



ABOVE & BEYOND

A newsletter for Penn Manor School District

WINTER 2015

A new era for Hambright

Open, airy design earns praise

Penn Manor School District has opened a new Hambright Elementary School to rave reviews from students, staff and parents.

The school, built next to Manor Middle School, can accommodate up to 750 students in three educational wings, each organized around a central open instructional area called an "academic commons."

"This is a model of what an elementary school should be."

— Dr. Jerry Egan
Hambright principal

The bright, airy design is a vast improvement over the old Hambright on Temple Avenue, originally built in 1936, said principal Dr. Jerry Egan.

"In the old building, we were limited by space. Now, I

feel as if we're unlimited by the space," he said. "We have the flexibility to go from small group to whole class to large-group instructional areas within a few steps, enabling us to accommodate all the learning styles of our students."

The school design relies heavily on natural light, with numerous windows and glass walls providing views of the farmland surrounding the site.

"The views – everywhere you look it's just beautiful," Egan said. Not only does the natural light reduce energy costs, but "it really helps create a positive environment," he said.

"The students take a lot of pride in their surroundings, and people are just very hap-



Crabtree, Rorhrbaugh & Associates photo

Hambright Elementary students, above, work on laptops in the school's bright, airy library. Below is the Hambright gym. In bottom left photo, students and staff gather in front of their new school just days after it opened for the 2014-2015 school year.

py to be here."

Built at a cost of about \$19.5 million, Hambright is the first new elementary school in Penn Manor since 1961.

It is the district's most technologically advanced building, with computerized control of all HVAC equipment and lighting and security systems.

Hambright also features a sprawling playground with a padded play surface. In cooperation with Manor Township and John G. Herr Park, the school also has a walking path that links to pedestrian paths totaling nearly 2 miles.

Egan could not be happier with how Hambright turned out.

"There is nothing I would



Crabtree, Rorhrbaugh & Associates photo

change about the layout of the building – it just makes sense," he said. "I feel this is a model of what an elementary school should be."

Penn Manor plans to sell the old Hambright school building on Temple Avenue for possible commercial use.



Superintendent's message

While walking through the bright new hallways of Hambright Elementary School recently, I was delighted to hear the strains of familiar Christmas carols during the band's rehearsal in the new music classroom. It certainly is hard to believe that the 2014-2015 school year is already in the midst of the holiday season!

The talented musicianship of our elementary students reminds me that we have **much to celebrate** in Penn Manor this season, and this edition of Above & Beyond highlights many of the great things about our community.

First, a little history on the story about our newest elementary school featured on the front page of this newsletter. If you recall, the Penn Manor Board of School Directors spent a lot of time carefully considering whether the district should incur the cost of replacing the old Hambright building on Temple Avenue.

After a number of forums during the 2010-2011 school

year, the response from our community was overwhelming in support of building a new school on a site more conducive to our educational programs, student safety, and future enrollment needs due to the growing attendance area in Manor Township.

As part of construction and as a way to give back to our community, a walking path around Hambright and Manor Middle School was added to expand Manor Township's existing path and enable Penn Manor residents to enjoy great views of two of our schools. The path has proven quite popular.

This illustrates to me that we are part of a caring community that values the importance of public education and supports our local schools, both financially and through attendance at school activities.

That fact was recently confirmed by both the number of community members attending the Hambright dedication

September 28 and the large turnout for the ColorBlast 5K run held September 21 on the new walking path at the Manor/Hambright campus.

Our students are another reason for us to celebrate all that is good in our community, as you can see from the articles in this edition. Our high school musicians put on an outstanding performance at the recent PASA-PSBA conference in Hershey.

Members of school boards of the 500 districts throughout the state made numerous comments on the fine musicianship and outstanding showmanship of our students.

Elsewhere in this issue of Above & Beyond, you'll read about the accolades our high school agricultural education program has earned on the state level.

Our girls' field hockey team also earned state honors and is a great example of the many young men and women who compete in all of our sports across three seasons of



Dr. Mike Leichter

play. The 2014 team added a second state championship to its previous state title from 2008.

I continue to be very proud of the hard work of all of our students, teachers, and staff, as well as the support we receive from our community. I hope you find this edition of Above & Beyond to be a reminder during this holiday season of our wonderful community.

Go Comets!

—**Dr. Mike Leichter**

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Inclement weather alerts

Information about weather-related school closings and delays is now available through a variety of sources:

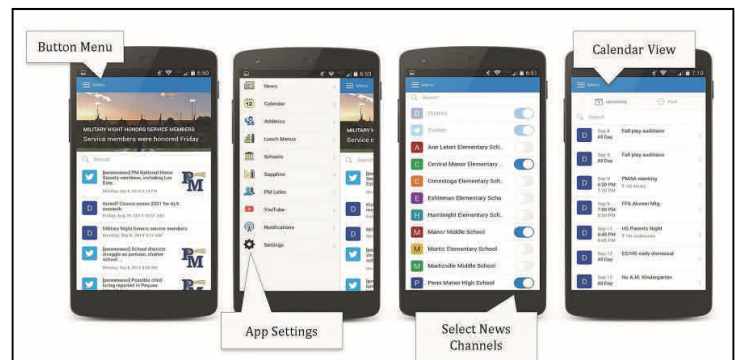
- Local radio and television stations before 6 a.m., whenever possible.
- The Penn Manor School District website, www.pennmanor.net.
- The district's Twitter account, @pennmanor.
- The district's smartphone app.
- Penn Manor's inclement weather hotline, 872-9500,

ext. 2333.

When inclement weather conditions develop during the day, resulting in an early closing, high school and middle school students will generally be dismissed first, followed by elementary pupils.

Unanticipated weather conditions or other factors may require changes to these procedures.

Should the district need to dismiss students early, parents or guardians will receive a phone alert via the School Messenger system.



Keep informed with free district app

Download the free Penn Manor School District mobile app and stay current with school and district news, calendar events,

menus and athletics. Plus, receive breaking updates on weather-related closings and cancellations and other important events,

right on your screen.

To download the app, search for "Penn Manor School District" on Google Play or the iTunes App Store.

Fast Facts: Class of 2014

Members of the Class of 2014 received \$1,719,445 in scholarship money to continue their education.

- 86 seniors earned 154 awards at the Senior Awards Ceremony.
- 44% are attending a four-year school.
- 21% are attending a two-year school.
- 4% of the senior class joined the United States military.
- 54 students achieved a 4.0 GPA or higher.
- 68 students graduated in the honors program (by earning a 3.75 or better GPA while taking three years of foreign language and earning a “B” or better, and four advanced-placement credits and five honors classes, earning a “B” or better in each).
- 48 students are graduating with honors and a 4.0 GPA or higher.
- 264 students took 402 advanced-placement tests in 20 different subjects.
- One senior, James Reilly, was recognized as a National Merit Commended Student.



Penn Manor High School principal Dr. Phil Gale, left, and superintendent Dr. Mike Leichter pose with, from left, Class of 2014 valedictorian Lauren Longenecker and co-salutatorians Justin Gaukler and Laura Bleacher at commencement.

PM agricultural education program tops in PA

Named Outstanding Secondary Program by state ag educators association

Penn Manor High School's agricultural education program was recently honored as the Outstanding Secondary Program in Pennsylvania by the state Association of Agricultural Educators.

The state award “is a testament to the dedication and teamwork of our teachers and the hard work and the passion of our students for agriculture and all its related industries,” said Neil Fellenbaum, one of four ag educators in the program.

The diversity of courses available to students is one of the reasons the program is so successful, Fellenbaum said. Pupils can enroll in everything from Introduction to Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources to

Veterinary Science, Horticulture, Agriculture Business, Biotechnology and Agriculture Mechanics. Students can earn college credits in some courses. In addition, they can earn credits for completed courses if they attend one of three colleges with articulation agreements with PMHS – Delaware Valley, State University of New York or Harrisburg Area Community College.

All Penn Manor agriculture students are members of Manor FFA – which boasts its largest membership in 10 years – and are encouraged to complete a supervised agricultural experience outside the classroom. SAE projects enable students to practice the skills they've learned in class by raising



Penn Manor High School agricultural education students load bundles of wheat for a local agribusiness to raise funds for the Manor FFA chapter.

animals or crops, completing environmental projects or other research or working for ag-related businesses while learning about budgeting, expenses and income.

“We are constantly striving to get our students involved in all three – classroom instruction, our FFA

chapter and our supervised agricultural experience program,” Fellenbaum said.

“When they are, the preparation a student gets in technical skills, leadership and experience in the No. 1 industry in Pennsylvania and the U.S. is hard to beat.”

'We've got your back'

Aavidum provides supports for students

To Brooke DeBerdine, Aavidum is "a big group of people who want to help other people."

The Penn Manor High School sophomore says the Aavidum Club "shows kids that they have people to talk to, they have people who care."

Since it was started last school year, the club has grown, with a membership of 100 to 200 students unified by a simple notion: everyone matters.

Aavidum, which branched out this year to include the district's middle schools, seeks to raise awareness about depression and suicide and foster a culture in which students feel supported by their peers and teachers.

"It shows kids that they have people to talk to," said Brooke. "They have people who care. Not everyone in high school is out to get you or make fun of you."

PMHS teacher Maria Vita, an Aavidum adviser, said the club has helped students understand that "your words to other people matter, especially for someone struggling with a mental disorder."

The club holds meetings where students can share their personal struggles, offer support and plan activities. Turnout for some is as high as 120 students.

"We openly talk about anxiety and depression," Ms. Vita said. "That never happened in our school before. I do think kids wear a mask, and it's hard to shatter



Participants celebrate after completing the ColorBlast 5k at Manor Middle School in September. The run raised \$10,000 to benefit Aavidum and Teen Hope, programs that increase awareness of teen mental health issues.



that mask."

Club members have been involved in a variety of activities. They sold orange bracelets in memory of Greg Frey, a Penn Manor High School student who passed away last year, and donated the money to

the Humane League in his honor.

Members also made videos and posters to promote the national suicide prevention hotline and raised money for Detecting Early Signs of Depression. Aavidum members from Penn Manor also participated in the kickoff of "Let's Talk, Pennsylvania!," a statewide campaign that encourages schools and communities to emphasize accepting, appreciating, acknowledging and caring for others.

Another major event was the ColorBlast 5K Run. Held at the Manor Middle/Hambright campus, the run raised nearly \$10,000 for Aavidum and TeenHope, a program that provides mental health screenings to all Penn Manor 9th-graders.

Aavidum members also volunteer to help at school activities and plan to host an Open Mike event to give students a new outlet to express themselves.



Don Scanlin, Advertiser photo

Penn Manor field hockey players, coaches and supporters pose with the state trophy after the Comets were named co-champions, with Palmyra HS, following a 1-1 tie.

State Champs!

Congratulations to the Penn Manor field hockey team for winning the Pennsylvania AAA Championship title in field hockey after playing to a hard-fought 1-1 tie with Palmyra.

Penn Manor and Palmyra were declared co-champions — the first time two teams have shared the title since 1994.

The state title is Penn Manor's first since 2008, and it caps an outstanding year for the field hockey team. The Comets were Section I champs, Lancaster-Lebanon League Champions and placed third in District III.

What a way to end an outstanding season!

Retirees include distinguished group of educators

Teacher Impact Award winner Joe Herman among longtime staff to retire over summer

It was a bittersweet night last spring when 29 retiring Penn Manor employees – with a combined 800+ years of service – were honored at the Employee Recognition Dinner in the high school cafeteria.

Among the distinguished retirees was longtime Penn Manor High School social studies teacher and coach Joe Herman, who was honored earlier in the year with a 2014 Teacher Impact Award from WGAL-TV.

Herman spent his entire 39½-year career at Penn Manor, teaching European, Asian, U.S. and



Joe Herman

Pennsylvania History, Field Geography, Psychology and Economics. He also coached track and field for his entire career and was a boys' soccer coach for 32 years and a field hockey coach for three years.

Herman was one of 201 teachers nominated to receive a Teacher Impact Award for 2014 and one of only five to receive the honor.



Penn Manor retirees honored at a banquet last spring included 21 elementary staff, above, and eight secondary staff, below left, with more than 800 combined years of experience in district schools.

Other Penn Manor teachers and support staff who retired at the end of last school year included:

Elementary: Louise Weidman, John Berry, Della Kreider, Joan Wimer, Sue Walkowiak, Deb Holt, Kathy Young, Barbara Kamen, Mary Ann Farmer, Cheryl Hogg, Linda Hampton, Linda Husler, Diane Dangro, Sue Althouse, Carole Chismar, Jane Witwer, Gail Thomson,

Ron Walton, Larry Rohm, Renae Radcliff and Linda Yost.

Secondary: Phuc Nguyen, Sally Muenkel, Barbara Rathbone-Frank, Amelia Herr, Jayne Leitzel, Carole Fay and Sandra Brown.

A heartfelt "thank you" to all the retirees for enriching the lives of so many students over the years.

Best wishes in retirement!

Upcoming in Penn Manor

- ♦ **January 2:** Vacation/weather make-up day
- ♦ **January 15:** End of semester
- ♦ **January 16:** No school, secondary; early dismissal, elementary
- ♦ **January 19:** Martin Luther King holiday
- ♦ **January 20:** Kindergarten Information Night, 7 p.m., Hambright Elementary
- ♦ **January 30:** Early dismissal (all students)
- ♦ **February 16:** President's Day Holiday
- ♦ **March 27:** Early dismissal (all students)
- ♦ **April 2, 3 & 6:** Easter vacation/weather make-up days
- ♦ **May 15:** Early dismissal (all students)
- ♦ **May 25:** Memorial Day vacation
- ♦ **June 5:** Last day of school (tentative)

Special education services

Penn Manor School District is required to provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities who are determined, through the evaluation process, to need special education and related services under IDEA and 22 Pa. School Code §14.

A school-age child with a disability, who is determined to be in need of special education and related services, is identified as a child with a disability eligible for special education in need of specially designed instruction.

The following are disability categories under IDEA:

- Autism
- Deafness

- Deaf / blindness
- Emotional disturbance
- Traumatic brain injury
- Hearing impairment
- Specific learning disability
- Mental retardation
- Multiple disabilities
- Other health impairment
- Speech and language impairment
- Orthopedic impairment
- Visual impairment, including blindness

A full description of the services and programs available is accessible at:

www.pennmanor.net/special-education/ or by contacting Theresa Kreider, director of student services, at 872-9500, ext. 2227.

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Above & Beyond newsletter is published by Penn Manor School District. If you have questions or comments, please direct them to Brian Wallace, Community Relations Coordinator, at 872-9500, xt. 2241, or email: brian.wallace@pennmanor.net.

PMSD participates in PA conference

Frerichs leads PASA-PSBA event

Penn Manor was well-represented at the recent PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference in Hershey.

Penn Manor school board member Dr. Rich Frerichs, president of the Pennsylvania School Boards Association, emceed the four-day event.

The Manor Singers and Penn Manor High School Percussion Ensemble performed during opening-day activities, and Manor FFA members presented the flags of the United States and Pennsylvania.



The Manor Singers, above, Penn Manor High School Percussion Ensemble, bottom left, and Manor FFA members, below right, helped open the 2014 PASA-PSBA School Leadership Conference, held in Hershey in October.

Penn Manor superintendent Dr. Mike Lechlitter and PMHS counselor Melissa Ostrowski participated in a presentation on two programs designed to promote mental wellness at district schools — TeenHope and Aevidum.

The conference featured presentations and workshops for school leaders on a wide range of topics, from cyberbullying and school safety drills to contract negotiations and virtual learning.



Dr. Rich Frerichs

