



KEYNOTES

Keyport Public Schools

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Keyport School District Opens Shelter For Victims of Hurricane Sandy

It is hard to believe that it is February already. The year is progressing quickly and the district is hard at work in our journey of academic excellence. Our district goals are as follows: Initiate and complete a comprehensive analysis of the District's K-12 math programs. Create a new district evaluation system, for teachers and administration, to increase student achievement. To successfully implement balanced literacy classrooms in grades K through Grade 8 focusing on targeted grade levels based on NJASK 2011-2012 scores. Complete an analysis of district athletic field and create a plan for field improvement.

In addition to our academic progress, the community of Keyport should also be very proud of its civic leadership. Hurricane Sandy, although a tragic experience, is an outstanding example of what Keyport represents.

Most people were not prepared for the impact that Hurricane Sandy imposed. However, Central School immediately became a shelter for the citizens of Keyport and Union Beach. I have referred to the shelter as a "mini city" in my conversations. Students, staff, and community members served in roles such as pantry assistants, chefs, nursing assistants, entertainers, etc. The list is endless as are the donations from the community.

This experience is one that your children have learned first-hand and through formal instruction. Students and staff are continuously working to provide ongoing support to the communities of Keyport and Union Beach, as we work collectively to move forward.

A district "Helping Committee" has been established and has facilitated support to over one hundred and fifty families thus far. Members of the committee have asked not to be identified. Being able to offer help is all that is wanted. I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge our students and staff for all of their efforts. These efforts also include welcoming Union Beach staff, students, and parents into our district. Grades 6-8 have been with us since November and will spend most of this year with us.

The Keyport Board of Education is committed to the academic success of all students. Embracing the students of Union Beach is something the Board would not have any other way. Hurricane Sandy although tragic, has only strengthened the communities of Keyport and Union Beach.



Below are pictures of the Keyport Central School Shelter. Cots were placed in the hallways and gym. Food and Supplies filled classrooms.





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Several people were interviewed after the KCS Shelter was closed. Here are some of the remarks

Sandra Shevlin, Keyport Resident

My home is near the Central School so I had a unique perspective in the days following the storm. After the fire trucks made announcements requesting blankets, pillows and supplies, the people came by the hundreds. Every single day, there was a never ending stream of cars from morning until night. The townspeople were wonderful.

Volunteers, just average people, jumped into action. I saw a nurse take charge on day one and she was still around on day ten. Men assembled cots and unloaded cases of food and water. First aiders helped with healthcare needs. Two women worked every day in the kitchen from morning until evening, one was always there. Early on, it became apparent that boredom could be an issue with 200 people, mostly seniors, suddenly stuck in our school building. Volunteers of all ages played cards, did puzzles or just socialized. I ran a daily bingo game. People played piano, a manicurist offered free services, a barber gave the men haircuts and shaves and the list just goes on and on. Everyone donated their time and talents to make the situation a little bit better.

The kids of our schools and from neighboring areas were fantastic. They were kind, patient and compassionate. As the majority of the people sheltered were senior citizens, it was a joy to watch the interaction between young and old that may never have occurred otherwise. Certainly the valuable life lessons those kids got from that week outweigh the loss of actual "school days".

At the helm of this ship was our superintendent, Lisa Savoia, making order from chaos. She led with a calm, firm hand, making decisions sensibly and rapidly. She jumped into action so fast that she was in pajamas for the first 24 hours! Mrs. Savoia turned her school into a safe shelter, a community really, with just two generators and a group of dedicated community members. She was there daily with her husband and 2 daughters in tow. Certainly, running an emergency shelter was not in her job description, but she did it wonderfully.

I was so proud and impressed with my town during this crisis. May the feeling of community follow you throughout the New Year.

Ashleigh Pileggi, 9th Grader KHS

After I heard that numerous people were displaced because of Hurricane Sandy, I felt horrible. I called everyone I knew to help get involved. I wanted to help because that could have been me. I spent 75 hours or more in total at the shelter, but each day for at least 10 hours, sometimes 12. While I was there, I would do anything that needed to be done. I'd serve food, give out care bags, and run to other shelters to drop off supplies they needed.

The KCS Shelter was made up mostly of volunteers who never worked on something this large. Though there was panic at times, everyone worked amazingly well together. People were saying that we ran the shelter more like a hotel than a shelter. While working with the seniors I learned so much and actually made a few friends that I still go to visit.

At one point, I was actually told to go home and take a break because I had been there so long. Since I felt that it could have been me, I felt I needed to be there to help. We're a small town and if someone needs help, I'll be there. It was important to me.



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Montgomery Township School District “Adopts” Keyport and Union Beach Schools

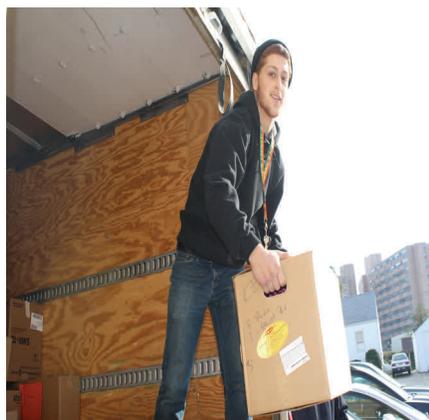
In the aftermath of Hurricane Sandy, so many school districts, private organizations, etc. responded to the needs of our devastated shore communities. Even people from far away felt the need to help us out. One district, in Montgomery Township, NJ, was one of those school districts who adopted both the Keyport and Union Beach School Districts. Chris Reginio, a former Social Studies teacher at KHS and Christine Grossmann, our former Student Assistance Counselor for the District, were instrumental in getting much needed supplies and support to both Keyport and Union Beach. They each felt that since they once worked here, they really wanted to help and give back, and they certainly did.

The Montgomery Township Schools have been working diligently with the Keyport and Union Beach school districts to bring them much-needed support and relief in the wake of Hurricane Sandy. Every Keyport and Union Beach student was able to receive school supplies (such as backpacks, notebooks, flash drives, folders, etc.)

Montgomery High School also sponsored a gift card drive that generated an astounding \$3700 in gift cards for the families of Keyport and Union Beach students just prior to the holidays. These cards were incorporated into several community wide events held by Keyport High School’s Hurricane Sandy Relief Committee. The gift cards were delivered in stockings to families in need to help make their holidays a little brighter.

In the upcoming months, Montgomery High School plans to continue fostering the relationships that have been built within Keyport and Union Beach by providing comfort and support as they rebuild their communities. Montgomery High School looks forward to visiting Keyport and Union Beach again soon!

Thank you Chris, Christine, students and staff members of the Montgomery Township School District!!!!





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National Honor Society Holds Thanksgiving and Christmas Toy/Food Drive 2012

On the morning of November 21st, National Honor Society had Thanksgiving meals delivered to 20 local families in need. Through generous donations from both the school and the community, enough food was collected to provide each family with a turkey and complete Thanksgiving dinner, as well as breakfast and lunch supplies. Another delivery was made on December 20th, this time with toys and food for 15 families in the Adopt a Family program. Thanks go out to everyone that made a donation to these worthy causes, especially the many high school clubs and faculty who always are a vital part of the success of both of these projects. Congratulations to NHS members for a job well done!!



Sandy Relief Committee hosts Christmas Breakfast

The Keyport School District, with the help of the Sandy Relief Committee with the help of many volunteers, hosted a Christmas Pancake Breakfast on December 22nd in the KHS cafeteria. The purpose of the breakfast was to support the families of Keyport and Union beach who lost so much during Hurricane Sandy. The following donations were received:

- Chris Moore at IHOP donated the pancakes, sausage, bacon and all the condiments
- Broadway Bagels donated the Bagels
- Maschio's Food Service donated the Danish
- 7-11 donated the coffee

The food was cooked by members of Kiwanis who also volunteered their time.

Between the food donations and all the volunteers that helped to make this a festive day for everyone, over 350 pancake breakfasts were served.

We don't want to forget to mention that Santa was there as well as arts and crafts for the little ones.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped to make this "Christmas Pancake Breakfast" a huge success.

