

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF THE CHATHAMS

Note from the Superintendent

March 2019

School Security Update

I hope that you are enjoying the spring weather! As you know, our Board of Education and school district administration have been evaluating our safety and security protocols over the past year. One of the recommendations I have made to the Board is to utilize Class III Special Law Enforcement Officers. This is a special position created by the Legislature and signed into law by Governor Christie in 2016 to help schools achieve a greater level of safety and security for students and staff. A Class III officer is a sworn officer who has received special training and is assigned to the schools within the municipality of the local police department.

In the fall, Chatham Township Police Chief Tom Miller and Chatham Borough Police Chief Brian Gibbons attended our [October 1 Board Meeting](#) to discuss the potential employment of Class III police officers in the school district. In December, our Board of Education and the Chatham Township Committee approved a shared services agreement. Chief Miller has led a search process for a qualified Class III officer and has involved me, CHS Principal Darren Groh, and LAF Assistant Principal Marco Freyre in the process. I am very happy to report that tonight the Township Committee approved Mr. Rudy Appelmann as a Class III officer for our schools located within Chatham Township (CHS, LAF, and SBS).

Mr. Appelmann (pictured right) retired as the Chief of Police in Montville Township this past December and has training in DARE/LEAD, emergency management, first aid, active shooter, CPR, juvenile detective unit, and more. In Montville, he was closely involved in working with the school district to increase police presence in the schools, including the use of Class III officers. We anticipate that Chief Appelmann will begin working at our schools by spring break (April 15), and be stationed primarily at Chatham High School. Mr. Groh and our other principals will introduce Chief Appelmann to students and ensure that there are opportunities for students to meet with him. As our police chiefs explained on October 1, our Class III officer(s) will not be involved in student discipline or in criminal investigations of students. Rather, the Class III officer will be a law enforcement presence in our schools and respond to any emergency that could arise—evacuation of a school, medical emergency, visitor against whom there is an active restraining order, and so forth. We believe that Chief Appelmann will be an asset to our school community.



The Chatham Borough Council has also approved an ordinance establishing the position of Class III officer. We are working with the Borough at present to approve a shared services agreement and then move forward with the selection process for a Class III officer for our schools located within the Borough (CMS, MAS, and WAS). I will communicate more information about that process as I have it.

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On an academic note, I am sharing a press release regarding Chatham High School below:

Chatham High School (CHS) has earned the first College Board AP[®] Computer Science Female Diversity Award for achieving high female representation in AP Computer Science Principles. Schools honored with the AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award have expanded girls' access in AP Computer Science courses. Out of more than 18,000 secondary schools worldwide that offer AP courses, CHS is one of only 685 to accomplish this.

“We are honored by this recognition and are proud of our students studying computer science for their achievements,” said Danielle Dagounis, District Design & Technology supervisor. “As a District, we are committed to continuing to provide all students with access to computer science courses and learning experiences across grades K-12, as well as AP Computer Science courses. Mr. Hajdu has done a phenomenal job of connecting with our female students to ensure continued interest and success in the subject area, as well as overall growth of the program which has seen a 375% increase in enrollment since the 2013-2014 school year.”

Schools receiving the AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award have either 50% or higher female representation in one of the two AP computer science courses or a percentage of the female computer science examinees meeting or exceeding that of the school's female population. Only 490 schools earned the AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award for AP Computer Science Principles.



“By inviting many more young women to advanced computer science classrooms, Chatham High School has taken a significant step toward preparing all students for the widest range of 21st-century opportunities,” said Trevor Packer, College Board senior vice president of the AP Program. “We hope this inspires many other high schools to engage more female students in AP Computer Science and prepare them to drive innovation.”



The AP Computer Science Principles course launch in 2016 was the largest in Program history. AP Computer Science Principles has promoted the growth of AP computer science in high schools. AP computer science course participation increased 135% since 2016, broadening STEM career opportunities for more students. The number of female, rural, and underrepresented minority students taking AP computer science exams has more than doubled in that period.

Providing female students with access to computer science courses contributes to gender parity in the industry's high-paying jobs and drives innovation, creativity, and competition. According to [UNESCO's Institute of Statistics data](#), less than 30% of the world's researchers are women; in North America and Western Europe, it's just 32%. [Research](#) shows women are more likely to pursue computer science if they're given the opportunity to explore it in high school.

Congratulations to our Design and Technology and Computer Science students and staff!

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