

# Pemberton Pride

The Newsletter of Pemberton Township Schools

Fall, 2021

## STUDENTS COMMEMORATE THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF 9/11

Students throughout the district participated in a variety of ceremonies to commemorate the 20th anniversary of 9/11. Students sported patriotic-colored clothing and thanked local first responders for their daily work.

The day began with students at Stackhouse receiving a visit from three Pemberton Township Police officers. The officers walked down each hallway as students stood and clapped, showing gratitude for the officers' contributions.

"It was great to have our students get to see the police in the hall," Stackhouse principal Robin Blue said. "We need our students to understand that the

They are all heroes."

Seventh and eighth graders at Helen Fort Middle School were also granted a visit from Air Force Chaplain (1st Lt.) Tarvick Linder. Linder talked about the severity of the tragic event and emphasized its historical significance to the young students.

"Chaplain Linder was a dynamic speaker, and our students were enthralled by his remarks at our 9/11 commemoration," Helen Fort principal Tami Strege said. "Hearing him challenge us all to be united in the face of hatred is inspiring. A former middle school teacher himself, Chaplain Linder was impressed with the maturity our HFMS students displayed in handling this historic event."

Students and staff at Helen Fort have previously expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to reside, learn and teach relatively close to an active military base. The opportunity has proven to lead to an enhanced learning experience.

"We are so grateful for the partnership we have with our friends at JBMDL," Strege added. "To have access to the base's officers enriches the lives of all our students, not just those who are military-connected."

The day concluded with local first responders visiting Denbo-Crichton and participating in an honorary outdoor parade that circled the building three times. First responders from the Pemberton Township Police

Department, Browns Mills EMS, Browns Mills Fire Company 1, Country Lakes Voluntary Fire Company, and Capital Health EMS showcased their emergency vehicles to students and staff members.



*Students at Denbo-Crichton wave flags as local first responders provide students with an honorary parade on September 11, 2021.*

The series of events helped the district rekindle its tight-knit relationship with local first responders and military officials after a year of students learning virtually. Administrators hope to continue building on this strong connection moving forward.

"We have always included JBMDL personnel in assemblies such as our Veterans' Day observance and our annual Career Day," Strege said. "I may have already planted the seed in Chaplain Linder's mind to be the JBMDL representative at these events this school year. To hear him and meet him multiple times would build such a positive relationship for our students."



*Air Force Chaplain (1st Lt.) Tarvick Linder speaks to students at Helen A. Fort Middle School on September 11, 2021.*

police are an integral part of the Pemberton community and they work daily to help keep Pemberton safe. I hope the students were able to

appreciate the role police play when they are needed.



Pemberton Learning Community: Pursuing Excellence One Child at a Time

# STUDENTS EXCITED FOR RETURN TO SCHOOL AT FULL-CAPACITY

Students in all nine buildings returned to in-person learning at full-capacity on September 7, 2021 for the first time since March 2020.

So far, students are continuing to adjust to the pace of a normal-length, in-person school day after growing accustomed to virtual learning experiences over the last year and a



*Fort Dix third grade student Caiden Jones uses crayons and pencils to work on his assignment on the first day of school.*

half. Students say the pace is much faster, but they are thankful to finally be able to interact with their classmates and instructors to the fullest extent.

“It’s been really fun,” Newcomb sixth grader Josalyn Hurlburt said. “I’ve seen all of my friends. It’s better being here because you have all of the teachers. It’s not like at home where you would have glitches and don’t have to see everybody behind a screen.”

Students have also expressed their satisfaction with the return of in-person learning because of the schools’ ability to provide resources that were not available to students during the pandemic. For example, Busansky fifth grader LaQuan Sheffield-Washington appreciates the opportunity to regularly visit the school’s library.

“My favorite subject is reading,” Sheffield-Washington said. “They have

free books here. I can read more than I ever have and I don’t have to worry about buying new ones once I finish a book. It’s a full library. Any type of book you like, you can get if you’re here.”

In-person learning has also provided students with more transparency and has improved information interpretation as teachers are readily available to communicate with students. Virtual learning created communication barriers that are no longer hindering instruction with the return of face-to-face interaction.

“Last year things were harder to understand,” Busansky fifth grader Serenity Knable said. “We were full-remote. Our teachers couldn’t explain things that well because they could show us when we were in the classroom, but they couldn’t show us on the computer.”

“It’s better now that we’re in school, even though we have dividers and masks. We still get to see our friends now, we get to hang out with other classes, and it’s a lot easier to learn.”



*Denbo-Crichton students arrive for the first day of school on September 7, 2021.*

Students also have the opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities that could not be practiced during the heart of the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, students at Busansky were excited to reaffirm their roles as safety

patrol officers.

“I really enjoy having safety patrol,” fifth grader Tehya Murray said. “I get to make sure people are safe and we



*Emmons kindergarten student William Gerlach poses next to the school’s sign as he waits for the doors to open on the first day of school.*

also get to do fun activities, like taking pictures and going through training. I like to make sure other people are safe and get home safely without any problems.”

“I stressed a lot at home on remote (learning),” Murray added. “There are less distractions at school. It’s more calm. I think that being back at school is better than being at home. I get to see my friends instead of seeing them on a box screen.”

All in all, students throughout the district are thankful to be able to experience school with a sense of normalcy once again.

More importantly, they are excited to reignite old friendships and simply be able to be kids again.

“It’s better because you just have something to do instead of sitting there on your computer,” Hurlburt said. “Even though we all love video games and virtual stuff, it’s not really something you want to do forever. You want to see your friends, get good grades, you want to go on the playground for peep’s sake.”

# Week of Respect 2021



Students around the district celebrated Week of Respect with various activities from Monday, October 4, 2021 to Friday, October 8, 2021. The activities included visits from local first responders, fundraisers, spirit days, virtual activities and much more!

1. Fourth grade students Julien Spence and Elysia Malave look at books at the Busansky Book & Bake Sale Fundraiser that benefited the American Cancer Society.
2. Fort Dix kindergarten student Kaylee Schiano sits in a firetruck at Fort Dix's Touch-a-Truck event on October 5.
3. PECEC student Hope Gemignani poses for a photo with her father as the Pemberton Township Department of Public Works visited PECEC on October 8.

## Homecoming Under the Lights!



# PTHS STUDENTS KICKSTART NEW SCHOOL YEAR WITH CHARACTER EDUCATION EVENT

Pemberton Township High School students opened the 2021-2022 school year with the second annual PTHS Character Education/EPIG Back to School event on September 10. The acronym EPIG highlights the high school's four core values of empathy, perseverance, integrity, and gratitude. This year's exciting activities featured a dunk tank, pie a teacher in the face, the toxic meltdown perseverance challenge, and a wall of gratitude graffiti.

Students and staff alike enjoyed the time away from the classroom to reconnect back at the high school in person after the challenges of remote learning. The general atmosphere was buzzing as students took on the challenges, danced, and enjoyed the beautiful weather with one another and the staff.

"We so appreciate the dedication the staff at PTHS has to



*PTHS students jump to avoid falling in the Toxic Meltdown Perseverance Challenge.*

get to know their students better," English teacher Alissa Trossbach said. "Relationships lay the foundation for what they do every day in the classroom." Teachers weren't the only ones satisfied with the outcome. According to Trossbach, the students responded well. "Feedback from the students has driven why we continue to host this event," she said. "Students build

relationships with one another and the staff, which leads to a great time of competition and community. As we

continue to build on our character education initiative here at the high school, the team believes this is a great event to continue. Hopefully, this becomes a well-known and anticipated tradition at PTHS."

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