



the Ansonian

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Ansonia Public Schools

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Superintendent Reviews District's Accomplishments

Now that the halfway mark in the school year has passed, Ansonia's new Superintendent of Schools has compiled a list of accomplishments, as well as plans for the coming months.

Carol Merlone, who took office on Aug. 1, said her greatest challenge during the past six months has not been getting to know the teachers, parents, and students, but rather, tackling budget challenges. She has met with the mayor and other city officials over the past several months to work through the present fiscal year, as well as prepare for next year.

"We will still move ahead," she said. "We have a dedicated group of professionals and concerned parents, who all share the same mission: providing the best education for Ansonia's children, given our resources." She points to several important initiatives that are underway:

A committee of educators and community members worked for two months to develop a District Improvement Plan, which was presented to the Board of Education and city officials on Jan. 10th. The plan involves numerous steps: assessing needs based on test scores and suspension rates; setting priorities and goals; developing actions and strategies; setting milestones, benchmarks and evaluation; and planning Staff Development to support the plan.

A new Human Relations Club has been established at Ansonia High School with the goal of reducing prejudice and discrimination and increasing cultural, religious, racial, and ethnic awareness for the school and community. This group, which involves 50 students, has representa-



Photo by Eileen Krugel

Carol Merlone, Ansonia Superintendent

tion on the Mayor's Task Force on Race and Ethnicity and will be hosting a Community Prejudice Reduction Conference. Please mark your calendars for this free and promising evening event: Wednesday, May 21, starting at 6 p.m. at Ansonia High School.

Our Ansonia High School football team continues to exhibit excellence, winning the state championship for a second consecutive year and being named the best high school football team in the state. We're proud that many senior members will be attending college, some prestigious schools, and we know

they will continue to excel.

During the past two months, we've had the opportunity to use a new parent-communication system called "Connect-Ed." It is used to call the homes of every student when school is cancelled, delayed, or students are dismissed early from school. Ansonia High is using it for daily absence calls, and the middle school will soon be using the system as well. Just a reminder: All calls except for the attendance calls originate from the Central Office, 736-5095, so if you miss the call and your caller ID shows this number, it may be one of the automated calls to better inform parents.

Mrs. Merlone will host three more "community meetings" in the Central Office, 42 Grove Street: Saturday, March 8 from 10-11 a.m.; Tuesday, April 8 from 6:30-7:30 p.m.; and Wednesday, May 7 from 7-8 a.m. Feel free to call Mrs. Merlone at 736-5095 or e-mail her at: cmerlone@ansoniam.org.

Changes in School Calendar for 2008-09

The 2008-09 school calendar approved by the Ansonia Board of Education includes the following two major changes:

- The first day of school on Wednesday, August 27, 2008 will be an early dismissal day instead of a full day of school.
- There will not be any school classes during Thanksgiving week in 2008. Instead, our teachers will be doing their Professional Development training that week. In the past, we have had to close school for a day in October and a day in March, as well as several early dismissal days throughout the year, to provide time for Professional Development. Therefore, for parents needing to make childcare arrangements, there will not be any school the week of Nov. 24, 2008.

The entire 2008-09 calendar is available on the district website at www.ansoniam.org under the Academic Calendar link. Copies can also be obtained in the Central Office.

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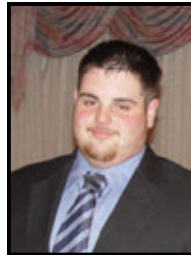
Photo by Eileen K. Ehnman

Ansonia Superintendent of Schools Carol Merlone poses with three of the students who received the Award of Excellence: (from left) Allison Phipps, Shannon O'Brien and Rose Scalzi. Ryan Benfield's photo appears below.

Kudos to Ansonia Students and Mr. Zuraw

Ansonia Public Schools' students have attained recognition for contributions they have made to their school and community. Join us as we show our gratitude:

On Dec. 6, 2007, Carol Merlone presented the annual Superintendent's Award of Excellence to Allison Phipps and Ryan Benfield of Ansonia High; and Rose Scalzi and Shannon O'Brien of Ansonia Middle. They were selected for their community service and service to others; academic prowess relative to ability, and leadership service to the school community.



Hatice Bolat, a fifth grader at Mead, has been named the New Haven County winner in the State's Fire Prevention Poster Contest. Hatice is Ansonia's first regional winner, and she is now in the running for the overall state prize. Other winners in the Ansonia contest included Alexandra Londono, Mike Belardinelli, Sanjida Shamim, and Caitlin Lonergan.

Several students were honored at the 9th Annual Celebration of the Arts, held by the Connecticut Association of Schools, at the Aquaturf Club on Feb. 4, 2008. They are: Julia Swiatek and Gary Reeves of Prendergast School; and Hatice Bolat and

Jordan Maida of Mead School. The students were selected based on outstanding citizenship, cooperative skills, and artistic ability in performing or visual arts.

On Jan. 10, 2008, Eileen Lawlor, life skills teacher at Prendergast, presented 85 children with Student of the Month awards for outstanding citizenship. The evening awards assembly was attended by more than 400 teachers, parents and relatives.

Three senior members of the AHS football team were selected for All-State honors and were guests at a banquet on Jan. 20. They are: Alex Thomas, Erik Kuraczea, and Michael Flynn. Alex also received the Lou DeFilippo Award. The entire football team will be honored at a banquet on March 28 at John J. Sullivan's.

Two brothers, Justin and Vincent Thompson, attained perfect attendance for the first marking period of the year in the alternative high school program. Vincent continued his perfect record through the second marking period as well.

Former Superintendent of Schools Robert E. Zuraw was honored in a special ceremony at the Central Office on Dec. 18. Mr. Zuraw was Superintendent of Schools from 1977-1991, and the building now carries his name as thanks for a lifetime of service to the education of Ansonia youth.