

Red Clay Consolidated School District

eNews

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In This Issue:

- **District Accepting Applications for Vacant Board Seat**
- **Martin Wilson Named Board President**
- **Dad's Day Huge Success**
- **Hurricane Relief Supplies Collected at Schools**
- **September Board of Education Meeting**
- **Diversity Committee to Begin Work on Equity Plan**
- **Choice Information Night Coming Up**
- **District Realigns Spending to Provide New Services**
- **Three Employee Contracts Approved**
- **Strategic Plan on Track, Workshop Oct. 3**
- **District Passes Civility Policy**
- **Cab Enrollment Committee to Meet**
- **Wellness Challenge to Focus on Fitness**
- **Warner Opens Adult Ed Center**
- **English Language Conference**
- **Family Resource Fair Adds Literacy Focus**
- **Bike to the Bay with Red Clay**
- **Upcoming Meetings and Events**

District Accepting Applications for Vacant Board Seat

Residents of Election District E (see map [here](#)) who are interested in serving on the Red Clay Board of Education have until end of business on Oct. 6, 2017 to submit a letter of interest to Superintendent Merv Daugherty.

The recent resignation of Mike Piccio, who moved from the area, left a vacancy on the seven-member board. The appointment runs through June 30, 2018.

In addition to a resume, the letter should include answers to the following questions:

1. Why are you running for the school board seat?
2. What do you hope to accomplish on the school board?

The school board will hold a public interview session with the potential board members on Oct. 18, 2017 at 5:30 p.m., prior to the regularly scheduled school board meeting, at Cab Calloway School of the Arts, 100 N. DuPont Road. Board members are expected to discuss the candidates and appoint the new member at the meeting.

Several other key points:

- Letters of intent will be made public, on the district website, at www.redclayschools.com
- Community members can submit questions they would like to ask potential board members to the superintendent by Oct. 6, 2017 via email at superintendent@redclay.k12.de.us.

Wilson Named Board President

Longtime Board of Education Member Martin Wilson was named president of the seven-member body at the September meeting. Board Member Faith Newton was named vice-president. Reorganization of the board was necessary after last month's resignation of Former Board President Mike Piccio, who moved from the area.

Mr. Wilson, an electrician by trade and the pastor at Living Waters Worship Center, has been a member of the Red Clay school board since 1999. He has served as vice-president in the past but this is his first term as president. "My priority has always been to work for all children," he said. "I believe the board can act as a bridge between the administration, and the board, and the community and my hope is that the board works together for the good of all Red Clay children."

Dad's Day Huge Success

More than 2,000 fathers, father figures and male role models accompanied their children to Red Clay schools on September 19, 2017 for Dads Take Your Child to School Day.

Cars filled the parking lots and lined the streets throughout the district Tuesday morning as children were taken to school by male role models in their lives. Upon arriving, many were treated to a buffet breakfast and enjoyed talking with fellow dads and their children.

Dads Take Your Child to School Day is a national event that celebrates and encourages the involvement of fathers and male caregivers of all kinds, starting with a trip to school. By bringing their child to school fathers demonstrate their commitment to the success of their children in school and in life. Their involvement in schools is associated with student improvement in academics, behavior and social skills.

Chicago hosted the first Dads Day event in 2004 when fathers walked to school with their children on the first day of school. Today Dads Take Your Child to School Day is an event celebrated in states throughout the country.

Schools throughout the district organized events at their schools for attendees and students. In addition to their morning breakfast hosted by Principal Amy O'Neill, Baltz Elementary hosted their first ever Dad/Daughter dance in the evening. Highlands Elementary School welcomed fathers in the cafeteria for a special breakfast. All guests received the day's lesson plan and were able to walk their child to first period.

"Today's events allowed us to advance powerful student learning by honoring our pop-pops, role models, uncles, cousins, godparents, friends, brothers, community members, coaches, and friends! We are both humbled and honored to have so many males in one room," said Highlands Elementary Assistant Principal Equetta Jones.

Cooke Elementary Principal Linda Ennis and her staff organized a Donuts with Dad (Granola with Grandpa & Pop Tarts with Pop Pop) program. Dads and father figures spent time reading books and drawing pictures before escorting their children to the classrooms. "We provided coffee, muffins, and milk to the Dads and kids. They completed a goal activity sheet together

and the line was endless for the fun Photo op with balloons that spelled out D-A-D. We had an overwhelmingly positive turnout,” stated North Star Principal Karin Jakubowski.

So many signed up at Heritage Elementary School that the school needed to hold two breakfasts, where students and their guests painted rocks to look like colorful fish that will line an external path at the school.

Students at H.B. du Pont Middle were surprised, yet, excited to be greeted by rows of dads lining the hallway entrance to the cafeteria. After lunch, students received high-fives of encouragement as they headed back to class. Over at Mote Elementary, Principal Anthony Gray-Bolden said, “First and foremost, it was great to have Dr. Daugherty and Brian Moore come and speak to over 30 dads, brothers, uncles, grandfathers, mentors about the value of parent involvement. Many of our students and parents seemed affirmed and empowered by this special day.”

Dad’s Day was a great event that allowed fathers and male role models to participate in their child / student’s education. Also, the event allowed the dad’s to gain more knowledge of school’s educational programs and sign-up to be volunteers. “Dad’s Day was very successful and the dads’ efforts are greatly appreciated,” stated Ted Boyer, Director of District Services.

The district posted hundreds of photos from schools across the district on its Facebook page, at <https://www.facebook.com/RedClaySchoolDistrict/>

Hurricane Relief Supplies Collected at Schools



In the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey, which flooded Houston and the surrounding areas, many Red Clay community members asked what could be done to assist communities, especially schools, pick up the pieces. In response, Superintendent Merv Daugherty announced on September 11 that supplies would be collected at all schools. Also joining in the effort was the Charter School of Wilmington and the Delaware Military Academy.

Red Clay partnered with the Home Builders Association of Delaware, and owners of Two Men and a Truck have donated the use of two trucks to drive the supplies to Texas. Delaware Moving and Storage donated boxes to pack the items. A driver from Red Clay Transportation volunteered to pick up supplies collected at schools and drive them to Cooke Elementary School, where students and parents have volunteered to sort and pack the items Monday evening.

“Many have asked whether Red Clay will be coordinating any efforts to assist with hurricane relief efforts,” said Superintendent Daugherty. “I’m proud to be superintendent of a district that is so anxious to come to the aid of those in need.”

September Board of Education Meeting

- [Teacher Contract](#)
- [Secretary Contract](#)
- [Paraprofessionals Contract](#)
- [Civility Policy](#)
- [Financial Position Report](#)
- [Strategic Plan Update](#)
- [Community Financial Review Committee Report](#)
- [Superintendent’s Report](#)

Diversity Committee to Begin Work on Equity Plan

The Red Clay Diversity Committee will begin discussions of a Red Clay Equity Plan on September 26, 2017 from 4 to 5:30 p.m. in the boardroom at district offices, 1502 Spruce Avenue.

The Red Clay Board of Education unanimously approved the development of an Equity Plan in August which will examine whether the district has systems in place to fully support students of color.

The need for the policy has been discussed by School Board Member Dr. Adriana Bohm, a sociology professor who teaches classes on racial parity. Several members of the community spoke in favor of the plan prior to the vote.

Bohm said that the idea behind equity is that all students do not need the same exact resources to be successful, but that in order to fully meet students’ needs differential resource allocation is often necessary.

Bohm said an equity policy would ensure that Red Clay does not have gaps in services to historically underserved youth, which include students of color, who may also have different learning styles, learning or physical disabilities, be members of the LGBTQ community, or come from low-income families.

A draft plan from the Diversity Committee would be subject to approval by the district Board Policy Committee and the Board of Education.

Choice Information Night Coming Up

Have questions about the School Choice law, Red Clay policies, or one of our schools? Get answers at the District School Choice Information Night on October 17, 2017 at Cab Calloway School of the Arts from 6 to 8 p.m.

Red Clay staff have planned a presentation on choice, the application process, and timeline. There will also be time for questions from the audience.

After the presentation, parents will have an opportunity to speak with school representatives who will attend the event. Parents can learn more about schools they are considering at individual Choice Open Houses held at each school.

The Delaware School Choice Law allows for families to apply for a seat in any school, regardless of where they reside. This year, the open application timeframe for school choice will run from Monday, Nov. 6, 2017 to Jan. 10, 2018.

District Realigns Spending to Provide New Services

Full time school psychologists and educational diagnosticians (ED's) in all Red Clay schools are providing new emotional and mental health services to students, families and staff.

Red Clay was able to meet this tenant of the new Strategic Plan through several budgetary measures, including realigning staff, cuts to district office budgets and adult travel, and through funding dedicated to Special Services.

"After months of discussion among community members, Board of Education members, and our staff, there was agreement that a main goal for the next (insert number) years should be providing additional emotional, mental and social supports so many of our students are better able to learn," said Superintendent Merv Daugherty. "Within the framework of state education budget cuts, this meant some sacrifice, somewhere, so we are pleased to be moving forward on this priority."

New school psychologists and ED's are needed in Red Clay to support a more inclusive school district, with a diverse student population that has many needs.

This year, eight new school psychologist positions were added so that every Red Clay school will have one or more psychologists to offer a wider array of services. In the past, psychologists mainly focused on special education evaluations, but now, due to an increase in staffing, individual or small group counseling, behavioral support training for staff and preventive intervention support services for all students will be available. The psychologists can work with staff and students to help with risk assessment, provide course support and intervene in crisis situations.

School psychologists are vital to the healthy development of many of the neediest students. They help students with social or emotional issues and those who are in crisis. They are a bridge between the classroom and difficulties at home and bring comfort to students as they go through their school day. Many have followed student progress over a number of years and can make school staff aware of hardships the students have seen outside of school. In addition, school psychologists can communicate with parents and tap into a network of resources.

In addition, three new educational diagnosticians were added this year so that each Red Clay school is staffed with at least one full time diagnostician, and larger schools staffed with additional part or full time positions. Educational diagnosticians coordinate special education services, assess and diagnose the learning problems of students referred to special education and support families of special education students.

District educational diagnosticians are liaisons to schools and arrange for many specialized student needs including homebound instruction, Child Find, specialized transportation, alternative education, behavioral supports, data reporting and secondary transition.

Both school psychologists and educational diagnosticians work with school staff, students, families and community members to ensure that all students with disabilities have the access and supports they need to be actively engaged in learning. Full time specialists in all schools provide opportunities for all Red Clay students to experience success in school and in life.

Three Employee Contracts Approved

By unanimous vote, the Red Clay Board of Education approved three-year contracts for several employee groups at its September meeting, including teachers, secretaries and paraprofessionals.

Terms of the agreements call for none of the groups to receive raises in salary during 2018, with a caveat to reopen salary negotiations should state financial conditions change. In order to meet a requirement for a balanced state budget, Delaware

lawmakers made numerous cuts statewide, including a \$26 million cut to education funding. The move meant a cut of \$3 million to Red Clay schools.

“We have been working really hard with our unions to reach fair and equitable agreements in these difficult financial times,” said Superintendent Merv Daugherty. Copies of the agreements can be found above, in the September Board of Education meeting section.

Strategic Plan on Track, Oct. 3 Workshop Planned

In advance of an October 3 public workshop to review where Red Clay stands on the 2017-2022 Strategic Plan, Deputy Superintendent Hugh Broomall gave the board and public an update at the September meeting.

Dr. Broomall said the overall goal of the plan is to “include academic gains and develop well rounded citizens by preparing today for tomorrow.” The plan builds on progress made over the past several years, and streamlines the district’s goals for the future.

The plan contains new and expanded programs for students throughout the system which will help Red Clay realize its mission of providing the environment, resources and commitment necessary to ensure every student succeeds.

The plan is available online at www.redclayschools.com.

The Strategic Plan serves as a guide for district decisions, framing where to allocate resources, how to prioritize funding, where to assign personnel, and how best to train teachers and staff.

The Strategic Plan consists of three goals and three focus areas. For each goal, the plan identifies a number of strategies the district will employ to reach the goal and how Red Clay will measure success. The goals and some of the strategies include:

Goal 1: Academic Excellence. The goal is to increase student achievement through a foundation of high-quality elementary instruction that enables students to meet or exceed national performance standards.

Some of the ways Red Clay will work to reach this goal include expanded elementary school language immersion programs, enriched talented and gifted programs, expanded Pre-K opportunities and a standards-based report card.

Goal 2: Future Ready. The goal is to increase student achievement through a high-quality secondary instructional program that enables students to thrive in school and beyond.

Some of the strategies Red Clay plans to use to reach this goal include expanded Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs, increased work/study programs, additional extra-curricular activities for all students, and enhanced secondary transition services.

Goal 3: Success for All. The goal is to prepare students to reach the highest level of academic achievement by strengthening supports and interventions for academic and social/emotional growth.

Red Clay plans to meet this goal through expanded services for autistic students and those with complex needs, offering supports for students’ social and emotional growth, professional development on culturally responsive practices, and increased academic intervention with several programs.

The draft Strategic Plan also identifies three Focus Areas, over-arching strategies to reach the district’s goals. They are:

Focus Area 1: High Quality Educators. Red Clay will work to build the best teacher workforce, paraprofessional staff and team of school leaders through a series of strategies outlined in the plan.

Focus Area 2: Operational Effectiveness. The final Strategic Plan will outline ways that all district departments, from Food Services, to Student Transportation, can help meet the district’s goals.

Focus Area 3: Community Engagement. Red Clay will work to engage students and parents, employees and community partners in new ways in order to meet strategic goals.

The final Strategic Plan is also expected to contain a section on Districtwide Milestones, which will establish performance targets at five areas to measure student progress and a section on Resource Allocation, which will spell out how spending will be aligned with the goals of the plan.

District Passes Civility Policy

Red Clay school board members passed a new policy at the September board meeting which furthers a “safe, civil environment” at district schools and on social media. The policy allows for district officials to block members of the community that engage in abusive conduct toward any district employee. Similar policies requiring civil behavior on the part of staff and students already exist.

“District administration and staff are held to high expectations with regard to the respectful treatment of parents/guardians and other members of the public and expect the same consideration in return,” reads the policy statement. “This policy has been developed in addition to applicable policies governing staff and student expectations of conduct.”

The policy, which was unanimously approved by the district Policy Review Committee, calls for the removal of abusive persons from district property, or from district social media sites.

Cab Enrollment Committee to Meet

A newly formed committee which will review enrollment procedures at Cab Calloway School of the Arts will hold its first meeting on Oct. 12, 2017 from 6 to 7:30 p.m. in the boardroom at district offices, 1502 Spruce Avenue. The agenda for the meeting can be found [here](#).

Board Member Cathy Thompson introduced a resolution to form the committee in July, which stated that while Cab has taken steps to increase the number of Red Clay students attending the school, the committee would be charged with creating a concrete plan to further increase attendance of Red Clay students, especially those students who have been under-represented at the popular school.

The resolution called for the committee to present its plan to the Board of Education at the March 2018 meeting, with an aim to go into effect in the 2019 school year.

The agenda calls for an overview of the Red Clay Choice program, an overview of Cab’s program and mission and discussion on future meeting dates and topics for discussion. The meeting is open to the public and time has been allotted in the agenda for public comment.

Wellness Challenge to Focus on Fitness

The Great Red Clay Wellness Challenge returns to a school near you.. this time with a ***focus on fitness!***

On October 16 through October 20th, do not miss your opportunity to sign up for the Fitness Focused Wellness Challenge. The challenge will start on October 23rd and run for 8 weeks, concluding on December 15th, just in time for the holiday season. During the challenge, participants will be tracking minutes of physical activity completed with a goal of increasing their activity levels. As with the previous wellness challenge, weekly information and wellness tips will be sent to all registrants to keep you focused on your fitness goals, as well as promotions to keep you engaged. However this time around, it does not stop with just the employees. This challenge has an added layer, dual accountability. For this challenge, registrants will have the option to sign up as individuals or as a mentor. If signing up as a mentor, the goal will be to add more minutes of physical activity into their classrooms to benefit the students, while the students also work to hold the teacher accountable to reach their own fitness goal! The school wellness chair in each building will help with building promotions and introduction to this challenge. Employees will be responsible for reporting their minutes of activity in Schoology. A video tutorial will be sent out with step by step instructions on how to track your fitness *Schoology style*. We hope to see a healthier and happier you at the “*finish line*” on December 15th!

Warner Opens Adult Ed Center



With a big dose of community assistance, Warner Elementary School opened an adult education center on Sept. 13, 2017 in the school's spacious library.

The center - a room equipped with tables and chairs, a computer, white boards and access to iPads - will serve as a place where parents can take reading and other classes, host meetings, and receive tutoring, to name a few of the roles school leaders and community partners hope the center will play. Warner has partnered with Children & Families First, along with Literacy Delaware, to provide the services to parents.

"This center will assist Warner in actualizing its vision and mission to provide an 'academically rich and comprehensively responsive' program," said Warner Principal Chrisaun Fitzgerald, who cut the red ribbon with student Jaron Twyman to officially open its doors. "We are excited about the partnership and look forward to assisting in the growth and development of our families."

The brief ceremony was attended by Superintendent Merv Daugherty, representatives of Warner's partners, and Warner students and parents.

"I'd like to thank our partners, and the community members who helped in opening this center," said Dr. Daugherty. "If we help one parent gain more confidence, all the efforts will have been worth it."

Goals of the center include providing basic reading instruction, one-on-one tutoring, English Language classes and small group courses for parents. In addition, the Warner parent group is invited to host meetings and utilize the resources that are offered in the center.

Candace Wilson, of Children & Families First, established a partnership with Literacy Delaware last year to provide reading classes at Warner. Parents engaged in more than 50 hours of tutoring, held in a library storage room.

School leaders, looking to increase the number of parents taking classes, identified a room in the library as the perfect spot to create the center. Assisting was the US Navy, which provided the carpeting, Home Depot, (who donated and installed the carpet) and an area Eagle Scout, who collected books and built bookshelves as his community project.

School leaders are hopeful that Warner parents take advantage of the services offered in the center. At the school's recent "Meet the Teacher" night, six parents signed up for reading instruction, said Cynthia Shermeyer, executive director of Literacy Delaware, which assists adults reading at or below a fifth grade reading level and/or adults who do not speak English to significantly improve their literacy skills. The goal is to serve a small number of parents the first year and expand classes in future years. "The first response is good and we hope to continue to fulfill a need in the community," she said.

Parents can learn more about what is offered, and register for classes or tutoring by calling Literacy Delaware at (302) 658-5624. In order for Literacy Delaware to serve Warner parents quickly, they suggest you mention Warner to the organization.

Red Clay Sponsors Regional English Language Conference

The Red Clay Consolidated School District is sponsoring a regional English Learner Conference in October to empower all students and families who speak English as their second language.

Red Clay staff, families and community members are invited to attend the half day conference on Friday, October 6 at Cab Calloway School of the Arts. The conference will take place from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and is designed to provide support for families who face language challenges as well as for the Red Clay staff and community members who work with them. The English Learner Conference theme, "Success for All" addresses the need to support the different challenges English Learner students and families face including academic, social and cultural issues. Also included is a workshop addressing the rights of immigrant families. Participants will learn ways to make instruction more effective and how to empower English Learners to be engaged in the community around them.

Each participant will have the opportunity to attend two one hour workshops and listen to keynote speaker Nigel A. Caplan, PhD., an associate professor at the University of Delaware English Language Institute. Workshop themes include instructional strategies that address the domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing; effective instruction for elementary and secondary English Learners; immigrants' rights; mobility challenges of migratory students; language differences vs. disability; and peer-led discussions that share challenges and solutions.

Registration is \$25 per person with the fee being waived for Red Clay employees. To register for the conference visit the website www.rcsuccessforallconference.com. Checks should be mailed to:

Red Clay Consolidated School District
1502 Spruce Ave.
Wilmington, DE 19805
Attn: Balbina Ventura

For further details or questions about the conference contact April Anderson, program coordinator, at 552-3714 or april.anderson@redclay.k12.de.us.

Family Resource Fair Adds Literary Focus

Red Clay has partnered with the News Journal to present the Imagine Delaware Literacy Fair, sponsored by Nemours, in conjunction with the highly popular Red Clay Family Resource Fair on Saturday, Nov. 4 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at John Dickinson High School.

Plans for the Literacy Fair include guest celebrity readers and speakers who can offer parents tips on how to help their children with reading. More information on the Literacy Fair will be released shortly.

More than 100 vendors typically attend the Family Resource Fair, from schools to community agencies which offer support to children and their families. The event is free to the public and does not require registration.

Bike to the Bay with Red Clay

Bike to the Bay with Team Red Clay October 7th - Parents & Students Welcome! Red Clay is committed to providing the best environment for our students to grow, and that includes their role models (you!) being fit and challenged to grow as well. This Fall 2017, Red Clay will host another employee wellness challenge that will focus on movement and fitness. The Bike to

the Bay will be the fun, challenging culmination of the efforts to increase physical fitness. There will be a pre/post party and spirit benchmarks along the way that will make this event one not to miss!

If you participate in Bike to the Bay, you can ride as little as 20 miles and as much as 100 miles, it's up to you! Don't have a bike? The Newark Bike Project and Urban Bike Project of Wilmington have bikes for rent or purchase at discounted rates and are excited to work with Red Clay employees, parents and students (12 and up) to find bikes to train and ride Bike to the Bay with.

Volunteers are always needed! If you do not want or can't ride in Bike to the Bay but would like to be a part of Team Red Clay, you can sign up to volunteer at one of the spirit benchmark stops for Red Clay or help set up the pre/post parties. Students over the age of 12 are welcome to sign up with Team Red Clay if they have a guardian to ride with them. All parents are also welcome to ride with Team Red Clay and promote fitness in our community!

Sign up today here on our Team Page! <http://main.nationalmssociety.org/goto/RedClaySD>

Upcoming Meetings and Events

- Meadowood Pre-K & MTP Back to School Night, Sept. 25, 6:00-8:00p.m.
- A.I. High Back to School Night, Sept. 28, 6:00-8:00p.m.
- Parent Advisory Council Meeting, Oct. 2, 6:00-8:00p.m., Highlands
- **Schools Closed – In-service Day (Offices Open), Oct. 6**
- English Learner Conference, Oct. 6, 8:00a.m. - 12:00p.m., Cab Calloway
- Facilities Committee Meeting, Oct. 9, 6:00p.m., District Office Board Room
- Community Financial Review Committee Meeting, Oct. 10, 6:30p.m., Brandywine Springs Teachers' Lounge
- Cab Calloway Choice Meeting, Oct. 12, 6:00-7:30p.m., District Office Board Room

