

May 2020

# First Friday

*A Monthly Newsletter of the Warren Township Schools*



The Warren Township Board of Education adopted a 2020-2021 budget that does not raise taxes at its meeting on Monday, April 27, 2020.

The Board of Education voted unanimously to approve the budget as presented by Dr. Matthew Mingle, Superintendent, and Mrs. Patricia Leonhardt, School Business Administrator. The flat tax levy represents a decreased operating budget from the tentative budget approved in March.

“Given the uncertain financial situation caused by COVID-19 and challenges it causes Warren Township residents, the Board and administration felt it was important to find ways to minimize the burden on local taxpayers,” said Mingle. “Our ability to get to a flat operating budget reflects creative thinking and collaboration between Board members and administrators. Thanks to some flexibility in expenses due to the closure this spring, we will be able to purchase needed technology and instructional supplies now and remove those items from future budget years,” Mingle added.

“The Warren Township School District has always operated in a fiscally responsible manner, not carrying long term debt as part of the taxes raised for several years now. Thanks to this solid budgeting process over the past years and a creative collaboration between board members and the administration, we see the opportunity to do right by our community by not creating an additional burden during this challenging time,” stated Christian Bellmann, president of the Warren Township Board of Education.



**SHINING BRIGHTER EVERY DAY!**

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“The budget process is an enormous undertaking of the administrative team, and impacts every aspect of how our district operates. Adopting this budget with a 0% tax increase is critically important to the Warren taxpayers, given some of the economic uncertainties that exist. As the Chair of the Finance, Operations, and Security Committee, I am proud of all the work done to accomplish this, and look forward to continuing to work with our entire team to ensure academic excellence and success for all of our students,” added David Brezee, chairman of the Finance, Operations, and Security Committee.

Leonhardt noted the Board had the ability to craft a budget based on a much larger tax levy, as the annually allowable 2% growth would have afforded the board an additional \$823,868 in taxes, and banked cap (representing unused capacity for raising taxes in the prior three years) would have allowed an additional \$1.5 million. Instead, the board has opted for a 0% tax levy increase, noting that the taxing authority will be “banked” in case of future needs. A recording of the Budget Presentation will be posted to the district website.

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**Please join the district in congratulating eighth grader, Kevin Chen, for being named the New Jersey state winner of the 8th Grade 2020 American Scholastic Challenge!! This 100-question online academic challenge is completed by hundreds of students across the nation and was done back in February. The results are in!!**

**Kevin is New Jersey's  
8th Grade STATE CHAMP!!**

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# FID TRIPS

Flexible Instruction has created many obstacles for teachers throughout the country to be able to engage with their students in real-time. Warren Township Schools has developed a process to support their educators with professional development specifically related to the use of technology and video so that lessons can be modified, individualized and appealing to students.

The virtual field trips provide students a unique experience to learn about a high-interest topic and submit a creative product while providing staff opportunities to participate in professional learning to refine their distance learning skills.

The lesson for each grade level follows the same format: listen to a story/chapter read aloud, take a virtual tour, respond to questions on a Google form, build or create something related to the topic and then share the creation. There are also extension activities for students who might be interested in additional work. Many of these projects are created to encourage students to shut down their Chromebook for a period of time to build or create a project specific to their FID Trip.





"Our goal was to provide instruction and activities in an easy to access platform that required very little interaction from the classroom teacher one day per week to enable all Instructional staff to participate in professional development," stated Cassidy.

The first two FID Trips have been very successful. Students have traveled to the International Space Station as well as Under the Sea to learn about Coral reefs. The overall reaction to FID Trips from the students has been positive. According to a middle school grade 7 student, "I think that this field trip was amazing and I am really looking forward to the next one."



Each Wednesday while students are participating in their FID Trip, all Instructional Staff members have engaged in virtual staff meetings as well as professional development sessions led by Mr. William Kimmick, Director of Curriculum. Ms. Stacey Modugno, Supervisor of Curriculum, Mrs. Jessica Nathan and Mrs. Kristen Stoyanov, Instructional Specialists as well as Mrs. Michelle Zgombic and Mrs. Suzanne Wisher, Technology teachers.

In a video shared with the district on April 3, Dr. Matthew Mingle, Superintendent of Schools, introduced a model which he has titled The Distance Learning Continuum. Level 1.0 entailed issuing assignments in text format, level 2.0 introduced short videos where students were able to view a video from their teacher to begin their day. Staff is currently working on level 3.0 which includes mini-lesson videos with clear instructional objectives and directions for a student response or activity.



On April 17, Mingle provided an update on new key information and the direction the district is heading on The Distance Learning Continuum. Additionally, Mingle reminded the school community to be mindful and flexible in terms of access to devices and the students' working environments as well as the rigorous training that the Instructional Staff are receiving.

The goal is to provide students with meaningful work while connecting them to topics of their particular interest.

"We are going to work extremely hard every day to do right by our kids to the greatest extent possible. We will get a lot of things right and we will get things wrong, as well. The best way for you to share that information with us about how you think we are doing or ideas that you are learning from other school districts is to fill out the weekly survey each Friday. We take those results very seriously and we use that to identify our priorities for the next week." (Mingle, 2020, 17.07)

## The district celebrated Take Your Child to Work Day!





## EVENT

Teacher Appreciation Week  
National Nurses Day  
Board of Education Meeting

# Upcoming Events DISTRICT WIDE

## DATE

5/4 - 5/8  
5/6/2020  
5/11/2020



Follow WTBOE  
Arts on Twitter!  
@wtboearts




## Coronavirus (Covid-19) Information


All communications related to COVID-19 can be found on the district website.

## Summer Fun

Given the uncertainty of social distancing requirements related to COVID-19, Summer Fun staff are hard at work developing an exciting virtual Summer Fun program that would include all facets of the regular program. More details will be shared in the next two weeks with a relaunched registration process.



**Vote for the Warren  
Middle School Band**



**RUBattleoftheBands.com**  
**Vote by May 17, 2020**

For full details visit RUBattleoftheBands.com.

When School's Out • We're On



**Warren Township Schools  
2020 - 2021**

Program includes an hour of enrichment every day at no additional charge!  
Coding, Robotics, Art, Drama, Spanish, Mandarin, Sign Language, Fitness & Sports, and Engineering/Maker Activities. Includes new! Flexible homework help, recreation, and student choice. Students of each site are assigned to a site leader for support and safety environments.

Register online at:  
[www.alphabest.org/warrennj](http://www.alphabest.org/warrennj)

**Time**  
Before School: 6:30 a.m. to start  
After School: until 6:30 p.m.

**Who can attend?**  
Students in Grades K-5

**Location**  
At Your Child's School

**When can I register?** Beginning 5/1/2020

**SPACES ARE LIMITED!** Please register early.

**DISCOUNTS**  
Siblings: 10%  
First Mile Discount: 10%  
WTSD Employee: 25%

Families may elect only one discount option.  
Discounts apply to 5-day enrollments only.

**Annual Registration** (non-refundable) \$50/child

**AFTER CARE MONTHLY TUITION**

Days per week	Monthly Tuition
1 day per week	\$130
2 days per week	\$260
3 days per week	\$390
4 days per week	\$520
5 days per week	\$650

**BEFORE CARE MONTHLY TUITION**

Days per week	Monthly Tuition
1 day per week	\$16
2 days per week	\$32
3 days per week	\$48
4 days per week	\$64
5 days per week	\$80

**Full Week of Care** (during non-school hours) \$205

**Early Release Days** \$26

**90 Visit Punch Pass** (non-refundable, non-transferable, first payment) \$185

**All Day Care** \$45

**Questions?**  
REGIONAL DIRECTOR: Jovanita Byrdach  
jbyrdach@alphabest.org or (973) 759-4511

**REGISTRATION & BILLING INQUIRES: (866) 300-7750**

alphabest.org   alphabestinfo@alphabest.org   (973) 759-4511

[Click Here to vote!](#)

[AlphaBest Information for the 2020-  
2021 school year.](#)

## 2020 - 2021 Open-Registration Information

The open registration portal to pre-register your new to the district student for the 2020-2021 school year is now active. Please [Click Here](#) to access the registration link to begin the 2020-2021 registration process for new to the district kindergarten students, grades 1 - 8 students, or preschool students selected in the lottery process to attend in the 2020-2021 school year. If you have neighbors or friends seeking to register students, please share this link or encourage them to visit the Warren Township School District's [web page](#) to access the link.

Shining Brighter Every Day!!