



SCARSDALE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

'Dale Dispatch: District e-Newsletter

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From Dr. Thomas Hagerman
Superintendent of Schools



Improving Student Food Choices

Many lovers of Broadway musicals instantly recognize the opening number of *Oliver!*:

"Food, glorious food!...What wouldn't we give for...That extra bit more --
That's all that we live for...Why should we be fated to...Do nothing but...brood...On food...Magical
food...Wonderful food...Marvelous food...Fabulous food..."

Of course, Oliver and the workhouse boys aren't the only ones who understand the power and significance of this staple in our lives. From religious and national holidays, to tailgating at sporting events, to simple family gatherings, food is an integral way we satisfy our physical, social, and even emotional needs.

For our children and students, a healthy and balanced diet supports optimal growth and disease prevention. According to reports from the American Dietetic Association, it also has an educational impact, resulting in better problem-solving abilities, recall, memory, verbal fluency, and creativity.

With regard to ongoing parent and educator concerns around providing students with healthier food and beverage options while at school, I am pleased to announce that we have made significant changes to our offerings as part of our larger initiative focusing on student and staff wellness.

First, the District has partnered with Chartwell's food service (SHS, SMS, QR), to improve the way in which menus are accessed by students and parents. Those who do take the time to peruse the site will notice several changes, including the addition of organic fruits and vegetables, low sodium options, leaner meats, homemade soups, and high fiber starches, to name a few. A closer look at the menu will also reveal that, on a daily basis, students may choose from new sections including, Fruits and Vegetables, Grill, Pasta, and Wild Greens. At the same time, there has been a significant reduction in the availability of minimally-nutritious foods and beverages.

Under the leadership of our PTAs, several of our elementary schools have also taken on a new vendor, Lunch In Hand, whose mission is to, "...provide every child a delicious, balanced, nutritious hot lunch in school every day." They cater home-cooked meals to our students and staff, which often feature seasonal flavors. On a recent trip to Heathcote, lunch consisted of turkey, seasonal vegetables, and fresh fruit. There is always a substitute offering, in the event a student doesn't like the main entree, and all meals are peanut-free. The vendor also offers gluten-free and vegetarian options. Moreover, the service also includes a "lunch coach" whose job is to walk around and observe what the kids really like. If a majority of students do not like something, it comes off the menu.

I am extremely proud and supportive of the changes that we are making as a District, both in terms of overall choices and, specifically, the healthier options that are now being provided to our students. Perhaps Oliver said it best: "What wouldn't we give for...That extra bit more...." And, now we are, and I have no doubt that our students are the direct beneficiaries. It is one more step toward reaching our ever-present goal of healthy, happy, and engaged students.

With warm regards,
Dr. Thomas Hagerman



Scarsdale's Role in the Global Learning Alliance

By Lynne Shain, Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum, Assessment, and Instruction

The Global Learning Alliance (GLA) was co-founded in 2012 by the Scarsdale Public Schools, Teachers College at Columbia University, and Hwa Chong Institution (HCI) in Singapore.

Before that, in 2009, the Scarsdale Public Schools entered a partnership with a research team at Teachers College (TC) to explore what "world class" learning actually is. Prior to this endeavor, we could only speculate from our own anecdotal experience what the highest caliber student work in the world looks like, and how schools and teachers enable their students to produce it.

To investigate this question in a systematic way, our research team identified [core capacities](#) that are important for students to acquire to be prepared for the challenges of the 21st century, and developed a research framework based on these capacities. Our interest in identifying global, exemplar student work led our TC research partners to arrange site visits to international schools that are acknowledged leaders in their countries, including Hwa Chong Institution.

The [first GLA Summit](#) hosted in Singapore in 2012 by HCI, brought together representatives from those schools and associated universities to consider the information and findings

gathered by the TCt researchers, and to gauge the level of interest in continuing our association beyond that meeting.

The Summit was a great success, with much information shared by the participants, and there was indeed an outpouring of interest to support a [second GLA Summit](#), which took place in Scarsdale in 2014. At this event participants provided an update of their work in fostering students' core capacities. They also discussed developing a pilot assessment of students' ability to solve non-standard, complex, global problems in collaborative groups. The [first such problem](#) selected was "The Global Warming Challenge: Keeping global warming below 2°C." A review of the resulting global project was a highlight of the [third GLA Summit](#) in August, 2016, and is reflective of its theme, "Educating Students for a Global Tomorrow." Participants in this third summit were:

- Australia: Shenton College
- China: Tianjin Normal University
- Denmark: Oregard Gymnasium
- Finland: Helsinki normal Lyceum, University of Helsinki, and Viikki Teacher Training School
- Hong Kong: Diocesan Girls' School
- Singapore: Hwa Chong Institution, Ministry of Education, Nanyang Girls' High School, and National Institute of Education
- Sweden: St. Ilians Skola, Enkopings Kommun
- United States: Edgemont Public Schools, Scarsdale High School, Scarsdale Public Schools, and Teachers College, Columbia University

The links below provide more detailed information about the Global Learning Alliance.

[GLA Timeline 2009 - 2016](#)

[GLA Summit 2012 Global Capacities Framework](#)

[Scarsdale Presentation GLA 2012](#)

[GLA Status Report November, 2012](#)

[Why Cross Border Collaboration is More than PISA](#)

Pilot Assessment 2016

- [Research Proposal](#)
- [Coding Framework](#)

2016 Summit III [Brochure](#)

Water Testing in our Buildings

*By Stuart Matthey,
Assistant Superintendent for Business and Facilities*



Given the concerns reported by national media regarding levels of lead in drinking water, Scarsdale Schools elected to undertake District-wide water testing this past spring.

The District contracted with an outside consulting firm to test the water flowing from 309 outlets across all our buildings, including all water fountains and other likely places of water consumption. All samples collected were in accordance with Environmental Protection Agency

(EPA) testing protocols.

Of the 309 water outlets tested, there were 12 at or above the EPA action level limits of 0.015 mg/L (parts per billion). Only two of these outlets were drinking water fountains. These water outlets exceeded this limit on either the first test (water draw first thing in the morning) or after the EPA recommended 30-second flush test.

A summary of test results is as follows:

- 309 water outlets were tested, with two samples being taken from each -- a first draw, or sample, from the outlet early in the day and a second draw taken after water was run through the outlet for 30 seconds.
- 97.4% of all water test samples were below 0.015 mg/L (parts per billion) on the first draw.
- Eight water outlets exceeded this limit, but none of these locations were from drinking fountains. All of these outlets were below 0.015 mg/L (parts per billion) on the second draw. Flushing protocols were put in place immediately until water filters designed for lead removal were installed and outlets retested for compliance.
- Four additional outlets failed the second test which included one water fountain each at SMS and Fox Meadow. All four of these outlets were closed immediately and reopened only after installation of water filters designed for lead removal were installed and outlets retested for compliance.

The complete report may be accessed on the District website [here](#).

In addition, testing is now also being completed on all dual faucet bathroom fixtures in the District, per recent clarification from state agencies. We expect those results in the coming weeks.

The District is committed to providing safe drinking water to our school community. We are proud of the fact that we addressed this issue before new State laws went into effect, which now mandate this testing. As a matter of course, we will continue to monitor the health and safety of our water.

Recruitment, Vetting, Selection, and Retention

*By Drew Patrick, Assistant Superintendent
for Human Services and Leadership Development*



Since starting in July, I have lost track of the number of times I have found myself asking some version of the following question, "So, how do we do that here?" As a new member of the organization, this question has served as a vital way to access information I need to know in order to complete tasks and contribute in meaningful ways. Thus, it should have occurred to me sooner that this question is also a good one to ask periodically from the standpoint of the larger community. To what extent do all stakeholders know how we conduct the important tasks of operating a successful school district? It is in the spirit of answering that question that I decided to devote this space to sharing a bit about our hiring process for professional staff.

First, it is important to know that the Board of Education has established a set of goals that guide

the recruitment and selection of staff. These goals are outlined in their [Hiring Principles](#) policy (9000.1), and included in this policy are the following important objectives:

- To develop and implement those strategies and procedures for personnel recruitment, screening, vetting and selection which will result in employing the best available candidates; i.e., those with highest capabilities, strongest commitment to quality education, and greatest probability of effectively implementing the District's learning program;
- To provide an in-service training program for all employees which fosters improved performance and increased rates of staff retention and promotion;
- To conduct an employee appraisal program that will contribute to the continuous improvement of staff capabilities and the learning program; and
- To assign personnel as effectively as possible.

The Board of Education broadly delegates these responsibilities to the Office of the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Leadership Development, subject to the review of the Board of Education and consistent with policy. In practice, Scarsdale's recruitment, screening, vetting, and selection process includes the following steps:

- Recruitment begins with both internal and external job postings using electronic and print outlets.
- [OLAS](#), a State-wide recruitment service, is the primary vehicle for collecting applications, and is used by educators throughout the tri-state region and beyond. In addition, District staff attend educator recruitment events, notify local colleges and universities of available openings, and utilize professional and personal networks to recruit the best possible candidates. A typical opening will garner well over one hundred resumes.
- Interview committees are established, and are typically comprised of administrators, faculty, staff, parents, and students, although participation varies depending on the role and responsibilities of the position being filled.
- Resumes are screened by administrators and the interview committee, resulting in a pool of viable candidates. These candidates are invited to a first round of interviews with the committee.
- The strongest candidates that emerge from the first round are invited for longer callback interviews with the committee.
- Finalists are selected, and are invited to present a demonstration lesson, as appropriate, and follow-up conversation. If there is a viable candidate for hire at this stage, the finalist or finalists are recommended to the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources and Leadership Development, who conducts a final interview. The process begins anew in the absence of viable candidates at this, or any, stage.
- Background, reference, and social media checks are made, and credentials are reviewed and verified.
- A recommendation is made to the Superintendent, and a final recommendation is brought forward to the Board to be considered for acceptance.
- The Board of Education votes to accept or reject the recommendation of the Superintendent. If accepted, the candidate is appointed to the position with a specific start date.
- Teachers and administrators appointed to probationary positions are on a tenure track of four years (three if tenure was previously granted in another New York public school district). Individuals who successfully reach the end of the probationary period may be recommended for tenure. The Board of Education again acts to accept, or reject, the Superintendent's recommendation.

Later in the year, I will share more detailed information about the tenure process, both for



Exploring Online Publishing Tools in the Classroom

By Jerry Crisci,

Director of Instructional Technology and Innovation

Several years ago, NYU professor Jay Rosen described the changes in the consumption of information by the general public. He referred to traditional consumers as "the people formerly known as the audience," indicating the shift from individuals merely consuming information to a public that wants to interact and actively contribute to online discourse.

A few years later, Forrester Research created a model to help individuals measure their engagement with digital tools. Their model, the Social Technographics Ladder, describes how individuals use the Web. The highest level of the ladder is "creators," individuals who use blogs or publish online documents.

The District's adoption of the Teachers College Writing Program is helping our students become "creators," providing them with enhanced opportunities to express themselves using technology tools, as well as pen and paper. The use of technology provides students with opportunities to share their work with an authentic audience, beyond their teacher and classmates, making their work more meaningful and helping students understand the power of sharing their voice with others. In addition to publishing some of their work online within the Scarsdale domain, we want students to experience using technology platforms, such as blogs, to share their writing with a wider audience.

We are introducing these tools in the elementary grades, helping students to understand the appropriate use of online publishing platforms. Students will be taught how to share their thoughts in a safe and appropriate manner. The elementary computer teachers will provide appropriate instruction to all students about online publishing, as well as appropriate ways to create and safely maintain a positive "digital footprint."

Students at other grade levels have also been using tools, like Google Sites, to publish their work. We expect that these tools will increasingly be part of our instructional program throughout the District, supported by our lessons in digital citizenship, teaching students to be thoughtful members of a culture that increasingly interacts online.



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