

March 19, 2013

What is the usage time of the Township versus the Board of Education and how much does each side contribute?

- The Municipality of PTH uses approximately 18.5% percentage of the programming and contributes approximately 20% or \$25,000 annually to fund VOTG
- The Board of Education uses 85% of the programming and contributes approximately 80% annually to the funding of VOTG

Have we looked in to bringing your own devices to school?

- The district is researching the pros and cons of implementing a bring your own technology to school program.

When will the path from PHS to Jagged Rock be completed?

- We anticipate that the path will be completely rebuilt by June 1, 2013.

What are the total costs of Attorney fees for the Seitz case?

- Weiner Lesniak, our Board Attorney, reports that they have billed the district for \$38,000 to date for the breach of contract lawsuit. The case is ongoing and it is expected that the case will be appealed to the appellant court
- To date we have paid \$12,314 in deductibles to Gold, Albanese, and Barletti.

Please update the list for Routine Maintenance of Athletic fields.

1. Aeration – Weekend of March 16th and 17th
Status – Delayed, currently scheduled for PHS and CMS April 17 & BMS & PHHS 19th. **COMPLETED**
2. Topsoil application – Topsoil is applied when inspections of the fields by the athletic directors, coaches, and/or maintenance staff find holes, ruts, etc. that creates a poor playing surface. It is also applied when needed for seeding bare spots.
Status – Topsoil ordered, scheduled for delivery April 15.
3. Seeding – Weekend of March 16th and 17th
Status – Delayed, currently scheduled for April 17 & 18th. **COMPLETED**
4. Fertilization – Weekend of March 16th and 17th
Status – Delayed, currently scheduled for April 17 & 18th. **COMPLETED**
5. Pesticide/Herbicide application – Weekend of May 25th and 26th
Status – Delayed, have Tick Treatment quotes, need PO.
6. Irrigation - The Township installs the water meters for the system in March and checks the system. Repairs are done as needed. Watering is done on an odd/even day basis. Sensors turn off the water during rain. Water schedules are adjustments as needed based on weather conditions.
Status – No need for irrigation to date. Sprinkler system ready. Rate - 1” per week.
7. Grass cutting – Begins in March on a weekly or as needed basis
Status – Very little need for cutting to date. Cutting will be completed as needed.

March 5, 2013

Can we get the water/sewer bill reduced from the Township?

- No, not at this time.

Can the Township give us additional SROs?

- No, not at this time.

2-26-13

How does the decline in Township ratables affect the school district budget?

- When the Township experiences a decline in ratables, it drives up the tax rate for all property owners thereby increasing the property taxes on all property owners including homeowners. Since the majority of property taxes go to schools, the decline in ratables creates the impression that the school district is increasing spending when in reality; the district is simply collecting the amount of taxes defined in the operating budget.

How do you get a savings from Health Insurance?

- The district does not receive a final cost for next year's health insurance until late May or early June. As a result, the amount contained in the budget is a projection based on claims files or usage. As we move through the school year and actual usage is determined, the projections become more accurate. Additionally, during the spring of each year, our broker works with multiple vendors/providers to negotiate the lowest cost to the district. Frequently these negotiations result in the district using a different provider/vendor each year as a means to reduce our health insurance costs. This year, due to low claims or usage, the projected insurance costs were reduced by \$200,000.

How much was the payout as part of the retro-pay for the PTHEA Settlement Agreement?

- **The total retro-pay for the teachers was \$1,387,227.19 plus the FICA payment of \$907.84. The percentages were as follows:**
 - 11-12 - Freeze
 - 12-13 - 3.0%
 - 13-14 - 2.5%
 - 14-15 - 2.5%

In the 12-13 Budget how much was allocated for PTHEA raises?

- 1.9%

1-24-13

- Are there new Board of Education committee assignments?
Yes, they were approved on 1-24-13 and can be found on the website http://www.pthsd.k12.nj.us/Board_of_Education.html
- I would like to please see a detailed schedule for the following items starting, I would hope, in about 8 weeks relative to the football field at PHHS. As a member of the PHHS Football Parent Association, I would like to stay on top of this with you in order to make the best out of a field and facility in dire need of upgrade and care.
 - 1) Aeration – Weekend of March 16th and 17th
 - 2) Topsoil application – Topsoil is applied when inspections of the fields by the athletic directors, coaches, and/or maintenance staff find holes, ruts, etc. that create an unsafe playing surface. It is also applied when needed for seeding bare spots.
 - 3) Seeding – Weekend of March 16th and 17th
 - 4) Fertilization – Weekend of March 16th and 17th
 - 5) Pesticide/Herbicide application – Weekend of May 25th and 26th
 - 6) Irrigation - The Township installs the water meters for the system in March and checks the system. Repairs are done as needed. Watering is done on an odd/even day basis. Sensors turn off the water during rain. Water schedules are adjustments as needed based on weather conditions.
 - 7) Grass cutting – Begins in March on a weekly or as needed basis
- Are our tracks in shape for the season? Yes. We will make any necessary repairs to the tracks in time for the upcoming season just as we did last year.
- Will we consider using town fields until ours are in shape? We have and will continue to use Township fields when available

- *NJ Monthly Magazine* and the disparity between the High and Hills.

In looking at the rankings from *New Jersey Monthly Magazine* it is important first to recognize that both high schools are ranked in the Top 100 and, while the Hills has seen significant improvement over the last four years, the High is still ranked in the Top 100, offers the same programs, both curricular and co-curricular, has a staff of dedicated professional teachers and administrators, and has gone from being 105th to 86th. The numerical difference between a school ranked 23rd versus 86th is minimal and a strong indicator that the school, in this case the High, is an outstanding high school with high achievement for all students.

After researching the weighting criteria used by the magazine and comparing the factors used to rank the high schools in New Jersey, we have identified the following factors as contributing to the difference in rankings between the High and the Hills.

First, the graduation rate between the two high schools shows an approximate 4% difference between the Hills and the High. We believe a portion of the difference is the result of the High having a special education program that the Hills does not have, in which students' IEP's indicate that they are expected to graduate in more than four years. This results in the High's slightly lower cohort graduation rate, which affects the rankings.

Second, the Advanced Proficient HSPA (High School Proficiency Assessment) test scores for the Hills are greater than the High's. Again, to some degree, this difference contributes to the difference in rankings for the two high schools and could be the most significant factor in the difference in rankings. Beginning last year and continuing this year, we have made significant improvements to increase student achievement of our students on the HSPA by expanding the remedial programs at the middle and high school levels, and adding new instructional software programs, such as Study Island and Catch Up Math. It is our expectation that both schools will remain in the Top 100, and that we will narrow the difference in rankings between the High and the Hills.

Third, the AP factors show a difference in students earning a 3 or better on the AP exams. Please note the difference in "AP Tests Offered" is a reflection of the courses taken by the students at each high school. We offer the same courses at both high schools and any difference is due to the courses selected by the students. Another factor regarding AP scores is that we have students at both high schools taking exams without taking the course. While students at both schools do this, the Hills' students have been taking more AP exams without taking the corresponding courses than the High's students have, which might affect the rankings.

The other factors, average class size, and student/faculty ratio are not likely, in my opinion, to significantly impact the difference in rankings between the two high schools.

It is important to understand that we continue to break down the data so we can accurately address the differences between the rankings. For example, when we look at the SAT scores of the top 25% of the students at both high schools, there is no statistical difference between the two high schools so we can draw the conclusion that those students who take the most challenging programs at our high schools are equally prepared for the SAT's. However, the lower performing 25% of students at the High have a significant difference than the lower performing 25% of students at the Hills. This is where we are making changes across the district and possibly making some additional changes at the High to better prepare students for the SAT's and to improve their HSPA scores. Another issue affecting SAT scores relates to the students at both schools who take SAT's before they enter 9th grade. At the Hills, these students score significantly above the mean and at the High, these students score significantly below the mean. We are looking at the CMS program to see what changes we can make to improve the CMS students' SAT scores.

Finally, while there is a significant difference in the number of faculty members with advanced degrees at the Hills versus the High, we have not been able to determine if this has a significant impact on the quality of education at the High. We are continuing to look into this factor.

New Jersey Monthly Magazine 2012 Ranking PHHS and PHS

	DFG	Grade 12 Enrollment	Average Class Size	Student/Faculty Ratio	% Faculty with Masters or Doctorate	Average combined SAT Score	% Advanced Proficient HSPA-LA	% Advanced Proficient HSPA-Math	Number of AP Tests Taken	% of AP Tests Resulting in 3+	Adjusted Cohort Rate
PHHS	G	268	18.2	10	64.3	1629	33.9	36.4	24	88.8	95.45
PHS	G	260	19.2	10.4	44.3	1587	26.7	28.3	19	83.9	91.61