



## Notes from the Desk of the Superintendent (continued)

We opened the month on Oct. 1 with a meeting at the State Department of Education about the state's application for federal funding from the "Race to the Top" program. This highly competitive project would bring major change to the way that schools operate in an effort to turn around chronically underperforming schools and districts declared "in need to improvement" under No Child Left Behind. Twenty school districts, including Ansonia, have been identified as partner districts in this project. There are three major pillars of improvement: urban school renewal, secondary school reform, and PreK to Grade 6 Academic Improvement. The next meeting is Nov. 13.

The Valley Health District asked the Valley schools to distribute an H1N1 vaccine survey to all of our parents, asking if they would be interested in having their child vaccinated. The forms were due on Oct. 23 and have been turned in to the health department. We have been told that clinics may be held in our schools but will be operated by the Health District.

On Oct. 2, I met with Pam Mautte of Valley Substance Abuse Action Council, who had the results of a recent "Survey of Students Needs." Students in Grades 7, 9 and 11 attending Valley public schools participated in the survey, which included questions about alcohol, drug and tobacco use.

The Interact Club from Ansonia High School, led by Guidance Counselor Amy Boccamazzo, attended a meeting with Frank Michaud of the Ansonia Rotary Club on Oct. 6. They are collaborating on an international project, "Nothing But Nets," in which money raised is used to purchase mosquito nets for African countries battling malaria.

On Oct. 7, Assistant Superintendent Diane Conway and I attended a State Department of Education information session about Connecticut's Common Core of Learning. The focus of this project is ef-

fective leadership practice and school improvement by following a systems approach in four domains: vision, teaching and learning, human relationships, and a culture for learning.

The Ansonia High School Human Relations Club has had a busy month of several activities. Mayor James Della Volpe joined me in a trip to the Valley Chamber of Commerce on Oct. 15, where a group of students were being trained to become "teacher leaders" for an elementary education program for fourth graders at Mead and Prendergast Schools. The education programs were held later in the month and were extremely well received by our students. On Oct. 21, our high school HRC students and 60 members of the Doyle Senior Center participated in the Second Intergenerational Dinner at Ansonia High School, during which students conducted conversations about diversity at their tables. We are grateful to the Community Foundation for Greater New Haven for funding these two very successful dinners, and everyone expressed interest in getting together again - perhaps at the Senior Center. On Oct. 23, our HRC officers and their advisor attended the NAACP Freedom Fund Dinner at John J. Sullivan's, accepting an award for their diversity work in the schools and community. Finally, on Oct. 28, the HRC sponsored a Power Breakfast at Ansonia High School, in which they previewed their past and future work for the business community. The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven announced a \$25,000 grant to support the HRC's work for the next two years.

On Oct. 16, I attended a meeting of the Southern Connecticut Area Superintendents Association. A presentation by Kevin Roy of Shipman and Goodman was given about the legal ramifications of H1N1. I also received information about a

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scholarship program for a senior pursuing a career as an educator and will share the information with the AHS guidance department.

During the month, Business Administrator James Gaskins and I conducted 2010-2011 budget reviews with several of our school administrators. The schools are tailoring their financial needs to their School Improvement Plans, which align with the District's Plan.

On Oct. 20, I was very pleased to participate in the first AP recognition ceremony at AHS. Five current students and 18 alumni received college credit and payments of \$100 for passing an AP test, which requires a score of 3 or higher. Several of our alumni received more than \$100 because they passed several AP tests. Our five current students at AHS who passed AP tests are Javier Arguello, Wilson Fong, Dian Kai Jiang, Annette Konopka, and Tomasz Korytkowski. This year, AHS is offering nine AP courses and nearly 140 students are enrolled.

A professional development session was held for administrators on Oct. 22 on the topic of "Effects of Efficacy on Student Achievement." The purpose of the training is connecting our goals to action through collaborative improvement and planning.

The Ansonia Rotary Club presented dictionaries to all third grade students at Prendergast and Mead Schools. Letters of thanks have been sent to the Club.

I attended the Mayor's Cabinet meeting on Oct. 24 and brought up the continuing parking issue at Ansonia Middle School. The mayor will be scheduling a meeting with the police chief and myself in order to help us rectify the situation.

The Civics Award Ceremony, sponsored by the Ansonia Rotary Club, was held on Oct. 27. Several members of our emergency services were honored: Ed Adamowski of the Ansonia Fire Department; Joseph Perrotti of the Ansonia Medical Rescue Services, and Officer Gerry Tenney and Lt. Wayne Williams of the Ansonia Police Department.

Ansonia's 2009-2010 Teacher of the Year, Fred Borne, was among those honored at the Connecticut Teacher of the Year Awards Ceremony on Oct. 29 at Central Connecticut State University. A contingent of Ansonia teachers and administrators attended this special program, which featured Anthony Mullen, the 2009 National Teacher of the Year and Connecticut's Teacher of the Year. We are proud that Fred Borne, a math teacher at AHS and advisor to the Human Relations Club, is Ansonia's Teacher of the Year.

Just a reminder that school will be in session on Wednesday, November 11, which is Veterans Day. Several events are scheduled to honor our veterans that day.

Finally, I would like to report on the upcoming dates of my Community Meetings with the Public:

\* **Thursday, Nov. 5** from 7:30-8:30 a.m. in the Superintendent's Office, 42 Grove Street.

\* **Wednesday, Dec. 16** from 6-7 p.m. at Ansonia High School—prior to the start of the Winter Concert by the AHS Music Department. Please stop in to see me!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol Merlone".

Carol Merlone, Ansonia Superintendent of Schools