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News

New digs welcome students New year brings new languages, business coalition

By CLAIRE KNAPP, Staff Writer
Wednesday, August 29, 2007 11:56 AM EDT

MOUNT OLIVE TWP. – When school resumes on Thursday, Sept. 6, students entering Mount Olive High School will find the extensive construction project complete, including the last piece of the project, a 1,500 seat performing arts center.

The \$46.9 million construction project began in August 2005 and also added 21 classrooms, 10 science labs, an auxiliary gym, and expanded the common area and cafeteria.

Among other additions were installation of new air conditioning systems in classrooms and a new turf field.

Curriculum changes this year include new classes in language studies including Chinese and Italian and new advanced placement courses in science, math, art and history.

“Two years ago we surveyed students at the middle school as to what languages they would take, if offered, at the high school,” said George Johnson, assistant superintendent.



He said Chinese and Italian were overwhelmingly chosen, even beyond the traditional options of Spanish and French.”

Schools Superintendent Rosalie Lamont said there will be an emphasis on preparing all K-12 students for increasing global competition by committing to higher levels of reading and study.

“The phrase “The World is Flat” is now part of our lexicon,” said Lamonte. “Expanding global communications and modern technology interconnections now allow people from around the world to instantly access

information and communicate with each other.”

She said the result is that companies can more easily utilize workers around the world as part of their workforce.

“Students graduating from our schools will be competing for post-secondary opportunities and jobs not just with students from neighboring towns or graduates from New Jersey, but with others from around the globe,” Lamonte said. “It is, therefore, imperative that students be well prepared to face the challenge of global competition.”

New Programs

Other new initiatives include “Battle of the Books,” increasing SAT prep activities, and providing more assistance for students.

Battle of the Books is a reading incentive program whereby students challenge each other to read more books and are quizzed on what they remember from their reading.

“Such programs make reading fun while promoting literature and fostering good study skills,” Lamonte said.

Lamont said the district would also focus on providing more assistance to special education students.

The school district also will work with the Business Coalition for Education Excellence, an arm of the New Jersey State Chamber of Commerce.

“The coalition is interested in promoting curricular rigor and enhancing the skills of those students who will eventually enter the workforce,” said Lamonte.

She said the district will work with the Chamber of Commerce to create a “Learn More/Do More/Earn More” program in grades six to 12.

“The program consists of learning modules offered to students twice a year that encourage them to stay in school, take challenging courses, and act responsibly,” Lamonte said.

Lamonte said the district is in the process of installing a new parent notification system that will be in operation early in the school year. The Honeywell Instant Alert for Schools system – is a “fast and effective emergency notification and communication service,” said Lamonte.

The system allows school administrators to provide immediate information to every student’s family through their chosen mode of communication, such as home phone, cell phone, e-mail, PDA, or pager.

Sandshore Elementary School will welcome a new principal, Robert Allen. Allen previously taught elementary school and gifted and talented programs in Long Valley before becoming a vice principal there. Since 1999 he has been principal of the middle school in East Hanover. He is replacing Bonnie Fullam, who retired in June after serving four years as principal.

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Russ 2000	800.67	7.81	▲
AMEX	2267.13	18.53	▲
NYSE	9698.68	101.70	▲
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The projected calendar shows school will be closed on Sept. 13, Oct. 8, Nov. 8-9, Nov. 21-23, Dec. 24-Jan. 1, Jan. 21, Feb. 18, March 17-21, May 26. The 2007-08 school year will end on June 20. The school calendar has three snow days. If school is closed for more than three days for inclement weather, the board may reschedule school holidays or recess days as school days. Additional days can also be added to the end of the school year.

For more information about the district and what parents may need to know before school opens, visit www.mtoliveboe.org.

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