We invite you to celebrate the accomplishments of the school districts involved in the Inclusive Schools Climate Initiative

Friday, June 7, 2013
10:00a.m.-1:00p.m.

New Jersey Department of Education
The Learning Resource Center (LRC)
200 Riverview Plaza, 1st floor
Trenton, NJ 08625

Building a Safe and Supportive School Climate
With a Focus on Students with Disabilities

Sponsored by
New Jersey Department of Education,
Office of Special Education Programs
in collaboration with
The Center for Applied Psychology at Rutgers University

Funded by IDEA, Part B
The mission of ISCI is to build safe and supportive school climates with a focus on students with disabilities
Welcome

Dear Colleagues and Guests,

Thank you for joining us to celebrate the accomplishments of the schools involved in the Inclusive Schools Climate Initiative (ISCI) pilot. ISCI has been developed through our partnership with the Office of Special Education Programs at the New Jersey Department of Education, and has been focused on working with selected schools to promote school environments that best support the inclusion of students with disabilities. Currently, 18 schools have been involved in the pilot, with 9 middle schools in the first cohort and 2 middle schools, 1 intermediate school, and 6 elementary schools in the second cohort. Each participating school has been involved in the formulation of an ISCI leadership team, an inclusion-focused assessment of school climate, and the development and implementation of a School Climate Improvement Plan (SCIP) which has been designed based on feedback from the assessment results. SCIP’s are unique to each school and include goals and a range of activities that are designed to promote change or to sustain aspects of school climate that best support inclusion.

I invite you to learn more about the ways in which these pilot schools have focused on creating a positive school environment for all students and staff, with a particular focus on students with disabilities, by visiting each school’s showcase table. Please use the “Meet and Greet” materials to engage in conversation, ask questions, share ideas, and make plans to stay in touch with the new people you meet today. We would love to see these strategies and programs replicated and adapted in other schools and communities. Please also take a moment to visit the ISCI showcase poster featuring more information about the Inclusive Schools Climate Survey and some preliminary results of the project, as well as the resources and materials on display throughout the Learning Resource Center.

This program contains further details about ISCI and descriptions of each school’s showcase to serve as a reference for your visit today. Please enjoy this opportunity to learn, share, engage, and network, and once again, thank you for being here to celebrate and support the accomplishments of the ISCI pilot schools in creating more inclusive school climates.

Sincerely,

Bradford C. Lerman, Psy.D.

Director, ISCI
Center for Applied Psychology-Graduate School of Applied and Professional Psychology
Rutgers University
Participating ISCI Schools by District

Brick Township Public Schools
Brick NJ
Lake Riviera Middle School  Emma Havens Young Elementary School

Brigantine Public Schools
Brigantine NJ
Brigantine North Middle School  Brigantine Elementary School

Cinnaminson Township Public Schools
Cinnaminson NJ
Cinnaminson Middle School  Eleanor Rush Intermediate School

Collingswood Public Schools
Collingswood NJ
Collingswood Middle School  Thomas Sharp Elementary School

Fair Lawn Public Schools
Fair Lawn NJ
Memorial Middle School  Thomas Jefferson Middle School

Galloway Township Public Schools
Galloway Township NJ
Galloway Township Middle School  Reeds Road Elementary School

Mendham Township School District
Mendham Township NJ
Mendham Township Middle School  Mendham Township Elementary School

North Brunswick Township Schools
North Brunswick NJ
Linwood Middle School  Livingston Park Elementary School

Plainfield Public Schools
Plainfield NJ
Hubbard Middle School  Maxson Middle School
ISCI Consultation Process

Leadership Teams

Each school’s involvement in ISCI begins with administrative support and the development of a leadership team engaged in promoting successful inclusion practices and a positive school climate. This is achieved through collaboration between each school’s ISCI leadership team and the Rutgers ISCI consultants to assess school climate and develop a unique data driven plan. As a community of learners, leadership teams also engage in networking opportunities to share ideas, resources, strategies, and best practices with one another.

Assessment

Addressing the needs of students with disabilities in all aspects of school life can be challenging. Each school participating in ISCI engages in an assessment of their school climate through survey and interviews. This process is able to help schools identify and increase their understanding of unique school climate factors, practices, and programs that influence opportunities for students with disabilities to be included with their general education peers throughout the school day.

Surveys

ISCI surveys demonstrate high reliability and are valid measures of constructs salient to aspects of school climate and inclusion. Statistical analyses conducted on the aggregated ISCI survey data (i.e., data from all ISCI schools) support previous analyses and reflect the following constructs: interpersonal relationships, inclusion, student behaviors and attitudes, work environment, and parent-school relationship. The ISCI assessment design allows for specific comparisons to be made across the groups participating in the assessment process. The surveys have been administered online through SurveyMonkey® to students, administrators, teachers, staff, and parents/guardians at each of the eighteen ISCI schools.

Interviews

Interviews have been conducted with teachers, counselors, child study team members, school psychologists, classroom aides, administrators, parents, and other stakeholders to provide an added perspective on inclusion practices and overall school climate.
**Feedback**

The assessment results are summarized for each ISCI school and displayed in a School Climate Profile, highlighting results by surveyed groups (e.g., students, teachers, certified staff, etc.), comparing results across groups, and summarizing themes that have emerged from interview data. A feedback meeting is setup with each ISCI school leadership team where assessment results are reviewed and team members begin to react to the findings, recognize and prioritize aspects of school climate that are strengths and areas of improvement for the school, and brainstorm ways to sustain efforts that are working as well as to address priority areas of concern. Team members utilize a brainstorming tool developed through ISCI to assist with the documentation of these ideas.

**School Climate Improvement Plan (SCIP) Development and Implementation**

Utilizing the survey results and the culmination of brainstorming ideas across leadership team members, each team develops a School Climate Improvement Plan (SCIP), which is a documented, goal-driven, action plan that team members commit to implement for the school year. Goals may be long-term in nature; however documented activities are focused on a single school year. SCIP development includes the following components:

- Measurable goals related to inclusion and school climate improvement;
- An evaluation plan to determine how success for each goal will be measured;
- The identification of existing school activities, programs, and strategies related to inclusion and school climate, their perceived success, and selection of strategies to continue;
- The addition of new activities, programs, and strategies, used in combination with existing strategies, that support newly identified goals;
- A timeline to complete each activity, program, and strategy indicating target dates and persons responsible; and
- A signature of commitment to the plan by each team member

SCIP implementation begins simultaneously with completion of the plan and documentation of each completed activity is indicated on the SCIP throughout the year. The specific strategies, activities, and programs developed through each SCIP are highlighted in each ISCI school’s showcase today as well as in the showcase description section of this program.
Reassessment, Feedback, and SCIP Review

Each ISCI school engages in reassessment of school climate through the use of the ISCI School Climate Survey and the interview process. Feedback is provided using an updated School Climate Profile and includes a comparison of the previous year’s results with the current year’s results. Similar to the initial feedback meeting, a follow-up feedback meeting occurs, facilitated by an ISCI consultant, and leadership team members engage, once again, in reacting to the data, prioritizing issues, and brainstorming ways to sustain efforts that are working and address areas of need. The SCIP is then reviewed, goals are adjusted as necessary, and strategies, activities, and programs are documented in the SCIP.

School Accomplishments

ISCI schools have been successful in implementing an array of strategies, activities, and programs, and to meet the specific inclusion and school climate needs of their schools. Through the assessment and SCIP development process, they were also able to implement these strategies consistent with the culture of their schools, honoring the customs, beliefs, language, and values of their schools. Many of the activities documented in SCIPs and implemented throughout the participating schools fit into two major goal categories: 1) improving relationships and 2) increasing awareness and knowledge of disabilities. Notably, the strategies, activities, and programs that schools have chosen to implement in relation to these goals addressed students, staff, and parents, and have included initiatives such as:

- Organizing homeroom periods to be inclusive
- Increasing inclusion in elective classrooms
- Developing an inclusive Upstander’s Anti-Bullying Club
- Implementing inclusive “Mix It Up Days”
- Hosting a school-run disability symposium
- Implementing an inclusive “Reading Buddies Program”
- Developing inclusive service-learning projects
- Implementing increased levels of professional development that focus on issues such as diversity and disability
- Reviewing literature and adding novels at all age levels that focus on empathy, diversity, and disability, including writing assignments related to this literature and a parallel Parent Book Club that focuses on adult literature with similar themes
- Using literature that highlight the experiences of persons with disabilities, particularly those disabilities present in the school community

These and many more initiatives can be seen in today’s showcase and in this program.
Data Outcomes

Our first cohort of schools has now completed two administrations of the Inclusive Schools Climate Survey and we are beginning to see some positive changes in school climate, particularly on items related to perceptions of the school’s inclusive environment, disability awareness, teacher work environment, student relationships, reduced bullying and teasing involving students with disabilities, and teacher-student relationships. As examples, in the majority of Cohort 1 schools:

- Students and teachers have reported an increase in their perception that students with disabilities have friendships with other students.
- Teachers reported an increase in their perception that students with disabilities are active members of the school community.
- Teachers reported a reduction in their perception that there are bullying behaviors in the school that involve students with disabilities, either as perpetrator or target of the behavior.
- Teachers reported an increase in their perception that students try to have a positive influence on other students.
ISCI SHOWCASE DESCRIPTIONS

Brick Township Public Schools

Cohort 1: Lake Riviera Middle School ~ Cohort 2: Emma Havens Young Elementary School

Lake Riviera Middle School: Our School Narrative

Lake Riviera Middle School was one of four middle schools in the country honored as a National School of Character (NSOC) in 2011-2013. This title was bestowed upon a school community that values 21st century learning goals, high academic standards, character education, curriculum integration, service, and parent/community involvement. We strive to develop well-rounded students who demonstrate respect, responsibility, and commitment to academic excellence and community service. Additionally, Lake Riviera Middle School was New Jersey School of Character (NJSOC) 2009-2013.

The staff at Lake Riviera Middle School is committed to excellence and to the academic, emotional, and social success of our students. Our English Language Arts Program combines research-based best practices to enhance reading fluency and comprehension of fiction and nonfiction text. Consistent with the findings from the Reading Next initiative, teachers use novels and required summer reading to foster a love of literature. In mathematics, our students utilize number sense and mathematical reasoning to solve real-world problems. Our science program promotes hands-on learning through authentic science experiences in our outdoor science center and through experiments conducted in our state of the art science labs. Our social studies program integrates history, geography, economics, and civics while promoting patriotism and appreciation for the democratic process.

All our classrooms have interactive projectors, document cameras, and computers to equip students with 21st century technical skills. We also have three computer labs, an iPad lab, and three lap top carts. Lake Riviera students are afforded the opportunity to explore a variety of special subject areas including music, art, world languages, communication arts, science technology, wood shop, and consumer science.

To nurture our students’ social development, there are a plethora of extra-curricular activities available for students at Lake Riviera Middle School. Students can participate in athletic activities and clubs designed to foster pride in themselves, their school, and their community. Some of the clubs open to all students include the Technology Student Association, Science Club, Golf Club, Drama Club, Art Club, Tut-R-Us Program, Newspaper, Student Council, and
Interact Club. In addition, students may apply to become members of the LRMS National Junior Honor Society in the seventh or eighth grade.

Our school motto “Aim for Excellence” is more than an aspiration, it is our obligation. LRMS staff is dedicated to providing students with a rigorous academic program, a character education program that enhances social and emotional development, a variety of extracurricular activities, and a commitment to our community. LRMS students receive awards and honors for their academic achievement, sportsmanship, citizenship, and creativity. LRMS parents are partners in education supporting and valuing learning in their homes. Our committed staff, students, and parents have created a recipe for success in our pursuit of excellence.

Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:

Lake Riviera Middle School currently has a student population of approximately 995 students with 94 certified staff members.

Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:

- 5th to 6th Grade Transition Program
- Buddy Class
- Character Education Program

Our Showcase:

- 5th to 6th Grade Transition Program – 6th grade teachers from our school are "buddied" with a 5th grade class from one of our three sending elementary schools. The 6th grade teachers, in collaboration with their 5th grade counterparts, visit on multiple occasions with their classes to offer the 5th graders opportunity to participate in various activities.
- Buddy Class – Students from 3 of our 6th grade inclusive classrooms have become buddies with students from one of our self-contained 6th grade classrooms. Throughout the year, these students have come together to discover various scientific phenomenon, such as chromatography, through a range of experiments.
- Character Education Program – To maintain our strong character education program, we sponsor an Annual Character Education Day in which all students are integrated into a range of character-based activities which are infused in all areas of the school, e.g., physical education, specials, and academics. We also have continued the Student of the Month Breakfast in which each student, those with and without disabilities, is eligible to
be chosen by a teacher for exemplifying the selected character value. In June, our school celebrates the overall Student of the Month with a Character Education Luncheon.

**Our Positive Results:**

- Our Transition Program enables the incoming students to have a “friendly face” to relate to upon their entering our middle school in September.
- As a result of the Buddy Class, the students from the inclusive classrooms have become peer mentors. Moreover, this model has spread to other classes in our school and becoming a “buddy class” to a special needs class is becoming part of the school culture. This activity has reinforced that we are all "differently-abled".
- Our Character Education Program is a truly inclusive activity in which every student has the same opportunity to participate and demonstrate good character.

**Emma Havens Young Elementary School: Our School Narrative**

Emma Havens Young Elementary School is a progressive instructional facility that provides services for a diverse community of learners from a variety of backgrounds with varying interest, talents, and abilities. The largest elementary school in the Brick Township Public School District, Emma Havens welcomes approximately 890 students each day in one Bilingual kindergarten class and first through fifth grade classes. The comprehensive instructional program and support services, such as bilingual education, enrichment, world language, resource, basic skills instruction, speech, occupational and physical therapy services, and English as a Second Language (ESL) are available to meet the challenging needs of our young, diverse learners and to provide opportunities for individual success.

Because we embrace the philosophy of teaching to the whole child, instructional opportunities also include an appreciation for the arts and health through course offerings in instrumental and vocal music, art, media, and physical education programs. In addition, each classroom is fully equipped with technology stations to support the curriculum. Technology stations in each classroom include four network computers that have Internet access and print stations throughout the building. In addition, Mimio interactive white boards, document cameras, flip video cameras, and a variety of software programs offer students multiple ways to explore the world around them.

Our commitment to Character Education remains strong. It is our vision to help all students learn about themselves and others and each person’s responsibility to shape our global society. We are presently incorporating programs which will support us to this end so that our learning community remains safe, caring, and nurturing for everyone. Extra-curricular offerings provide
students with opportunities to extend their learning beyond the classroom and into the community. Students in fourth and fifth grades may participate in Winter or Spring Chorus, and fifth grade students may join the school band or participate in the strings ensemble. In addition, participation in Student Council and Early Act build character and commitment to the community through service learning. The school environment promotes strong values that include hard work, commitment, involvement, and character building.

Parent involvement is the cornerstone of student success. We are excited to continue the strong relationship Emma Havens Young School celebrates with the PTA. They also sponsor educational assemblies and partner with our staff to support events such as Family Reading Adventure Night and Family Math Night that support the curriculum. The PTA also sponsors evening and weekend activities designed to provide opportunities for children, parents, and staff to spend time together.

*Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:*

Emma Havens Young Elementary School has been recognized by the Ocean and Monmouth County Food Bank for our extensive donations earning several Hunger Challenge: Spirit of Giving Awards. We have also been recognized by Relay for Life, Quarters for Water program and the Brick Township Rotary Club for our fundraising efforts. We’ve also received several thousands of dollars in grant money to infuse STEM education into our curriculum.

*Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:*

After reviewing the results of the ISCI survey, our school focused on goals pertained to the acceptance of differences, continuing to praise positive character traits and actions, awareness of disabilities, and creating a smooth transition to Middle School. The following activities were used to maintain a positive school climate and continue to encourage the acceptance of visible and invisible disabilities.

- Rachel’s Challenge, a program to help us learn to accept differences
- Character Education
- Disability Awareness through Literature-based Lessons
- Transitioning from elementary school to middle school
Our Showcase:

- Rachel’s Challenge – lesson binder, chains of kindness, signed banner
- Character Education – Photo gallery of our character education assemblies, school bulletin boards, and Giraffe Heroes recipients. Also sample certificates of achievement and reward pins, and a video of a 5th grade class singing “Lean on Me” to highlight the character traits of Respect and Caring
- Disability Awareness – Books and student response on tri-fold board
- 5th to 6th Grade Transition –Chains that depict goals for success in 6th Grade

Our Positive Results:

Character education language has become “second nature” to our school culture. Being safe and successful are key components to our programming. We have witnessed our students expressing their open-mindedness and genuine interest in learning about others’ differences. We have seen a “buy in” to the Chains of Kindness from Rachel’s Challenge and the message that one kind act can not only help one person, but many others as well. Our students are excited to hear their names called during Character Education Assemblies, and equally excited when they see their parents or family members arrive to see them awarded. We are proud of the positive effect that our Character Education program with the help of Rachel’s Challenge has had on our school’s culture.

Our Shared Activity: Our Transition Program from Elementary School to Middle School

Our school has joined forces with Emma Havens Young Elementary School in creating a “Goal Chain,” which is an excellent follow-up to the elementary school, our district partner on ISCI, implementing Rachel’s Challenge. As part of our middle school’s Transition Program, all incoming 5th grade students will meet with members of the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) in small groups for an overview and tour of the middle school. After the tour, the NJHS members will ask each 5th grader to write their goal for entering middle school on a strip of oak tag. From these strips, a “Goal Chain” will be created and displayed for 6th Grade Locker Night in August.
 Brigantine Public Schools

Cohort 1: Brigantine North Middle School~ Cohort 2: Brigantine Elementary School

Brigantine North Middle School: Our School Narrative

Brigantine North Middle School is a comprehensive 21st Century middle school that serves 295 students in grades 5-8. The North School maintains rigorous academic standards that enable our students to master the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards while successfully transitioning our students into high school and beyond.

BNMS curriculum also offers an array of special subjects and extra-curricular clubs to our students. In grades 5-7, Art, Music, Instrumental Music, Industrial Technology, Computers, and Spanish are all part of our curriculum. In 7th grade, students can also choose to participate in our television broadcasting elective and produce daily/weekly news shows that are broadcast over our local area network. In 8th grade, our students are offered an elective program where they can select from a variety of exciting electives: TV Production, Web 2.0, Digital Camera, Microsoft Office, Bridge Building, Robotics, Pro Desk Top, Video Production, Advanced Piano, Advanced Music Theory, Ceramics, Multicultural Art, and Pop Art. Instrumental music, both band and string, is offered to students in grades 5-8 as an elective as well.

Our band and choir programs are open to any interested students in grades 5-8 and participation levels are excellent. We have over 30% of our total student population involved in these programs. Both the band and choir perform concerts in school as well as at community events. Our traveling choir performs in places outside of the school and District throughout the year. Two of our students were selected to sing in the All South Jersey Chorus and two others for the All South Jersey Band. Our athletic program includes several team sports. Our soccer, cross country, basketball, and volleyball teams are competitive again this year, and we offer an instructional crew program for 7th and 8th grade students. Over 100 students participate in these activities and are recognized at our annual June sports assembly.

In order to support both the instructional capabilities of our staff and the educational needs of our students as well as foster communication with parents, we continue to technologically enhance the building. New computers and Smart Boards were added in several classrooms and labs. A 30-device mobile iPad2 lab was added to our array of instructional materials as well. The school implemented OnCourse Systems as our student information system with a parent/student grade portal and teacher Web sites for increased communication. We continue
to use Connect-Ed – notifying parents by phone in minutes of emergency school closings, important meetings, programs, letters, etc. This year we also enhanced our media-rich curriculum by providing benchmark assessments through the Core K-12 math program to assist students with fine-tuning NJCCCS skills in the area of mathematics.

The North School continues to provide a safe and comfortable learning environment where the students can interact positively with the teachers and each other on a daily basis.

**Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:**

Brigantine North Middle School consists of grades 5 through 8 and has a current enrollment of 304 students. In 2011, we received the New Jersey School of Character Award and were recognized as a National School of Character. The Brigantine School District is a truly inclusive, positive environment, which promotes a great sense of community and the development of caring, productive students.

**Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:**

In an effort to increase communication and student connectedness:

- St. Baldrick’s Day
- Mix it Up Days
- Olweus Anti-Bullying Program (see Shared Activity)

**Our Showcase:**

- Mix it Up Days - Seating in our school cafeteria is usually assigned by homeroom. Once a month, the students receive a card that is color-coded. They are then directed to report to the table in the cafeteria with the corresponding color. We have found that this allows students to interact with a variety of different people and expand their friendship base.
- St. Baldrick’s Day - St. Baldrick's Day is a community and school-wide event. It is a fundraiser for those diagnosed with childhood cancer. This disease has impacted our school directly and we are very motivated to be involved in this charitable cause. There are various activities throughout the day, such as a lip synch contest, an eating contest, and a "baldmitton" competition, comprised of student/teacher partners. The culminating activity is the shaving of the heads. Students, staff members, police officers, and fire fighters raise money by getting friends and family to sponsor them to have their heads shaved. This year we raised over $10,000, which is amazing, in light of the loss and devastation that Brigantine sustained as a result of Hurricane Sandy.
Our Positive Results:

100% of our special education students are mainstreamed for part of the school day. Our students feel comfortable with their teachers and peers.

Our newly implemented Olweus anti-bullying program, a shared ISCI activity for Brigantine ES and MS North, has led to a 66% decline in the number of reported harassment, intimidation and bullying episodes and to a sense of unity in both schools.

Brigantine Elementary School: Our School Narrative

The Brigantine Elementary School provides services to a multicultural enrollment of 480 students in preschool through grade 4. In fulfilling its mission, the school continues to earn the highest state and national educational honors for model programs and student achievement. A major goal of the school’s mission and Safe School’s initiative is to infuse character education into the curriculum to help children respect themselves, others and reduce bullying and violence. The school received its 5th consecutive state award for exemplary programs in character education. The school was selected as a 2011-2013 New Jersey School of Character and a National School of Character. The school previously was selected by the Boyer Center as having the #1 Best Practice in the United States for character education.

Our Student Council works closely with community agencies to preserve our environment. In 2012 the Executive Director of the New Jersey Clean Communities Council presented the Middle and Elementary Schools’ Student Councils with a plaque for exemplary projects to keep our community clean. Our school has previously won more than a dozen awards for recycling and other innovative environmental projects. The Student Council also participated in many charitable activities including making sandwiches for Sister Jean’s Kitchen.

In preparation for the new Bullying mandate the school applied for and received funding in 2011-12 to implement the “No More Bullies/No More Victims” program. Through this program staff, students, and parents received professional training from the CAP staff to identify, prevent, and respond to bullying. The Brigantine Police Department introduced an Anti-Bullying/Safe Schools program entitled, “Brigantine Union of Cops and Schools” (B.U.C.S.) The program included classroom presentations and programs televised over our school station.

The school also prides itself on its Intergenerational Program that helps children develop kindness and respect for grandparents and senior citizens. In 2012 our students captured many awards in Atlantic County Grandparents Day Contest.
The school continues to promote the use of technology. Through the Brigantine Elementary School Television [BEST] programs, students write, direct, and air daily telecasts to every classroom in the school and produce outstanding educational programs for our student body. The BEST program has earned a New Jersey Department of Education Best Practice award for Technology.

The administration and staff thank our children, parents, and members of the community for their exceptional involvement and support in helping our school earn state and national honors.

**Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:**

The Brigantine Elementary School currently has an enrollment of 445 students in preschool through fourth grade. In 2011 we received the New Jersey School of Character Award and were recognized as a National School of Character. The Brigantine School District is a truly inclusive, positive environment, which promotes a great sense of community and the development of caring, productive students.

**Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:**

To increase trust and to further develop a sense of community:

- Strengthening Families
- Bubbles for Autism
- Olweus Anti-Bullying Program (see Shared Activity)

**Our Showcase:**

- Strengthening Families - Staff from the Brigantine School District, in conjunction with Atlantic Prevention Resources, invited families of our students to attend trainings to further develop their parenting skills. Seven evening training sessions were conducted. Childcare was provided and there were opportunities for the families to engage in activities separately and together.
- A bubble for Autism - April is Autism Awareness Month. In our district the majority of students with Autism attend programs within the district. Prior to Bubbles for Autism Day, students are encouraged to make posters to carry at the Walk with messages regarding Autism. Story books are available to teachers to share information about Autism with their students. The entire school participates. Everyone goes to the outside track. They walk around the track with their posters and blow bubbles to honor and recognize those with Autism and their families.
Our Positive Results:

100% of our special education students are mainstreamed for part of the school day. Our students feel comfortable with their teachers and peers.

Our Shared Activity: Olweus Anti-Bullying Program

The Brigantine School District has implemented the Olweus Bullying Prevention Program in kindergarten through eighth grade. We have had very positive feedback about it since its inception. We used our ISCI stipend to purchase the Olweus materials, including special T-shirts for students and staff that say, "We Stick Together, Brigantine Public Schools." Everyone wears the shirts on Olweus days, which are held every other Friday. The ISCI Team selects and distributes special anti-bullying lessons that will be the focus of class meetings. After each lesson, the teachers send the ISCI Team a follow-up report to summarize the lesson, note concerns, and make suggestions for future lessons.

Although implementation has just started, it is apparent that the sense of unity achieved on our Olweus Days is carrying over to our daily interactions. We have experienced a 66% decline in the number of reported harassment, intimidation and bullying episodes.

The students are starting to internalize the four key points of the Olweus Program, which are:

• We will not bully others.
• We will try to help students who are being bullied.
• We will try to include students who are left out.
• If we know that somebody is being bullied, we will tell an adult at school and an adult at home.
Cinnaminson Township Public Schools

Cohort 1: Cinnaminson Middle School ~ Cohort 2: Eleanor Rush Intermediate School

Cinnaminson Middle School: Our School Narrative

Cinnaminson Middle School, home of the Pirates, has a student population of 571 in grades 6, 7, and 8. The 7th and 8th grade students are assigned to a "house." The house consists of 6 content specialists, one each for language arts, reading, mathematics, science, social studies, and world language. There is one 6th grade house staffed by 8 teachers. The 6th grade house is comprised of content teachers in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. In lieu of a daily world language course, 6th graders receive a double math period. All teachers in all grades are highly qualified to meet NCLB standards. 6th, 7th, and 8th grade mathematics students may qualify for an advanced study program and place in Honors Geometry in ninth grade. Students who complete Algebra I in eighth grade are given high school credits that appear on their high school transcripts. Similarly, an advanced reading program is in place in all three grades. Project Challenge is a program designed to supplement the experiences of gifted students by exposing them to a variety of academic and creative activities. Students in need of extra help may qualify for remediation in either a smaller class or as a supplement. In addition, classified students' individual educational needs are met in self-contained, resource room, and/or in-class support settings. An after-school program, Steps to Success, offers supplemental instruction in reading, writing, and math. 6th grade students also benefit from instruction in a comprehensive cycle program. Students rotate through 8 classes in art, computer technology, family and consumer science, organizational skills, theatre, Spanish, French, and music. At the conclusion of 6th grade, students select either Spanish or French to take on a daily basis in 7th and 8th grades.

Students may also opt to participate in band, chorus, chimes, guitar ensemble, and/or strings. Instrumental, guitar, and string lessons are also available. Students may also audition for the jazz band and the select choir. A variety of available club activities include Art Club, Battle of the Books, the yearbook, Chess Club, Drama Club, Junior Cinnamentors, LEGO Club, S.H.O.C.K., S.T.O.P., Student Senate, World Cultures, and Unity Club. The Music Department, in conjunction with the Drama Club, produces a full-scale musical annually each spring. An intramural athletic program allows students to compete at a recreational level. Interscholastic competition is also available in baseball, basketball, cross-country, field hockey, lacrosse, soccer, softball, track, and wrestling.
The Middle School Home & School Association and Cinnaminson Education Foundation provide support for programs and activities through fund raising and volunteer efforts. The school also partners with the local veterans and senior citizens in the community for several activities during the year.

Cinnaminson Middle School was selected to participate in the NJ Caring Schools Inclusion Project and is identified on the NJ Department of Education website as an Aspiring School to Watch.

Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:

We are the home of the Pirates and emphasize the importance of getting our students “hooked” on good character and positive behavior. All of our activities support character education and an inclusive school climate.

Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:

- Project Wisdom
- Faculty Member of the Month
- Motivational Media
- Pirate Hooks
- Unity Day
- Service Learning

Our Showcase:

- Project Wisdom – Each day each teacher reads an inspirational thought to the class and sends the message: **You** can make today a great day; it is up to **you**!
- Faculty Member of the Month – Each month, the whole school community votes on a teacher whose behavior and attitude represent Pirate Pride and that teacher is awarded with a marble apple to put on his/her desk.
- Motivational Media – We sponsored a special Advisory Activity Day to help the younger students appreciate the “Power of One,” the power of one decision and of one person, through video and special discussion groups, while the older students used the same type of media to explore “Tomorrow,” and decisions they make for their future.
- Pirate Hooks – Students can earn a “Pirate hook” for showing good character and positive behavior; their parents also receive a special phone call from the Assistant Principal so that they can be aware of the award and share in the Pirate Pride.
• Unity Day – Once a year our whole school community celebrates our diversity with a special program that honors the range of our diversity.
• Service Learning – Our students are involve in service learning and community service; they make on-going donations to the food banks and work at the area Soup Kitchen.

Our Positive Results:

We found that our discipline referrals have gone down and there are more students participating in the Unity Club, our service learning club.

Eleanor Rush Intermediate School: Our School Narrative

Eleanor Rush Intermediate School is a community of learners where the best interest of students comes first. It is home to approximately 540 students in grades 3-5. Our goal is to produce literate, confident, and responsible students in a building that is safe and has high expectations for learning.

Teamwork between the school and the home is fostered to enable both academic and behavioral success. Our primary goal is to have each student achieve to his or her full potential. To accomplish this goal, good character of students and staff is essential.

We have a dedicated staff that truly believes all students can learn to high levels of achievement. Teachers refine their lessons to raise the level of their instruction in order to increase student achievement. Teachers incorporate a balance of whole class, small group, and individual instruction to differentiate and best meet the needs of all students. All teachers meet the requirements of a Highly Qualified Teacher.

Our curriculum is driven by the New Common Core State Standards. Students receive instruction in Language Arts Literacy, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Special Area teachers instruct in art, music, physical education, library, health, Spanish, and technology. There are a wide variety of support programs that accommodate student needs: additional support in reading and math, special education, gifted and talented, English as a Second Language, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and physical therapy.

In Language Arts Literacy, a Balanced Literacy Approach to learning is incorporated. Balanced Literacy includes interactive read aloud, shared reading, guided reading, writing, word work, and spelling. Students listen, speak, read, write, and view daily in all subject areas. To reach the standards and benchmarks at each grade level, teachers use “The Units of Study for Teaching
Writing in Grades 3-5” by Lucy Calkins and the “StoryTown” Reading Program published by Houghton Mifflin/Harcourt.

In Mathematics, instruction focuses on real-life problem solving, a balance between teacher-directed instruction and opportunities for open ended explorations, and applying technology. Students explain their mathematical thinking and solve problems in more than one way. The “Envisions” math program published by Scott Foresman/Addison Wesley enables students to experience success in the five mathematical strands: number & numerical operations, geometry & measurement, patterns & algebra, data analysis, probability & discrete math, and mathematical processes.

Eleanor Rush Intermediate School offers a number of extra-curricular clubs and activities that are held after school hours including: Student Council, instrumental and vocal music groups, intramural/athletic programs, art club, butterfly club, unity club.

Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:

Eleanor Rush Intermediate School in Cinnaminson, NJ has a total enrollment of 547 students and 70 staff members. The Rush School is known for its’ Music Makers program which has been nominated three consecutive years in Holiday Choir competitions. They won in 2010 and 2011.

Our students and staff care a lot about their community as evidenced by their local fundraising campaign called the Jane Weilenback Foundation. This foundation raises thousands of dollars each year for needy family in the Cinnaminson area. The students also raise money and awareness for Autism through a puzzle piece fundraiser. Rush School raised over $1,000 for the Alicia Rose Victorious fundraiser by selling bandanas to students and staff. The school was recently cited by the Burlington County Freeholders for their efforts to build a fence for shelter dogs.
Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:

- Memorial Garden
- Good Character Activities
- Character Attitudes of the Month
- Halloween Parade
- Unity Day
- 300 Club
- Literature with Character Education and Disability Awareness themes
- DVD with a focus on anti-bullying education
- Recognition of Good Character

Our Showcase:

The Eleanor Rush Intermediate School does many things that focus on positive school climate and creating a caring culture. Our showcase display will feature photographs from the 2012-2013 school year as well as the Good Character Tickets that the students have earned from one another during the school year. The images will be from the Memorial Garden, where students remembered the tragedy that occurred in New York on September 11, 2001. The pictures will also show the students eating lunch with the principal as a reward for showing their good character. The students celebrate their differences and diversity during Unity Day and the students who earned a perfect 300 on their NJASK tests are showcased as well.

Our Positive Results:

Discipline referrals have gone down, while Good Character tickets went up.

Our Shared Activity: Disability Awareness through Literature

Our middle school students read grade-appropriate disability-themed literature to each classroom at Eleanor Rush Intermediate School, our partner school in cohort 2 of the ISCI project. We plan to make this an annual event.
Collingswood Middle School: Our School Narrative

The core curriculum at Collingswood Middle School includes courses in math, science, social studies, health/physical education, and a double block period of language arts for grades six, seven, and eight. The sixth grade program is characterized by the inclusion of a learning lab period that is utilized as a flexible learning space and allows for technology-infused, interdisciplinary projects. Regularly administered assessments and evaluations provide information that is used diagnostically and prescriptively to prepare the students for the NJ-ASK 6, 7, and 8. Academic support is provided to the students through a content-related Basic Skills Program, READ 180, After School Homework Club, Computer Lab Drop-in, and Peer Tutoring. Literacy is integrated across the curriculum, with the students being given the opportunity to apply their knowledge through their participation and performance on cross-curricular units and assessments.

The curriculum also provides opportunities for our students to experience a wide variety of special interest courses through exploratory classes and semester and full-year electives. The following electives and exploratory courses are available to our students: German, French, Latin, Spanish, Woods and Crafts, Journalism, Orchestra, Chorus, Commercial Art, Music Appreciation, Tech Ed, Spanish Culture and Communication, Creative Writing, Basic Foods, Software Applications, Keyboarding, PowerPoint, and Introduction to Web Design.

Technology is infused throughout the curriculum. Computer labs and a state of the art Library Media Center offer students and teachers a variety of software applications to extend and enhance classroom instruction with both PC and MAC platforms. Selected departmental classrooms are equipped with Smartboards and PC tablets and wireless LCD Projectors that provide additional interactive instructional technology and digital media clips. The technology education curriculum introduces students to the multitude of career choices in the field of technology.

In addition to a rigorous and enriching curriculum, our students enjoy a myriad of extra-curricular activities that include nine athletic teams and numerous after school clubs. The students’ social growth and development are as equally important as academic achievement. The school offers an effective Peer Mediation Program, a Peer-to-Peer Transition Program, and
a responsive and communicative Counseling Department. The staff and administration are committed to establishing and maintaining a climate of respect, tolerance, and understanding.

We are proud that the middle school has a long tradition of service at the community level to school-wide action on global concerns. A positive school climate and a safe, nurturing environment characterize our school. An atmosphere of mutual respect exists between the home and the school. The PTA is extremely active and involved and significantly contributes to the life of both the school and the community. PTA sponsored activities provide the students with a wide variety of rich and meaningful social and educational experiences.

Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:

Our school was named Camden County School of Character for 2012. We have been striving to create a school environment that fosters positive relationships among students, staff, and parents. Character Education continues to be an important focus at Collingswood Middle School.

Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:

The cornerstone of our ISCI program has been the Pawsitive Partner Program. We have committed to make a school an inclusive environment where all students feel like part of our team and each team member is valued for their contribution. Through the Pawsitive Partner Program we initiate various service projects as well as offer a wide range of activities and programs so every student gets a chance to take part in something. We have also been committed to including families in our school programs as well. Programs that have been included in Pawsitive Partners are: 9/11 Day of Service, Family Fun Night, Panther of the Month, CMS Walk-a-thon, and 6th Grade Transition Camp.

Our Showcase:

Pawsitive Partner Program - a program that fosters inclusion and rewards students for demonstrating positive character traits

- Family Night
- CMS Walk-a-thon
- 9/11 Day of Service
- Panther of the Month
Our Positive Results:

We had an increase in faculty creating after school clubs and activities for students. We increased the number of students participating in school activities. We also increased the number of parents who attended our school community events.

Thomas Sharp Elementary School: Our School Narrative

The Thomas Sharp School staff is committed to providing students with a high quality education. All of the staff take this responsibility very seriously and value the trust that the parents have placed in them. We value our parents as important stakeholders in the Sharp School learning community. Through the establishment of a partnership with our families, we are able to engender and maintain two-way communication and involvement.

The students are a part of a diverse community of learners who experience a plethora of educational activities and exposures daily. All teachers meet the requirements of the No Child Left Behind legislation and are recognized as highly qualified teachers.

Continued district initiatives such as the implementation of the co-teaching model and the establishment of an academic enrichment club provide students with additional support for literacy and math skills across the curriculum.

Our Mission Statement emphasizes that individuals should be provided with opportunities and experiences that will instill skills and confidence and engender a desire for life-long learning. Instructional techniques are employed that allow for individual differences in learning style. Instructional practices such as Differentiated Instruction, Cooperative Learning, Active Engagement, and the Multiple Intelligence Approach to Instruction are a daily part of the learning process. The staff continuously and actively seeks ways to tap in to the strengths of every student.

A Technology Plan that ensures that all students will have access to technological tools guides the district. Every classroom has multiple desktop or laptop computers along with a fully functioning independent computer lab. Each fourth and fifth grade student has a district owned wireless laptop. Every classroom teacher has a projector and document camera, while our Pre-K, Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grades have electronic whiteboards in each of their classrooms. The implementation of a computer based Rosetta Stone World Language program has greatly improved the children's world language skills, which can be accessed from home. Cross-curricular activities integrate instructional technology and media across grade levels.
In addition to challenging academic programs, the students participate in activities that focus on their emotional learning. On a monthly basis, students explore character education themes that are designed to raise their awareness and instill essential life skills. Through their participation in these activities, the students are provided with practical strategies for coping in social and emotional situations.

The Thomas Sharp School climate is characterized as being safe, welcoming, and nurturing. An atmosphere of mutual respect exists between the home and the school. The Sharp School PTA is extremely active and involved and significantly contributes to the life of both the school and the community.

**Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:**

Thomas Sharp Elementary School has 156 students and 35 staff members.

**Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:**

Since the ISCI School Climate Survey indicated that our students lacked an awareness regarding the various disabilities students may have, we created a Disability Awareness Program.

**Our Showcase:**

- An assembly kicked off our disability awareness program.
- The author of the book, "Keep Your Ear on the Ball," came in and talked to all the students about her experience teaching a blind student in her classroom.
- Through the class read aloud, the teachers then read a series of books about various disabilities to their students.

**Our Positive Results:**

Our students show more empathy and understanding regarding disabilities.

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**Our Shared Activity: Elementary School Students Mentored in After-School Program by Middle School Students**

The creation of “Cub Club” was a joint effort between the Collingswood Middle School and Thomas Sharp. Students from the Middle School serve as mentors and role models to elementary students in an after-school program that meets twice a week for 6 weeks.
Fair Lawn Public Schools

Cohort 1: Memorial Middle School ~ Cohort 2: Thomas Jefferson Middle School

Memorial Middle School: Our School Narrative

Memorial Middle School is the educational home to approximately 450 students in grades 6 through 8. A dedicated and diverse team of professionals helps to ensure that all students reach their greatest potential. This is accomplished through a balance of academically rigorous curricula and high levels of support for every student. This is done with the ultimate goal of helping students to develop academically, socially, and emotionally into active and contributing citizens prepared for the challenges of the twenty-first century.

The curriculum is one which is student centered, skills based, and aligned closely with the Common Core State Standards and New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. All students participate in the core subjects of mathematics, language arts, social studies, science, and world language. Teachers in these core areas meet in teams to plan, monitor, and evaluate the programs and to develop specific strategies to help all students reach their greatest potential. In addition, each student’s academic experience is enhanced through a series of exploratory courses designed to reinforce and stimulate interest in the areas of art and music, as well as the authentic practice of mathematics.

Perhaps Memorial Middle School’s greatest asset is the high level of involvement of students in exciting and motivating co-curricular activities and clubs. Celebrate Character is our nationally recognized program which makes trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship an integral part of Memorial’s culture. These elements of character are woven into the fabric of the Memorial community through its curricula and special programs. Memorial’s Environmental Club, as well as individual science teachers, has won numerous grants to continue the beautification of our school. Memorial also sponsors intramural sports, art, world culture, newspaper, computer, gardening, and math clubs. Furthermore, instrumental music and chorus programs provide opportunities for students to showcase their musical talents. All of these, and others, help to ensure a well-rounded student experience.

Memorial is extremely fortunate to have tremendous community support and an active PTO. Our PTO members play a vital role in the success of our school by sponsoring events such as book fairs, spirit wear sales, and various other fundraisers. In the past, proceeds from these events have been used to support our clubs and purchase technology for the classrooms. A
unique partnership exists between our parents and faculty which generates a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.

Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:

Memorial Middle School has a total enrollment of approximately 450 students and 92 staff members. Our school has been recognized as a National School of Character and a State School of Character.

Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:

Staff responses to the ISCI School Climate Survey indicated the biggest need was to focus on supporting students with disabilities within their classrooms. Therefore, a main goal for our school during the ISCI pilot project was to educate and raise awareness among staff on how to best support students with disabilities within their classrooms.

Our Showcase:

We utilized our faculty meeting times to conduct a series of roundtable sessions where staff is able to interact with one another and increase their knowledge base in several areas of disability awareness. These sessions provided time for staff to engage with one another and to strengthen awareness in specific program areas.

Our Positive Results:

The roundtable sessions increased positive interaction between staff and enhanced the level of program understanding within our building. This awareness came in the form of:

- Improved understanding of the roles and responsibilities of staff within our various special needs programs
- Improved school culture/climate in our building due to the inclusion of several programs
- Improved staff comfort when interacting with students with disabilities

Thomas Jefferson Middle School: Our School Narrative

The mission of the Thomas Jefferson Middle School is to inspire and challenge all students to be life-long learners, empowered with the knowledge, skills and character to shape their futures, realize their dreams, and contribute positively to the world. Serving approximately 650
students, in grades six through eight, a dedicated staff works collaboratively to engage students in a variety of stimulating academic classes. Our comprehensive extracurricular program includes activities such as Instrumental Music Instruction, Math League, Drama Club, Intramural Sports, and Student Council. Thomas Jefferson Middle School is an active learning environment where students with the support of teachers, guidance, and child study team professionals develop socially, emotionally, and academically.

The faculty at Thomas Jefferson Middle School is committed to helping all students learn and be successful. Our district provides quality professional development opportunities for staff focusing on instructional strategies, student assessment, and technology in order to increase student success. Staff and administration prepare students for a smooth transition from middle school to high school with emphasis on career development and choice.

Another important component of our program is parent involvement. A dedicated staff in conjunction with parents and community members share in a partnership that believes that quality education is a priority. Interaction among students, staff, and the parent produces an atmosphere here at Thomas Jefferson that encourages students to grow in self-discipline and responsibility. The PTO meets regularly, publishes an informative newsletter, and assists teachers and administration with a variety of school programs. Our parent group is strong and active, contributing positively to the overall school climate.

At Thomas Jefferson the six pillars of character - respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and citizenship are the cornerstones of our total school program. It is expected that students will have mutual respect for one another and become responsible citizens. Exemplary behavior is recognized on the student’s report card with outstanding conduct recognition.

Annual school goals are developed with input from teachers, parents, and the administration reflecting the needs of students and meeting the requirements of No Child Left Behind. Academic excellence is recognized by placement on the Principal’s List or Honor Roll.

Thomas Jefferson Middle School prides itself in a long tradition of excellence. Opportunities are available for all students to excel and be ready to face the challenges of life in the 21st century. We are proud of our school, our academic program, our teachers and students. It is our school spirit, the learning climate, and level of parent and community support that makes us a true learning community joined together to provide each student with an excellent education.
**Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:**

Our school serves 685 students in grades 6 through 8 with 85 dedicated school faculty members who seek to inspire and challenge all students to be life-long learners, empowered with the knowledge, skills, and character to shape their futures, realize their dreams, and contribute positively to the world.

**Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:**

Our ISCI activities demonstrate that our school works toward:

- Expanding our students' knowledge, tolerance, and understanding of differences through experiences with students with disabilities
- Expanding our teacher's knowledge, acceptance and understanding of students with disabilities

**Our Showcase:**

- Motivational Speaker, Mark Farrell, spoke to students on, "Understanding, Accepting and Celebrating Our Differences."
- ISIC resource manual used to guide creation of classroom libraries in grade 6 with novels that focus on students with disabilities (e.g., *Wonder, My Thirteenth Winter, Blindsided,* and *Kissing Doorknobs*). These novels expose students to disabilities that are both "visible" and "invisible" and help them gain insight into the struggles their peers experience on a daily basis.
- To facilitate disability education of the staff, Dr. Nussbaum, our LDTC created a disability manual.
- The Child Study Team met with the staff during their PLC (Professional Learning Community) periods to assist teachers with strategies, understanding, and insight on how to work with students a range of disabilities.
- Fun in the Science Lab was created by the visit of our enriched science students to Memorial Middle School’s Bridges class for students with autism. Together they made slime and ate brownies in order to facilitate understanding.
- General education students read to four classes of special needs students at Milnes Elementary School. What better way to facilitate understanding of differences then by reading and sharing stories?
- We partnered with the Fair Lawn High School work-study program by welcoming two students with disabilities into our lunchroom to help them gain on-site experience as they work with our lunch provider Chartwells.
**Our Positive Results:**

Thomas Jefferson Middle School community is learning:

- Despite our many differences, there are many more similarities between us.
- The feeling of how rewarding and satisfying it is to help others.
- How to work with, have fun with, and reach out to students with disabilities.
- The knowledge necessary to facilitate a better understanding of how to teach students with disabilities.

**Our Shared Activities: Strengthening Skills through a Pen Pal Program; Bridging Friendships through Experiences**

- Memorial Middle School and Thomas Jefferson Middle School have joined together to create a Pen Pal program. Our students with autism and Down’s syndrome and the students who are second language learners at Thomas Jefferson corresponded via mail, giving the students more exposure to written language as well as to the cultural and other differences that exist between these pen pals. As the students continued to correspond, they began to learn more about their pen pal, allowing the students to be more open and personal about their questions and responses. In May, the two classes came together and the pen pals met each other face-to-face for the first time.

- The general education students at Thomas Jefferson Middle School in conjunction with the ESL (English as a Second Language) students have been building friendships and working together with special needs students across the Fair Lawn School District. Together they have performed science labs, written pen pal letters, and read to one another. What a wonderful experience it has been for the entire community.
Galloway Township Middle School: Our School Narrative

Galloway Township Middle School serves a diverse group of over 800 students in grades seven and eight. Our philosophy, Growing Toward Maturity and Success, is visible throughout the halls and classrooms each and every day.

Academic excellence is a major tenet of growing toward maturity and success. GTMS offers advanced courses in language arts literacy, advanced math, algebra, geometry and Spanish. Technology is evident throughout our building. Classrooms are equipped with overhead projectors, computers, and document cameras. Additionally, GTMS has two technology labs with instructors that focus on the latest programs and modalities for student usage. These technological advances increase student comfort with technology but also keep GTMS on the cutting edge of student learning.

Arts and Humanities is another important component of a middle school education. GTMS is proud to offer various courses in several areas of interest including engineering design, Spanish, theatre, music history, life skills, and art. As well, our band and choral programs are also an integral part of life at GTMS. Each year students perform during the Holiday and Spring Concerts. The success of these programs is validated through the many students that are recognized and celebrated as they are selected for All South Jersey Band and Chorus Honors. GTMS also offers several after school activities and interscholastic sports. Included in this area are many sports, clubs, and activities held beyond the contractual school day.

At GTMS, we have established “Respect the Paw” initiative focusing on being a respectful school community through a team approach. Other programs include “Good Citizenship” and “Student of the Month” where individual students are recognized for modeling good citizenship, strong character, unity, and friendship.

Through carefully planned professional development trainings, the teachers at our school are making the instructional adaptations necessary to enable our students to achieve the New Jersey Content Standards. These standards specifically define what students need to achieve academically. We are continually modifying our curriculum objectives and teaching practices to ensure that our pupils perform well on the state-governed NJ ASK (New Jersey Assessment of...
Skills and Knowledge) tests. We are integrating work place readiness standards and skills into our curriculums as we prepare our students for their role in the 21st Century. Our teachers work in Professional Learning Communities to work on specific goals and use data to drive instruction and enhance instruction.

On a daily basis, the GTMS administration, faculty, and staff are dedicated to making our students feel safe in the building in which they reside for much of their day. We hope and aim in making sure our students, each and every day, recognize the importance of academic excellence, the diversity of others, and the importance of being a good citizen!

Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:

Galloway Township Middle School (GTMS), in Galloway Township, Atlantic County, NJ, has a total enrollment of 830 students and 100 teachers and assistants.

Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:

Since the ISCI School Climate Survey results indicated that our students and staff needed to raise their awareness about disabilities, we have focused on raising disability awareness with a focus on respect through a range of activities.

Our Showcase:

- Respect the Paw – In this on-going school-wide initiative, students received recognition for demonstrating respect. Rewards include: school-wide incentives (football, volleyball, and basketball games of students vs. faculty); team-level incentives (pajama days, hat days); and individual incentives (Citizen of the Month luncheon and Respect the Paw goodie bags).
- Community of Caring Garden/Greenhouse - Students with multiple disabilities grew plants from seed in the stipend-sponsored school greenhouse and created a school-wide community garden.
- Walnut Street Theater - Presentations on cyberbullying and character education.
- On-going Service Learning Activities - Food drives, clothing drives, Giving Tree (helping families in need during the holidays), and fundraising efforts for Super Storm Sandy victims were some of what our students focused on.
- In-school Counseling Services - Provided for students needing enhancement in social skills. The guidance counselor presented and read about "differences" and disabilities awareness through a book titled, *Freak*. 
• Disability Awareness Workshop for Staff from EIRC-South in March 2012.
• Autism Awareness Fundraiser - Student council members along with students with disabilities made chocolate lollipops in the shape of puzzle pieces.
• Wellness Fair - The ISCI table provided handouts from local organizations that provide services specializing in a range of disabilities.

Our Positive Results:

The ISCI activities reinforced continuous respect between students as well as students and adults. There has been a decrease in HIB and discipline referrals. In addition, we have seen students with more severe disabilities participate in after school activities, such as, our school play production of the "Wizard of Oz" and the GTMS TV broadcast. One of our students, a student with autism, won the Atlantic County School Spelling Bee. He will now compete in the National Spelling Bee in Washington DC. Our Physical Education teacher has recently established the A & W's (Athletes and Wonders) for Project Unify NJ, a Special Olympics-sponsored program that pairs general education students with special education students. Our students have participated in soccer, bowling, and are now practicing golf together.

Reeds Road Elementary School: Our School Narrative

Reeds Road Elementary School is a New Jersey Department of Education "Star School of Excellence!!" Our school is “home” to approximately 600 children in grades Kindergarten through sixth. Our students believe learning is more than just obtaining information; it’s learning how to get along with one another; it’s knowing you are safe and cared for in every way; it’s learning from the example of adults who enjoy working with children; it’s learning about smiles and laughter.

Our school offers a hands-on approach to science which allows our students to experience science and not just hear about it. Each of our classrooms has technology to enhance instruction in all content areas, and our Computer Lab is outstanding!! Each of our technology-enriched classrooms contains a document camera and LCD Projector. Our Language Arts Literacy Program opens the door to the world of literature through a sequential learning process which integrates reading, language, spelling, and writing through a balanced literacy framework.

The arts are an important component to learning at our school. Our band and choral programs are well received by the community. Many of our students’ talents are recognized and celebrated as they are selected for All South Jersey Band and Chorus Honors.
Our school fosters the value of “altruism” as we engage in our project H.O.P.E. (Helping Others through Public Education). Students and staff are involved in their school community through essay contests, fire prevention poster contests, many charitable drives. In addition, we've raised thousands of dollars for a variety of charitable organizations.

Through carefully planned professional development trainings, the teachers at our school are making the instructional adaptations necessary to enable our students to achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards. We are integrating work place readiness standards and skills into our curriculums as we prepare our students for their roles in the 21st Century.

In addition to strong academic focus, we also take the time to teach and instill Character Education values. Our School emphasizes seven core values which we believe are essential to becoming a productive adult. The values of Honesty, Respect, Responsibility, Kindness, Forgiveness, Fairness, and Courage are integrated into all that we do as a school family and school community. We have our students participating in programs such as, “Big Buddies", "Goodwill Ambassadors", and "Peer Mediation", to name some examples.

Lastly, for everyone involved in the Reeds Road Elementary School, success comes from a unique setting: a home-school partnership, personal contact, team work, hands-on, experiential learning, cooperation, concern for the “whole” child, and a limitless amount of love that exists in a “family” atmosphere. "Here At Reeds Road Elementary School, It's All For One and One for All. This Is Our Philosophy. We Believe It And We Live It."

**Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:**

Our school has a total enrollment of 622 students, 103 faculty, and was recognized as a New Jersey Star School in 2001 for our Character Education programs.

**Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:**

We learned from the ISCI survey that our students and staff needed to raise their awareness about disabilities and establish an understanding of students with disabilities. We have focused on raising disability awareness with a focus on respect through a range of activities.
Our Showcase:

Our school implemented a school-wide initiative called the H.E.R.O campaign (Help Encourage Respect for Others). This campaign includes a variety of activities throughout the year to continue to promote this statement. We also have had several assemblies dealing with respect, tolerance, and character education.

We are having a week of Autism Awareness for “Light it Up Blue” Week, and will engage in activities such as, handing out Autism Awareness bracelets, sponsoring a “Dress Blue” day, implementing classroom activities with help from our teachers throughout the week, and making daily morning announcements with a statement about Autism Awareness. Teachers will be provided resource kit for Autism Awareness for them to use during the week.

We are creating a resource corner for students and staff on disability awareness in the library. We had an in-service training for our staff with the focus on disability awareness.

We have continued to implement ongoing activities related to our school’s ISCI initiative, such as, service learning activities (food drives, clothing drives, book drives, etc.), school based counseling, and anti-bullying lessons.

Our Positive Results:

Through our activities that were implemented we saw a reinforcement of continuous respect between students as well as between students and adults. This has been shown through the tremendous decrease referrals related to HIB (Harassment, Intimidation, and Bullying).

Our Shared Activity: Improving the Transition Program from Elementary School to Middle School for All Students, Including Students with Disabilities

We are working with Reeds Road Elementary School to increase participation of 6th graders who attend our Spring Open House. The hope is that this will make the transition from elementary school to middle school easier for students, especially for students with disabilities. The 6th grade students will have the opportunity to see the Middle School building, meet teachers, and see presentations about the classes and extracurricular activities that are offered. The students with disabilities will have the opportunity to meet the Child Study Team, which will include meeting their new counselor and case manager.
Mendham Township Middle School: Our School Narrative

The Mendham Township Middle School community takes great pride in providing our students with a rigorous academic program within a student-centered environment that recognizes and respects the worth and dignity of all individuals. Our motto is “Every Student Every Day!” Our instructional programs accentuate four core areas: mathematics, integrated language arts, science, and social studies. Authentic literacy skills are the foundation for all learning. Additionally, related arts instruction encompasses technology, art, music, library media services, French, Spanish, Mandarin, health, and physical education. Our programs aim to endow our students with a well-balanced educational experience necessary to meet their cognitive and affective needs. All of these instructional services, with the exception of sixth, seventh and eighth grade mathematics are provided within a heterogeneous classroom setting.

Our school offers a series of activities, programs, and competitions designed to challenge our more capable students. There are also numerous clubs and activities open to all children. They include, but are not limited to, Forensics, Global Awareness, Student Council, Chorus, Band, Orchestra, Yearbook, Science Olympiad, Book Club, Marsville, Cognetics, Quest, Gateways, Model Congress, and Newspaper. Student support services are provided through Peer Leadership, DARE, Advisory classes, academic lab, Homework Club, zero and tenth period supplemental classes, and guidance services. There is also extensive opportunity for participation in interscholastic athletic competition through girls and boys soccer, girls and boys cross country, girls and boys basketball, girls field hockey, girls and boys volleyball, softball, baseball and girls and boys lacrosse. In the 11-12 school year, our student athletes captured County Championships in 5 different sports!

Special Education programs are provided through a combination of educational supports and related services. At each grade level, resource centers are available to eligible students in Reading/Language Arts, and Mathematics. In-class support programs are also provided with content area teachers and special education teachers. The Child Study Team works with parents and students to select appropriate services to benefit each student.

We foster the concept that education is the cooperative effort of parents, students, and educators. The Home School Association and the Mendham Township Education Foundation are very active and valuable organizations that donate time, resources, and financial assistance
to our school. H.S.A. provides cultural arts experiences that complement the curriculum. In addition, it sponsors parent advisory groups at all grade levels and members volunteer their time and assistance at school functions.

Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:

Mendham Township Middle School is located in Mendham Township, New Jersey. The middle school houses 413 students in grades 5-8; 53 staff members comprise the faculty.

Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:

The Mendham Township School District found it to be of great value to continue to raise awareness of students living with disabilities. We additionally recognized the need to raise the consciousness of both the positive and negative impacts a disability has on the individual with disabilities, and the whole family dynamic.

Our Showcase:

Our showcase focuses on raising awareness of disabilities using literature. Each grade level read a different novel which focused on a story of peers with both observable and “invisible” disabilities. The novels were a major part of the year’s language arts curriculum.

The advisory classes continued to teach valuable lessons that reinforced the themes conveyed in the novels and taught in language arts. Both the language arts and advisory classes created opportunities for the students to reflect and process the characters’ successes and struggles. Examples of activities included, Language Arts lessons (essays, journals, writing prompts, comprehension lessons); group and individual counseling sessions; advisory lessons.

Our Positive Results:

We observed an improvement in both the classroom environment and less structured settings, such as the hallways, recess, and the cafeteria. While reading the selected novels, the students appeared to be fully engaged. Students were asking questions and related each book’s message to their own real life experiences. It was additionally evident the message resonated with the students for many weeks as they continually referred to the book’s various messages. Students who live with a disability and siblings of those with a disability appeared to be validated by the experiences of the novel’s characters. The advisory classes allowed students to engage in conversation enabling them to process the novel’s content and the characters’ experiences.
Mendham Township Elementary School: Our School Narrative

The Mendham Township Elementary School provides an exceptional educational experience for students in pre-kindergarten through grade four. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on the individual growth of students in a nurturing and intellectually stimulating environment supported by all faculty and staff members, parents and the community at large.

The curriculum is designed to integrate skills and conceptual understanding, while utilizing traditional and alternative assessments to measure student progress against personal learning goals and curricular outcomes. All students participate in a full range of academic offerings and unique experiences to enhance the mind as well as the body in art, music, physical education, technology, library/media science, and the world language/cultures. The Mendham Township Elementary School employs a balanced literacy language arts model. Level appropriate authentic literature is used as the base for reading, writing, and word study instruction. Extensive staff development has furthered the implementation of Teacher’s College Reader’s and Writer’s Workshop and differentiated instruction. Students leverage technology to enhance their educational experience. Each classroom is equipped with a SMARTboard, SMART document camera, 4 student computers, and teacher computer station. Students have regular access to 2 full computer labs, and 3 portable laptop classroom carts. Each student has the opportunity to study one of twenty-five languages through the Rosetta Stone Online Language Learning system, while all Grade 3 and Grade 4 students also use the Rosetta program to study Spanish.

Development of character is a vital component in a child’s early education. At M.T.E.S., we believe that each of us plays a vital role in our children becoming well-adjusted, responsible, mindful, and compassionate young people with the ultimate goal being a dignified, morally driven, and inquisitive adult. With the additional resource of a School Counselor, our educators and parents engage collectively to educate children in such a way that they develop affection for ethical behavior by using the curriculum as the medium to experience respect, compassion, responsibility and self-control.

A range of educational services is available for students with special needs through the multidisciplinary Child Study Team. Resource educators in grades K-4 collaborate with general education classroom educators to instruct and support students eligible for special education services in small groups and within their classrooms. We provide Co-Teach classrooms, to provide special educational students an appropriate inclusive curriculum.
Our Gifted and Talented Program provides grades K-2 students opportunities to have weekly enrichment activities. All Grade 3 and Grade 4 students may select from a variety of enrichment offerings such as robotics, garden club, drama, reader’s theater, digital media, and poetry.

*Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:*

Mendham Township Elementary School has a total of 375 students and 72 faculty members, which includes an integrated full-day preschool program that supports children with special needs in an inclusive setting.

*Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:*

Book discussions highlighting characters with various disabilities were used to create and reinforce empathy and shared language across and between grade levels. Using carefully chosen literature, this initiative has supported teachers with avenues to engage in important conversations about inclusion and responsible bystander behavior.

*Our Showcase:*

Specific books were selected and utilized at each grade level to reinforce awareness of people with special needs and inclusive behaviors that help to create a safe and supportive school environment. With the younger students, the counselor presented read-alouds and encouraged further discussion. In the older grades, teachers facilitated book club discussions and encouraged kids to reflect on their own behaviors and how they have and may continue to affect others.

*Our Positive Results:*

Younger students engaged in activities and class discussions that have resulted in “bucket-filling” behaviors and greater awareness of themselves and of the diverse needs of others. Selected older students participated in a “Bully Busters” program to help reinforce appropriate bystander intervention. This group became our eyes and ears on the playground and in the lunch room. Through their dialogue, educators learned how students were including others in activities within and outside of the classroom. This program also inspired other students to present extension ideas that would help students with special needs who were sitting in the lunch room by themselves to feel included.
Our Shared Activities: Sharing Language and Modeling Inclusive Behavior; “One Book, One School;” Learning about Disabilities from the Community

- Mendham Township Middle School Peer Leaders have worked along with the Mendham Township Elementary School fourth graders. The objective of this partnership is to promote shared language and model inclusive behavior during small group conversations and activities.
- In May of 2013, the peer leaders will introduce the book *Wonder* and the “one book, one school” concept.
- Community members connected with PACCS, a parent advisory committee, have shared with the school community the challenges and successes associated with living with a disability.
Linwood Middle School: Our School Narrative

Linwood Middle School is a learning community comprised of 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students who are organized into teams that are divided into two House Centers. Each team has its specific identity and is intended to serve as a personalized environment. The Core Curriculum includes courses in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. This Core is supported by Life Skills (elective) courses where students explore Music, Art, Computers, Technology, and World Languages (French, Spanish, German, and Italian). We also offer a Health program that includes components from the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (DARE) and Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) programs and a Physical Education curriculum that supports the physical development of middle level students. Our Learning Center provides enhancements to support the Core Curriculum Subject Areas for students classified for Special Education services.

Linwood Middle School offers its students a variety of co-curricular opportunities. Our students have taken on major roles in drama productions and as members of the award-winning band, choir, and orchestra performance groups. Active co-curricular groups include Yearbook, Student Council, Robotics, Student Leadership, Video Club, School Newspaper, Academic Challenge, Literacy Magazine, Book Club, along with our recently added Junior National Honor Society. Additionally, all students at LMS have the opportunity to participate on our Athletic Teams Boys and Girls Soccer, Cheerleading, Softball, Boys and Girls Lacrosse, Boys and Girls Basketball, Boys and Girls Cross Country, Gymnastics, and Wrestling. We believe that providing students the chance to participate in a variety of activities will support the intellectual, emotional, social, and physical development, further supporting the success at Linwood Middle School.

Our students are provided with opportunities both during and beyond the school day for academic enrichment. During the last period of the school day, all students have a “Read and Review” period which provides support in test taking strategies in preparation for state mandated tests, provides extra help for students in their classes, and incorporates different lessons on Character Education. Additionally, Linwood Middle School also provides an exciting after school program entitled “Project Response” which is assisted by our Municipal Alliance. This program provides additional support using computer based programs and addressing various social topics.
Our success at Linwood Middle School is the direct result of the combined efforts from the home and the school. With a dedicated staff and administration and a supportive parent community, Linwood Middle School will continue to enjoy its reputation for caring about every student as an individual who has the potential for unlimited achievement. Our goal is to provide the best educational experiences that will ensure the success of each student as they prepare to lead responsible and productive lives.

Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:

Linwood Middle School has a total enrollment of 1,374 students and 150 staff members. Our school has been recognized by the International Alliance for Invitational Education as an Inviting School (2004) and a Paula Stanley Invitational Fidelity School (2008).

Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:

- Strengthening Teacher/Student relationships through an Advisory Program
- Raising Disability Awareness with our 2nd Annual 6th Grade Disabilities Awareness Symposium
- Raising Disability Awareness through the formation of LAB (Linwood Awareness Buddies)

Our Showcase:

- Our Advisory program occurs on a monthly basis with students meeting in small groups for thirty minutes with a staff advisor. Advisory themes for this year have been: Responsible, Honest, Thankful, Kind, Rachel's Challenge Lesson, Ambitious, Self-Motivated, and Optimistic. The Advisory program strives to help students gain the necessary skills to make successful school and educational decisions and to feel better connected to our LMS community.
- The 2nd Annual 6th Grade Disabilities Awareness Symposium will include several agencies presenting information on various disabilities to our 6th grade class. These students are given the opportunity to visit with each agency during the Symposium to hear short presentations and participate in hands on activities to raise their awareness about disabilities.
- LAB (Linwood Awareness Buddies) brings students of different learning abilities together in an effort to increase academic, social, and communication skills. Activities have consisted of painting pumpkins, making cards for the Food Bank, playing board
games, and engaging in iPad and craft activities. All participating students and staff received Linwood T-Shirts with our slogan, "Abilities Link Us Together."

**Our Positive Results:**

- Advisory Program is a true inclusive effort. All staff, including teachers, administrators, CST, therapists, nurses, aides, counselors, etc., act as advisors and have enthusiastically shared their experiences running the groups as well as the products the students have created during group for display to our school community.
- 6th Grade Disabilities Awareness Symposium, which was first held in May of 2012, satisfied a true need for student exposure to types of disabilities, according to our 6th grade teachers. It provided valuable, educational information regarding how to approach and interact with people with disabilities.
- LAB (Linwood Awareness Buddies) project is expanding and our hope is to formalize it as an after-school club or service-learning class to increase our efforts to provide educational instruction/resources to the general education students, including sharing the information with parents. It will also facilitate the successful socialization of students with and without disabilities as they work on tasks together.

**Livingston Park Elementary School: Our School Narrative**

Located on the same site since 1896, Livingston Park Elementary School has proudly served the people of North Brunswick, New Jersey, for over 100 years. The Livingston Park family currently consists of 799 students enrolled in grades K-5. Our school has been named a New Jersey School of Character, has been recognized by the New Jersey Department of Education for Best Practices in the category of Citizenship/Tolerance for Middlesex County, and was further honored by the New Jersey Department of Education as a Star School. Our Family Circles program was also selected as a Promising Practice by the National Schools of Character program.

We believe in a holistic approach to education in which good character is developed through teaching, example, and practice, and a caring school community is a prerequisite to effective teaching and learning. Our efforts to create such a nurturing environment center on our award-winning peace education/prejudice reduction program, Project Harmony. As a staff that is philosophically committed to on-going peace education, we believe that the skills of peacemaking and conflict resolution can be learned and integrated with curriculum. Our Family Circles program creates opportunities for small cross-sections of students and teachers to meet throughout the year to work together on activities which create a sense of belonging. Through our fifth grade peer leadership program, students are empowered to be role models for
younger children. The Student Council gives youngsters a voice in school issues and promotes citizenship and shared responsibility for the school.

Efforts to maintain the highest quality of education are ongoing. We maintain an up-to-date computer lab and provide our teachers and students with integrative technology to enhance planning and learning outcomes. We have expanded the use of technology throughout the school building by installing SmartBoards in grades 1-5 as well as our Special Education, English Language Learning classrooms, and Library. We offer a full-day Kindergarten program to meet the needs of our growing student population.

Our teachers participate in Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) within their grade level teams. This allows for sustainable professional development geared towards the mission and goals of the school, and ultimately advancing student achievement.

Parents/guardians are valued partners in the educational process and their participation is both welcomed and encouraged. Parents/guardians support and strengthen our school programs and contribute greatly to our children’s success through Livingston Park’s PTO. Parents and guardians as well as community members volunteer their time in the classrooms. Together, we strive to continue to make Livingston Park a center of excellence for each child’s education.

**Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:**

Livingston Park School is a K-5 school with over 750 students in North Brunswick Township. It has a diverse population served in 34 classrooms.

**Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:**

From the result of the ISCI School Climate Survey, we developed goals to focus on strengthening our school culture/climate and raising awareness about “hidden” disabilities among students and staff. We realized that these areas would most likely be improved by helping students and staff strengthen their relationships and understand and empathize with students with “hidden” disabilities. In an effort to build trust and respect among students as well as between students and staff, we introduced Yoga and disability-themed literature and videos into our classrooms.
Our Showcase:

- Yoga in the classrooms at our school is a fun activity that helps raise our students’ self-efficacy and creates positive interactions between students as well as between students and staff.
- Story books and novels that focus on characters with “hidden” disabilities are wonderful vehicles for teaching disability awareness at every grade level. We use them as “read alouds”. They have helped our students learn more about autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, learning disabilities, intellectual disabilities, and Asperger’s syndrome. To support the classroom in implementing this program, our ISCI School Leadership Team created a guide of “Suggested Activities” for teachers at every grade level. This guide includes available resources, lesson ideas, supplementary videos, and suggested discussion topics.

Our Positive Results:

Yoga in the classrooms has helped reduce negative interactions that commonly take place in the classroom. It is starting to be utilized more widely and the students love the idea. Teachers have found the breathing and stretching exercises to be helpful and fun, especially during testing.

The books and lessons are helping us to raise the awareness of “hidden” disabilities and to improve the climate of acceptance and tolerance in the school. Students are very engaged in the activities and many share personal encounters or experiences with friends and family members who have disabilities. We believe that the lessons are helping to build empathy among students and they are certainly learning more about the impact disabilities have on children. Moreover, it has focused our school on discussing and developing strategies for including everyone and becoming the agents of change to accomplish this.
Our joint activity focused on increasing disabilities awareness and communicating an overall message of acceptance. Linwood staff, students receiving special education services and students involved in the LAB program conducted a disabilities awareness lesson with 5th grade students from our ISCI project partner school, Livingston Park Elementary School. The introductory activity focused on the message of acceptance by using several videos (e.g., How Katie Got A Voice, Just the Way You Are Song, My Friend with Autism). Livingston Park ES staff was presented with the book, How Katie Got A Voice, for their guidance library. The 5th grade students were broken into small groups and paired with a Linwood Middle School (LMS) staff member and students from LMS involved in special education as well as the LAB program. All 5th grade students participated in 5 activities which were set up as stations in which the following disabilities were depicted: muscular mobility disability, visual processing and learning disorders, dyslexia, blindness/visual impairment, and hearing impairment. At these stations students were able to experience hands-on activities highlighting what it would feel like to have each specific disability. For example, at the muscular mobility station, students attempted various fine motor activities, such as stacking pennies, cutting, and coloring with a sock on their hand. The purpose of the activity was to make students aware of the challenges faced by people who have a muscular mobility disability. After completing all station activities, fifth grade students received a bookmark for their participation with our slogan "Abilities Link Us Together" and had the opportunity to share with their 5th grade teachers what they learned.
Plainfield Public Schools

Cohort 1: Hubbard Middle School ~ Cohort 2: Maxson Middle School

Hubbard Middle School: Our School Narrative

Hubbard Middle School has a rich history as an educational center for over eight decades. It is currently home to an ethnically diverse student population of more than 450, and an equally robust and diverse faculty and staff of 65 members entrusted with providing sound and rigorous academic instruction while supporting the students’ social and emotional development. The student to teacher ratio is approximately 20:1 and all instructional staff members are highly qualified. Hubbard Middle School is home to students in grades 6-8.

As a ‘Priority’ school, Hubbard Middle School’s core instructional delivery (Math, Literacy, Science, and Social Studies) is guided by the state’s Common Core Standard’s ‘Model Curriculum’. Classroom teachers employ research-based multiple instructional strategies to engage our diverse student population. During the course of the academic year, our students are cycled through elective offering such as Art, Technology, Vocal & Choral Music, Band & Instrumental Music, Dance, World Language (Spanish), in addition to Physical Education and Health. In an effort to enhance the quality of student engagement and instructional delivery, each core classroom is outfitted with a Promethean board along with a minimum of 2 – 3 computers. Classroom teachers additionally have access to three computer labs within the building to support whole class technology based lesson activities, and our updated media center serves as a research and technology lab where teachers and the media specialist collaborate to work on various projects throughout the academic year. Hubbard Middle School teachers utilize the web–based programs Acellus and Measuring-Up Live, as supplemental tools to meet the differentiated learning needs of our students.

In an effort to create a personalized learning environment, HMS students will participate in a weekly Advisory session to ensure that our students are well known by at least one adult at school. The Advisory sessions are character education-based with an emphasis on relationships, coaching, and facilitation of student-driven agendas. Our school participates with Rutgers University’s ISCI (Inclusive Schools Climate Initiative) program which promotes the acknowledgement and inclusion of our special needs population in all school related functions and activities. Additionally, HMS will maintain its relationship with Rutgers’ MEET (Minorities Engineering Educational Task) organization to facilitate our annual ‘Engineering Day’ with our eight grade students. The monthly ‘Executive Sessions’ with invited professionals from various career fields will continue throughout the academic year. These sessions are designed to
expose our students to the numerous career paths available to them for consideration as they begin thinking about their future endeavors.

Our school welcomes the support, cooperation and commitment of our parents, students, faculty, administration, and the Hubbard community at large in promoting the success of our students.

**Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:**

Hubbard Middle School is a "Priority School" with an enrollment of 479 students and a staff of 60.

**Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:**

- **Advisory** – weekly character education lessons carried out in small groups run by staff the students might not otherwise know; emphasis on relationship-building between students and between students and staff
- **Anti-Bullying and Tolerance Awareness Assembly** – an anti-bullying assembly with educational skits depicting typical middle school scenes involving bullying and how to appropriately deal with it and music
- **Cyber Awareness Assembly** – an educational assembly to teach students how to avoid the dangers of the internet
- **Christmas Door Decorating Contest** – in this inclusive activity, students participated in a contest to decorate doors for the Christmas season
- **Hispanic and African American Celebrations** – celebrations of our school’s diverse community
- **Staff and Student softball game** – an opportunity to build positive student-staff relationships
- **Mother’s Day Sip** – an opportunity to invite parents to our school
- **Random Act of Kindness Activity** – Making flower gift baskets for neighbors to thank them for being patient with us throughout the school year
- **The creation of our “Peace Garden” Hubbard Scholars Planting Seeds of Peace**
Our Showcase:

Our showcase will feature a video by Hubbard student’s “Stop the Bullying”. This video was used to initiate awareness around bullying in an effort to create empathy and respect among students. We will present a Photo Gallery depicting various functions and activities for students as well as staff highlighting respect, tolerance, and acceptance.

Our Positive Results:

We have observed improved interactions between students and between students and staff. We have also seen an increase in the inclusion of our students with disabilities within all school activities and functions.

Maxson Middle School: Our School Narrative

Maxson is home to 430 students in 6th, 7th and 8th grades. There is a team of 42 full-time instructional staff, various support staff, 2 school-based service case workers, 3 security officers, and a part-time school resource officer. Our class sizes range between 20-25 students. The student/teacher ratio for students with exceptionalities remains within state and federal guidelines. Students who are English Language Learners (ELL) and students who have special needs are included into the general education classroom setting with appropriate teacher support. A typical day consists of 9 periods, six periods of instruction, an elective, lunch, and physical education/health. Our opening day bell rings at 8:12 a.m. and ends at 2:50 p.m.

Maxson Middle School is the home of the Falcons and our motto is “Soar to Success.” The Falcons abide by four overarching themes: Be Respectable, Be Responsible, Be Safe, and Aim High. The 2012-13 school year marks Maxson’s 3rd year working in collaboration with the New Jersey Positive Behavior Support in Schools (NJPBSIS) program.

Maxson also participate in the Channel One program each morning. Our student library is open each morning and three day (T, W, TH) afterschool. Maxson has three technology labs with computers in every classroom. Staff can be seen using overhead projectors, calculators, laptops with LCD projectors and Promethean boards. Students have access to Study Island and Achieve 3000, which is academic software. Students also have access to EasyTech, a technology-based interactive program designed to teach students about the use of various technology tools.

Maxson is home to the Pride Program designed for students with behavioral disabilities. This program team has the support of a full-time Behaviorist as well as the Child Study Team.
personal development class has been instituted to provide students in the Pride Program with additional coping skills.

Finally, Maxson is home to a grant-funded program entitled the 21st Century program. This program is free and open to all Maxson students.

**Additional Information from Our ISCI School Leadership Team:**

Maxson is home to 430 students grades 6 through 8. There is a team of 42 full time instructional staff, various support staff, 2 school based service workers. Students who are English Language Learners and those with special needs are included into the general education classroom setting with appropriate teacher support.

**Our Highlighted ISCI Activities:**

- Maxson Middle School Valentine’s Day Social
- Maxson Middle School Student-Staff Unity Week

**Our Showcase:**

Maxson Middle School has focused on developing several inclusive activities, such as, a Valentine’s Day Social and Student-Staff Unity Week. These events and celebrations are aimed at fostering and developing positive and constructive interpersonal bonds between students and their peers, staff and their peers, and students and staff through healthy competition and social interaction in non-academic settings.

- Our Valentine’s Day Social targeted areas of our school climate that we wanted to strengthen, such as, student-student relationships, diversity of our school community, and the inclusion of students from all subgroups (e.g., English language learners, students from special education, and students from general education).
- Our Unity Week aimed to enhance relationships between all members of our school community. All of the diverse groups which make up our school had an opportunity to participate in school-wide activities.

**Our Positive Results:**

Events such as those we are highlighting have enhanced the overall school spirit among the students and staff. Not only have positive attitudes toward school been fostered, but
excitement towards future school initiatives and events has been built. During Unity week, for example, we distributed our school T-shirts; this has helped to create a strong sense of being united as one school, not a collection of separate groups. The previous anxiety and tension that existed between students, staff members, and students and staff has been reduced.

**Our Shared Activity: Promoting the Transition from Middle School to High School: One Field Day to Unify All Students in 2 Middle Schools**

Hubbard and Maxson will unite to host a year-end Field Day. This will help students and staff make connections and foster positive student-student relationships within the larger community. Our joint goal is to provide an appropriate venue to reinforce understanding and acceptance of each other. We are giving students the opportunity to interact and socialize with their peers as they progress towards the larger school community in Plainfield High School which they will attend together.
## Inclusive Schools Climate Initiative Contacts
### ISCI Schools

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<tr>
<th>District and School</th>
<th>Principal</th>
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<td>Brick Township Public Schools</td>
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<td>District and School</td>
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<td><strong>Galloway Township Public Schools</strong>&lt;br&gt;Galloway Twp. Middle School</td>
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<td>Mr. Brian Brotschul&lt;br&gt;(732) 289-3600&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:bbrotschul@nbtschools.org">bbrotschul@nbtschools.org</a></td>
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<td><strong>North Brunswick Township Schools</strong>&lt;br&gt;Livingston Park Elementary School</td>
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<td><strong>Plainfield Public Schools</strong>&lt;br&gt;Hubbard Middle School</td>
<td>Mr. Kwame Asante&lt;br&gt;(908) 731-4320&lt;br&gt;<a href="mailto:kasante@plainfield.k12.nj.us">kasante@plainfield.k12.nj.us</a></td>
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Please note: Each ISCI school team includes many members who contributed to their school’s success in developing strategies, activities, and programs highlighted in this Showcase Celebration Program. We have provided contact information for the principal and a team contact for each school.
### ISCI Staff

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### New Jersey Department of Education  
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