, "It's a great honor to welcome him back to Owen J. Roberts."



2015-16 Owen J. Roberts School District Calendar

SCHEDULE OF ACTIVITIES AND HOLIDAYS	
August 2015	
25-27	Professional Development - No School
31	First Day of School
September 2015	
4	No School Students/Staff
7	District Closed
October 2015	
12	Professional Development - No School
November 2015	
3	Professional Development - No School
5	Secondary 1st Quarter Ends
23-24	Parent Conferences - Half Day Students
25-27	Thanksgiving Recess - No School Students/Staff
26-27	Local Holiday/District Closed
December 2015	
1	Elementary 1st Trimester Ends
24-31	Winter Recess - No School Students/Staff
24-25	Local Holiday/District Closed
January 2016	
1	District Closed
18	Local Holiday/District Closed
22	Secondary 2nd Quarter Ends
February 2016	
12	Professional Development/No School
15	Local Holiday/District Closed
March 2016	
2-3	Parent Conferences - Half Day Students
8	Elementary 2nd Trimester Ends
23-28	Spring Recess - No School Students/Staff
25-28	Local Holiday/District Closed
April 2016	
4	Secondary 3rd Quarter Ends
11-29	PSSA Testing Window
May 2016	
16-27	Keystone Testing Window
27	Professional Development - No School Students
30	District Closed
June 2016	
9-10	Half Day Students
10	Last Day School - Quarter & Trimester Ends
10	Graduation
13	Professional Development

August 2015						
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May 2016						
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	First Day of School		Quarter Ends
	No School for Students/Staff		Trimester Ends
	Professional Development - No School		PSSA/Keystone Window
	Half Day for Students		Graduation
	District Closed		Local Holiday

September 2015						
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December 2015						
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March 2016						
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June 2016						
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October 2015						
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January 2016						
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April 2016						
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24	25	26	27	28	29	30

PSSA/Keystone Testing Window

Grades 3 - 8 April 11-15, 2016  
Grades 3 - 8 April 18-22, 2016  
Grades 4 & 8 April 25-29, 2016  
Keystones - May 16-27, 2016

Snow Make-up Guidelines

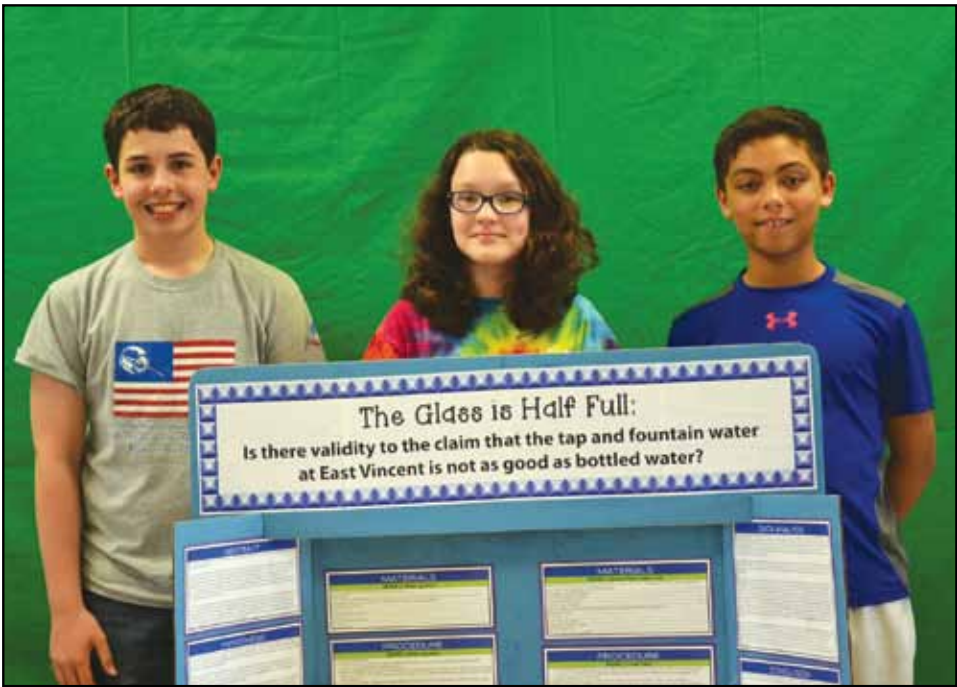
June 9 & June 10 are two snow days built into the calendar.  
If a third snow day is used, school will be in session on March 23.  
If a fourth snow day is used, school will be in session March 24.  
Graduation will remain on June 10.

NOTE: Early Dismissal Times are 10:50 a.m./Secondary & 11:50 a.m./Elementary

Total Days: Student = 182; Teacher = 192: Two Snow Days Built In

e-Cyber Success

The East Vincent Elementary eCYBERMISSION team, Aqua Squad, placed in the top three first places in Pennsylvania. They were then selected as an eCYBERMISSION Regional Finalist. eCYBERMISSION is a science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) initiative offered by the Army Educational Outreach Program (AEOP). According to their website, the U.S. Army is committed to answering the nation’s need for increased national STEM literacy and expanding STEM education opportunities across the country to open doors to new career paths for America’s students that lead to a brighter tomorrow. All mission folders are scored up to five times by eCYBERMISSION Virtual Judges on the following criteria: use of scientific inquiry practices, engineering design process, benefit to the community, and team collaboration. Aqua Squad members Jackson Massey, Jeanne Tokay, and Andrew Bilotta were concerned with water quality and performed research on quality and preferences at East Vincent Elementary. As a regional finalist, each team member will receive \$1,000 U.S. savings bond in addition to the 1st place state prize of \$1,000 U.S. savings bond. The team will advance to judging before a regional panel to attempt to qualify for a national prize.



OJR National Art Honor Society recently completed Wildcat art on the walls of North Coventry Elementary School.

Study Initiated

The District is expected to see moderate growth in its student population over the next five years. New housing developments and resale of existing homes are causing shifts in demographics. With variances in population growth, an area of heightened consideration is the equitable distribution of students throughout Owen J. Roberts School District’s five elementary schools.

In an effort to maximize student learning, as well as use resources efficiently, there will be a review of the attendance areas for our elementary schools over the next eight months. The Board of School Directors’ commitment to build two new elementary schools (East Vincent and East Coventry) also makes this a fitting time for an attendance area study.

Approaching the process thoroughly, the District has formulated a working committee of administrators, teachers and parents to review the data so that all stakeholders have a voice. Recently, a participation survey was made available to all elementary parents. The committee will meet regularly and updates will be provided at regular monthly Board of School Directors meetings. Recommendations for changes, if any, will be presented to the Board of School Directors in early 2016, with projected implementation for the 2016-2017 school year.





Congratulations to Middle School student, Robin Mailum, who qualified for the Chester County Spelling Bee contest and competed through five rounds.

Congratulations to the members of the Mindsteins First Lego League team from East Vincent Elementary School, coached

by Ms. Carrie Mitton, who completed in the First State FLL Championship: Rory Booth, Jenneve Felice, Adam Levin, Chelsea McNeff, Josh Neely, Ian Pugh, Cole Swierczek, Marie Tokay.

Congratulations to the members of the Watercolor Wildcats First Lego League team from North Coventry Elementary School, coached by Ms. Patrice Reiche, assistant coach Ms. Patty Janda, and high school team member Walter Nelson, who completed in the First State FLL Championship: Kimberly Amstutz, Elizabeth Clowney, Thomas Gammon, Noah Gonzalez, Zachary Grahl, Mallory Horner, Jake Koster, Mattie McReady, Logan Richter, Cara Semach.

Congratulations to the members of the WiredCats First Lego League team from the OJR Middle School, coached by Mr. Justin Giannone, who completed in the Eastern PA FLL Championship: Will Blackledge, Ryan Maneval, Alex Martin, Sean Zubey.

Congratulations to the members of the Owen J. Robots First Lego League team from the OJR Middle School, coached by Mr. Justin Giannone, who completed in the Eastern PA FLL Championship: Aaron Beekly, Jackson Gelting, Quenten Heise, Nate Kelly.

Congratulations to the 62 High School AP Art Students who were selected to exhibit art at the Montgomery County Community College 2nd Annual Tri-County High School Art Show. The following students received one of the 15 Tri-County awards that were presented at the show: Sarah Berkey, Julianna Clark (recipient of two awards), Jennifer Miller, David Snyder (recipient of two awards), Tess VanDerWerff. Thank you to Miss Tracey Schiavello to her dedication to the High School Art Department.

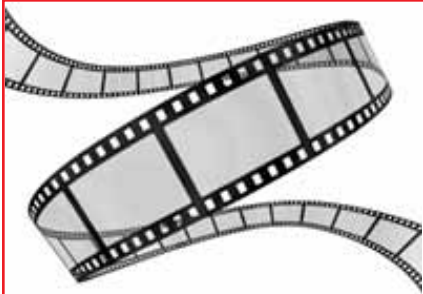
Congratulations to Michelle Intoccia and Leah Muthler for qualifying for the PMEA All-State Choir.

Congratulations to Daniel DiMarino whose string quartet composition was selected to be premiered at the PMEA All-State Conference.

Congratulations to the Owen J. Roberts Gay Straight Alliance who attended the Rainbow Connection Conference at West Chester University and was awarded with Program of the Year. They were recognized for their work on Ally Week and Day of Silence.

Congratulations to State Champion Odyssey of the Minds: the high school engineering team; Ethan Conway, George Kullen, Makenzie Briglia, Liam Conway, Alex Glasier, Madison Matarazzo, and Caroline Rajtik, Middle school engineer team; Kasey Fitch, Annie Ardit, Maddy Braun, Emily Glasier, Olivia DeVol, Lauren McLaughlin, and Jeanie Tokay, and East Vincent Elementary engineering team: Addy Darcy, Sofia Loiocono, Sarah Ewing, Nick Wood, Charlie Kullen, Charlotte Camp, and Jen Plasha.

Please congratulate our Valedictorians and Salutatorians for the Class of 2015. Valedictorians: Utkarsh Pandey (Best of Class) and Patrick Shaw. Salutatorians: Nathan Smith, Ahmed Farhan, and Ethan Gelting.



## Film Festival

The 11th Annual OJRHS Film Festival will be held on Wednesday, May 20, at 7:00 p.m. in the High School auditorium. It will feature short films that our high school students submitted to the Greenfield Youth Film Festival as well as other films.

## Partners for Safe, Savvy Students

Young people love media, sharing it and socializing with it. Parent organizations and the Owen J. Roberts Education Foundation are now partnering with the Owen J. Roberts Technology Department to help fund certain technology projects such as projectors, sound systems and iPads for learning environments. With increased technology use, the district continues to work intentionally to develop responsible digital citizens. Digital citizenship requires educating students and those who watch them. Cyber-safety is part of the Owen J Roberts School District Teacher Tech Academy and students learn how to be safe and responsible online in many ways at school. This year, Director of Technology Paul Sanfrancesco has given digital footprint presentations to parent organizations at all Owen J. Roberts schools. Mr. Sanfrancesco partnered with high school students for additional discussions regarding social media to show parents how to use some popular tech tools such as Instagram, SnapChat, Yik Yak, and other social media programs. Parents were able to learn about potential risks and best ways to keep kids safe in a digital world.

## Wildcat Athletic Highlights

The Wildcat Varsity Wrestling Team competed in the Southeast Regional Wrestling tournament. For the first time in school history, the Wildcats crowned three champions. Demetri D'Orsaneo, Derek Gulotta, and Xavier Ferrizzi all took 1st place. Dominick Petrucelli took 2nd place and Ryan Resnick took 5th place. All five of these wrestlers, a school record, moved on to the PIAA State Wrestling Championships in Hershey. All five wrestlers won at least one match in the tournament. Derek made it to the semi-finals where he suffered an injury and was forced to default to 6th place. As a result Derek became the first wrestler from Chester County to earn four state medals and only the sixth wrestler from District One to accomplish this milestone. Demetri D'Orsaneo took fifth place and moved into second place on the all-time wins list at Owen J. Roberts in the process.



On February 6, in a dual wrestling meet with Phoenixville High School, Derek Gulotta earned his 135th career victory. This makes Derek the all-time winningest wrestler in school history, eclipsing the previous mark held by Owen J. Roberts volunteer assistant coach Aaron Brown.

The OJR Girl's Varsity Soccer Team was named one of top Academic Teams in the country for the 2013-14 academic year.

Ben Huzzard was named to the Pennsylvania Soccer Coaches Association All-State Team for the 2014 Season. Congratulations to Ben, his team, and coaches for helping him achieve this great honor.

Samantha Garritano and Caroline Rajtik, members of our HS Field Hockey team, were named to the 2014 Keith Waldman – Optimal Performance Associates / NFHCA High School National Academic Squad for the 2014-15 school year. This a great accomplishment for both of these individuals to have the success in the classroom, as well as on the field.

The Girls basketball team qualified for the District One AAAA playoffs.

In Girls Swimming and Diving, the PAC-10 championship team finished undefeated (10-0 overall), 7-0 in PAC-10 and had 11 district qualifiers. Allison Drohosky set a new team record in the 100 Breaststroke. Devon Niness, Laurel Fink, Taylor Davis, Gabby Yuhas set a new team record in the 200 Freestyle Relay. The 200 Medley Relay team of Devon Niness, Allison Drohosky, Morgan Hansen, and Gabby Yuhas placed 7th in the PIAA State Championships with a new team record and All-American consideration time. Morgan Hansen set a new team record at the State meet in the 100 Butterfly winning an 8th place medal. Laurel Fink also qualified and competed at the State meet at in the 500 Freestyle.

Boys Swimming and Diving were also crowned PAC-10 Champions for finishing 9-0-1 overall and 6-0-1 in the PAC-10 with 10 district qualifiers. The Boys team also snapped a 52-meet winning streak by Perkiomen Valley in the process. State Qualifiers were: Alec Schneider, Weston Lickfeld, Colin Bauer, Simon Crew; 200 Medley Relay, Colin Bauer; 50 Freestyle, Weston Lickfeld; 100 Breaststroke

Morgan Stone, Maddie Gerbert and Kerry Huzzard all recently scored 100th career goals in Girl's Lacrosse. Coach Tornetta reached his 400th career win.

## Introducing the Buddy Bench



Inspired by the work of a student at Roundtown Elementary School, the North Coventry K-Kids, along with their moderator Kathleen O'Neill, created a buddy bench for the school playground. Their bench was featured on the Benches Around the World website. Students built the bench with the following uses in mind:

1. The first idea is to ask someone to play. If someone doesn't have a friend to play with, they will sit on the bench. You can go over and ask them to join you!
2. The second idea is the ask someone to walk and talk. Maybe someone is new, go ask them to walk with you. Get to know new friends.
3. The third idea is to meet up with your friends at the buddy bench. Have your friends gather at the bench to decide what to play or simply to talk with one another.