

# Pemberton Pride

The Newsletter of Pemberton Township Schools

November, 2023

## PECEC INTRODUCES NEW PRESCHOOL STEM CLASSROOM

The Pemberton Early Childhood Education Center hosted a ribbon cutting ceremony in celebration of its new STEM classroom that was revealed on Tuesday, October 17, 2023.



*Director of Early Childhood Deborah Ceplo, Superintendent Jeff Havers, Board of Education President Terry Maldonado, and Board members Wanda Knox and Pete King are joined by two preschool students at the ribbon cutting ceremony.*

PECEC's incorporation of the specialized classroom is designed to introduce young children to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math, develop real-life skills and support overall academic growth. In preschool, STEM learning focuses on the concepts of curiosity, inquiry and play. Teachers support higher-level thinking and problem solving as children explore and experiment with a variety of materials to include a wind tunnel, ramps, deflectors and balls, and loose parts.

"We are very excited to finally open our pre-kindergarten STEM room," Deborah Ceplo, Director of Early Childhood, said. "This opportunity will challenge our children to share their ideas and work together to find solutions. Introducing STEM concepts at an early age will increase children's critical thinking and problem-solving skills while also increasing vocabulary growth and social skills."

After detailed research and planning, the implementation of a preschool STEM classroom was presented to the Pemberton Board of Education and approved in 2022. The idea was motivated by the success of the

Pemberton Early Childhood Education Center's Educational Outdoor Learning Lab, which opened in 2019.

As advocates for best practices in



*PECEC student Naomi Russell experiments with a gear machine designed to teach students about gear size, order, direction and the speed of gear rotation.*

early childhood education and lifelong learning, Pemberton early childhood staff gained interest in early STEM education in 2018. Research shows that STEM learning supports behavioral, emotional and intellectual development.



*Superintendent Jeff Havers helps student Arrayson Moore operate a miniature conveyor belt in the STEM classroom.*

Cognitive and 21st century skills are also supported by STEM experiences at an early age. The concept also helps to develop confidence, problem-solving, creativity, decision-making, empathy, cooperation, motor skills and initiative.

"We are excited to introduce STEM learning to our youngest scholars with the implementation of this new classroom," superintendent Jeff Havers said. "As technology continues to evolve, it's important to hone in on real-life skills at an early age to help assist the development of our youngest learners. We look forward to providing this educational opportunity for our students at the Pemberton Early Childhood Education Center."



Pemberton Learning Community: Pursuing Excellence One Child at a Time

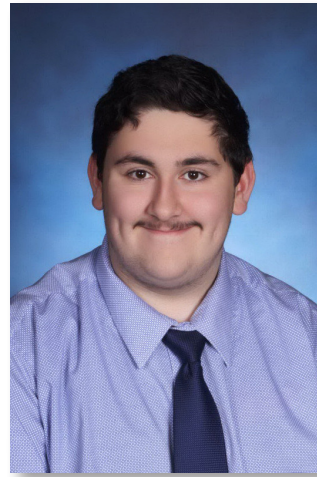
# COLLEGE BOARDS HONORS TWO PTHS STUDENTS

Pemberton Township High School seniors Lily Israel and Nikolaus Ryder received National Recognition from the College Board for their outstanding performances in the classroom and on notable standardized tests.

Israel was a recipient of the National African American Recognition Award (NAARA) and the National Rural and Small Town Award (NRSTA). Ryder also received the National Rural and Small Town Award and was honored as a National Hispanic Recognition Award (NHRA) recipient.

These two students earned this academic honor because of their GPA of 3.5 or higher and outstanding performance on the PSAT/NMSQT, PSAT 10, and/or AP Exams. Israel and Ryder can now list this honor on college applications to enhance their transcript and stand out to institutions.

"We're extremely proud of Lily and Nikolaus for receiving these prestigious honors," Pemberton Township Schools superintendent Jeff Havers said. "To be recognized on the national level by the College Board speaks volumes about these students' commitment to furthering their education and achieving academic excellence. Lily and Nikolaus have set a positive example for their classmates and illustrated our mission of Pursuing Excellence, One Child at a Time."



*Nikolaus Ryder*



*Lily Israel*

## BUSANSKY HOSTS N.J. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION PRESS EVENT AND SAFETY DEMONSTRATION

The New Jersey Department of Transportation hosted a press event/safety demonstration at Busansky Elementary School to recognize our schools' participation in the Safe Routes to School Program, and to celebrate International Walk to School Month and National Pedestrian Safety Month! Speakers included NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti, superintendent Jeff Havers, Pemberton Township mayor Jack Tompkins, principals John Schmidt (Emmons) and Keith Swaney (Busansky), and Program Director of Cross County Connection TMA Patrick Farley.



▲ Above, 5th grader Hunter Hughes inaugurates the press event at Busansky with opening remarks and introduces NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti.



► Right, NJDOT Commissioner Diane Gutierrez-Scaccetti participates in a safety presentation with students at Busansky Elementary School.



▲ Above, students in the Busansky safety patrol unit pose with members of the New Jersey Department of Transportation and principals Keith Swaney and John Schmidt.



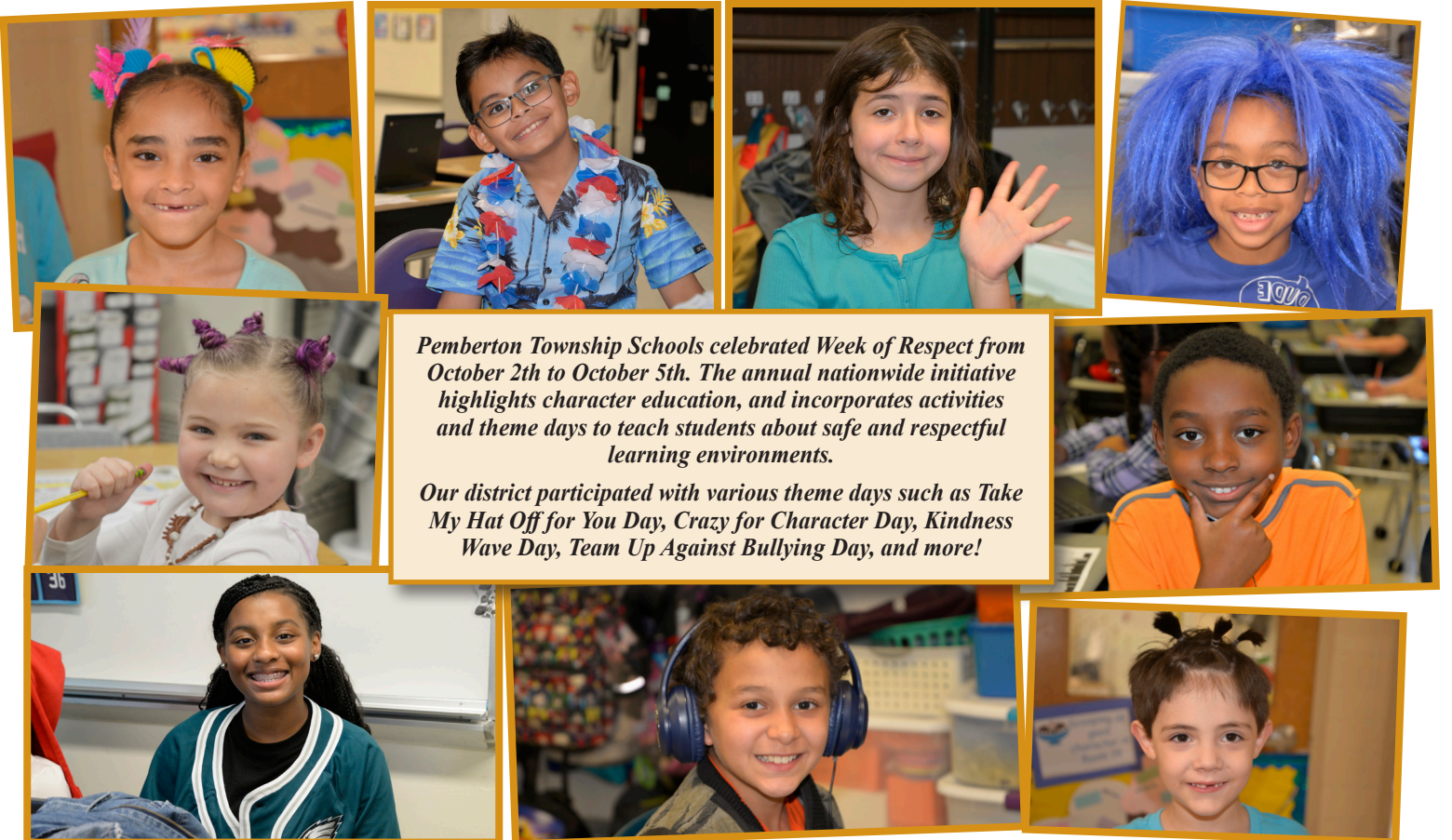


# Fort Dix and Stackhouse Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month



Fort Dix and Stackhouse recognized Hispanic Heritage Month by hosting Afinké Dance Company for two salsa and bachata dancing assemblies. Students also participated in a poster-making contest, and classrooms at both campuses displayed flags of Spanish-speaking countries outside their doors for students and staff to observe.

## 2023 WEEK OF RESPECT ACTIVITIES



*Pemberton Township Schools celebrated Week of Respect from October 2th to October 5th. The annual nationwide initiative highlights character education, and incorporates activities and theme days to teach students about safe and respectful learning environments.*

*Our district participated with various theme days such as Take My Hat Off for You Day, Crazy for Character Day, Kindness Wave Day, Team Up Against Bullying Day, and more!*





# Homecoming 2023



Pemberton Township High School hosted its annual Homecoming festivities against Cinnaminson on October 21, 2023. The Hornets honored former coach William McDowell with a moment of silence before the game, who passed away on October 9th. A Blackhawk helicopter from Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst also performed a pregame flyover and landing for spectators. Pemberton Pride!

## District Welcomes New Helen A. Fort Middle School Principal

Aaron Eyler has been appointed principal of Helen A. Fort Middle School. He replaces Tami Strege, who departed from the district in October, 2023 to serve in a new position at the New Jersey Department of Education.

He most recently served as a high school principal at Matawan Regional High School from 2018 to 2023.

Eyler was also a middle school principal in the Matawan-Aberdeen Regional School District from 2015 through 2018. During that time, the schools were awarded the "No Place for Hate" designation by the Anti-Defamation League. He also served in roles as the district's anti-bullying coordinator from 2017 to 2018 and was the school security specialist from 2021 to 2023.

In August 2012, Eyler was named the assistant principal of Piscataway High School. He oversaw all aspects of school safety and security, technology implementation, the social studies and English departments, and the Rutgers Future Scholars program.



**Aaron Eyler**

During his tenure at Piscataway, Eyler represented educational leaders on Governor Chris Christie's "New Jersey School Security Task Force" from 2013 to 2015. His efforts helped pave the way for many of the school security updates that are in place today.

The Middletown, N.J. resident has served as the President of the Matawan Regional Administrators Association, Co-President of the Monmouth County Principals and Supervisors Association, and as a Board Member for the New Jersey Principals and Supervisors Association. On May 5, 2023, he was invited to testify before the Joint Committee on the Public Schools. Eyler also served on the national level as the New Jersey representative to the National Association for Secondary School Principals from 2019 to 2023.

He received his bachelor's degree in History at Ramapo College and earned a master's degree in Education with a concentration in Educational Leadership and Supervision from Rutgers University.

# EMMONS NATIONAL SCHOOL OF CHARACTER ASSEMBLY

Howard L. Emmons Elementary School hosted a brief assembly to celebrate being named a National School of Character on October 20. Pemberton Fire Chief Craig Augustoni, Police Chief Jonathan Glass and his command staff, and Pemberton Township mayor Jack Tompkins were among those in attendance. The assembly concluded with students dancing in celebration!



*Pemberton Pride* is a publication of  
Pemberton Township Schools

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Denbo-Crichton student Diane Smith celebrated the school's Grandparents' Day celebration with her 100-year old great grandmother. Lois Brown met former First Lady Michelle Obama for her 100th birthday last November.

"This was the first Grandparents' Day she has been to in a long time," Smith said. "It makes me feel amazing. I feel so blessed to be able to spend time with her in all of her 100 years of glory."



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