

Last Student Day Moved to June 11

At its regular meeting on March 22, 2021, the Indian River Board of Education approved a series of changes to the 2020-2021 school district calendar.

The last day of school for students in Grades PreK-11 will now be **Friday, June 11**. The last day for teachers will be Tuesday, June 15 and the last day for paraprofessionals will be Friday, June 11.

The changes resulted from unused surplus days built into the calendar for weather-related school cancellations and from three additional school days during the first and second marking periods.

Continued on Page 3

Instructional Schedule Modified

The Indian River School District is pleased to be offering four days a week of in-person instruction for high students currently participating in the hybrid model.

Beginning the week of April 12, high school hybrid cohorts A and B will be combined, allowing hybrid students at Indian River and Sussex Central High schools to attend classes in person on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Due to a high percentage of families opting for in-person instruction at our elementary and middle schools, we are unable to combine cohorts with the current three (3) feet social distancing guidelines. This will result in the continuation of in-person learning two days a week in separate cohorts A and B. Wednesday will continue to be a remote learning day for most students.

The district will continue to explore ways to provide additional in-person instructional opportunities at the elementary and middle school levels.

In addition, all staff will now work in their school buildings on Wednesday rather than working remotely. This will give the district the opportunity to explore increased in-person learning opportunities for hybrid students in Grades K-12 who may need extra support. Schools will coordinate with teachers and families to determine which students may benefit from Wednesday in-person instruction.

The district will continue to offer full-time remote instruction for parents who

Continued on Page 4

District Saddened by Passing of Floyd Toomey

The Indian River School District is saddened to inform our community that Phillip C. Showell Elementary School constable Floyd Toomey passed away on March 14, 2021.

Mr. Toomey was commissioned as a constable in July 2019 and then joined the staff of Phillip C. Showell Elementary School in Selbyville. Prior to joining the Indian River School District, he served as police chief for the towns of Dagsboro and Ellendale.

"Floyd Toomey was a dedicated constable whose top priority was overseeing the safety of students and staff at Phillip C. Showell Elementary on a daily basis," IRSD Superintendent Dr. Jay Owens said. "Mr. Toomey rendered a great service to our district by giving parents the peace of mind that their children were safe while on school grounds. We are deeply saddened by his passing, which leaves a huge void in the PCS community. We extend our deepest sympathies to Floyd's family and friends."



Mr. Toomey spent more than 30 years in law enforcement prior to joining the Indian River School District. He was Dagsboro's police chief from 2007-2019 and Ellendale's police chief from 1993-2007. He was also a police officer for the Georgetown (1987-1993), Capitol (1986-1987) and Delmar (1979-1981) municipal departments. Mr. Toomey served many years in the U.S. Army National Guard, reaching the rank of sergeant. He served a year of deployment in Afghanistan in 2012-2013 and was awarded a Bronze Star for heroism.

The Indian River School District offers its most sincere condolences to the Toomey family and the Phillip C. Showell community.

Indian River School District

"A Model of Excellence"

31 Hosier St.
Selbyville, DE 19975
(302) 436-1000
irsd.net

Board of Education

Rodney M. Layfield,
President

Leolga T. Wright
Vice President

Derek E. Cathell

W. Scott Collins

Dr. Donald G. Hattier

Gerald T. Peden

Constance T. Pryor

Dr. Heather M. Statler

Dr. Jay F. Owens

*Board Secretary and
District Superintendent*

The Indian River School District is an Equal Opportunity Employer and does not discriminate or deny services on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, creed, religion, veteran status, sexual orientation, marital status, citizenship status, pregnancy, age, ancestry, disability, gender identity, genetic information, military status or any other characteristic protected by law.

 Find us on
Facebook

 @IndianRiver DE

Visit us on
the web at
irsd.net

From the Superintendent



Dear Parents,

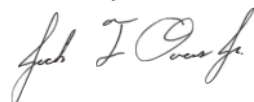
Throughout this school year, it's been our goal to have as many students as possible safely receive in-person instruction under the health and safety protocols set forth by the State of Delaware. Our hybrid program has been up and running since September and to date we have more than 7,600 students, or 71 percent of our total enrollment, receiving in-person instruction two days a week. After consulting with our administration and instructional staff in recent weeks, we determined that we could safely combine our two high school cohorts and provide those students with in-person instruction four days a week. We are very pleased to be offering these additional days to students at Indian River and Sussex Central high schools beginning April 12.

Here are a few exciting things happening in our district this spring:

- We will be offering an extensive and robust summer school program in 2021, with activities to be held at all district schools. Details will be communicated to parents following Easter Break. (See Page 5.)
- Teacher of the Year winners have been selected for every district school (see Page 3). These gifted educators will now compete for the overall district Teacher of the Year Award, which will be announced on April 29.
- After a year's hiatus, spring sports are back at both the middle and high school levels. Good luck to all of our dedicated student-athletes!
- Plans are currently in the works for prom and graduation activities at both of our high schools. Stay tuned for details in the coming weeks.

The district suffered another great loss on March 14 with the passing of Mr. Floyd Toomey. Mr. Toomey was a dedicated constable at Phillip C. Showell Elementary School and had a long and decorated career in law enforcement prior to joining the IRSD team. He was also a long-time member of the U.S. Army National Guard and a Bronze Star recipient. Floyd will be greatly missed and our deepest condolences go out to his family and the Phillip C. Showell community.

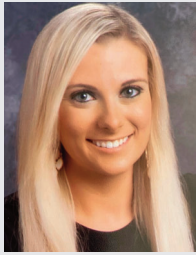
Sincerely,



Dr. Jay F. Owens
Superintendent

Notice of Board Vacancies in District 1

The Indian River Board of Education is seeking candidates to fill two vacant seats in District 1 through June 30, 2022. Interested candidates should contact Superintendent Jay Owens at (302) 436-1000 or jack.owens@irsd.k12.de.us. Candidates will be required to submit a candidate filing form and letter of interest no later than 4:00 p.m. on **April 16, 2021**. Forms and additional information are available at irsd.net.



Amy Absher



Erin Bullock



Karen Coty



Bethany Flood



Eileen Gartman



David Grise

IRSD Teachers of the Year, 2021-22

Each IRSD school has selected its Teacher of the Year for 2021-2022. The winners are as follows:



Christine Hogsten



Sarah Johnston



Laura Marsh



Shelley McBride

- Amy Absher**, Lord Baltimore Elementary School
- Erin Bullock**, Southern Delaware School of the Arts
- Karen Coty**, Georgetown Middle School
- Bethany Flood**, North Georgetown Elementary School
- Eileen Gartman**, Howard T. Ennis School
- David Grise**, John M. Clayton Elementary School
- Christine Hogsten**, Phillip C. Showell Elementary School
- Sarah Johnston**, Georgetown Elementary School
- Laura Marsh**, Long Neck Elementary School
- Shelley McBride**, Millsboro Middle School
- Matthew McCowan**, Selbyville Middle School
- Haley Mears**, East Millsboro Elementary School
- Ashley Rowe**, IRSD Early Learning Center
- Matthew Selba**, Indian River High School
- Alina Wrench**, Sussex Central High School

These teachers will compete for the honor of Indian River School District Teacher of the Year, which will be announced during a special ceremony on April 29.



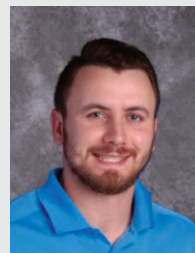
Matthew McCowan



Haley Mears



Ashley Rowe



Matthew Selba



Alina Wrench

**Congrats
and
Good
Luck!**

Calendar Changes

From Page 1

In addition, the Professional Learning Day originally scheduled for Monday, April 19 has been moved to **Wednesday, April 21** and the Teacher Work Day originally scheduled for Friday, May 28 has been moved to **Wednesday, May 26**. As a result, April 19 and May 28 will now be regular school days for students and staff. April 21 and May 26 will serve as asynchronous instructional days for students.

Millsboro Junior Optimist Club Assists Homeless



Throughout the month of March, the Junior Optimist International Club at Millsboro Middle School collected items for Sussex Community Crisis Housing Services in Georgetown. Items such as shampoo, conditioner, body wash, toothbrushes, toothpaste, paper towels, pencils, pens, notebooks and plastic containers were collected to benefit the homeless in our community. The Junior Optimists presented the collected items along with a \$200 donation to Sussex Community Crisis Housing during a special ceremony at the school on March 30.

Podcast Available on Several Platforms

The **IRSD Spotlight** podcast is now available on several online platforms and mobile apps including Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, Spotify, iHeart Radio, SoundCloud, Stitcher, Spreker and Podcast Addict.

Episodes and bonus content can also be accessed by visiting irsd.net and going to the Podcast link under the Discover IRSD tab.

Here are our most recent episodes:

- **Episode 62:** "Why Did You Become a Teacher?" – Posted March 9, 2021
- **Episode 61:** "Women of Will" – Posted February 11, 2021
- **Episode 60:** "Wrapping Up 2020" – Posted December 17, 2020
- **Episode 59:** "Brandon McCabe, IRSD Teacher of the Year" – Posted November 23, 2020
- **Episode 58:** "Countdown to Kindergarten" – Posted November 12, 2020
- **Episode 57:** "Meet Your Supers" – Posted October 13, 2020
- **Episode 56:** "Rewriting the Playbook" – Posted October 1, 2020

To search for episodes on Facebook, use the hashtags #irsdpodcast and #irsdspotlight.



Todd Fuhrmann

Women of Will Honors IRHS AD

Indian River High School Athletic Director **Todd Fuhrmann** has been named a 2021 Under Armour Women of Will Hall of Fame winner. Todd is one of just five athletic directors in the United States to receive this award.

Under Todd's direction, Indian River is one of just two high schools in Delaware and only 200 nationwide that are participating in the two-year-old Women of Will program, which offers a robust support system for female athletes with the goal of changing lives and inspiring the next generation of women to strive for greatness.

Women of Will is sponsored by Under Armour and BSN Sports. The Hall of Fame Award was given in honor of Women's History Month.

The Women of Will program at IRHS was recently highlighted in Episode 61 of the IRSD Spotlight podcast.

SCHS Students Headed to BPA Nationals

Sussex Central High School had four students qualify to compete at the National Level for Business Professionals of America based on results from competitions at the recent state BPA Leadership Conference.

Results are as follows:

Joseph Rose

- 1st Place – Information Technology Open
- 2nd Place – Financial Math Open
- 2nd Place – Digital Communications Open
- 2nd Place – Advanced Spreadsheet Applications
- 2nd Place – Project Management Concepts
- 3rd Place – Computer Programming Open



Allison Weldon

- 1st Place – Ethics and Professionalism
- 3rd Place – Prepared Speech

Tina Witke

- 1st Place – Desktop Publishing

Kamryn Camper

- 3rd Place – Computer Security

These students have qualified to represent SCHS, the Indian River School District and the State of Delaware at the National BPA Leadership Conference to be held in May.

High Schoolers to Attend In Person Four Days a Week

From Page 1
prefer that model. Parents who would like to switch from remote to hybrid instruction should contact their child's school by **April 15** in order to

effectively plan for the fourth marking period. In considering such requests, schools will determine if social distancing guidelines of three (3) feet between students can be maintained

in the classroom setting. Schools must also determine if transportation services can be provided with social distancing guidelines of three (3) feet between students on school buses.

District Offering Expanded Summer School Programming

The Indian River School District will be offering a comprehensive 2021 summer school program with a focus on accelerated learning for students in preparation for the 2021-2022 school year.

The *Building Bridges and Accelerating Learning for All Students* program will run from **July 7-August 18** at all district schools. Transportation will be provided, and a meal and/or snack may also be provided depending on the length and time of the program. Schools will send invitations to families following Easter Break.

Summer programming will be held Monday through Thursday and most sessions will run from 8:00-11:30 a.m. Howard T. Ennis School programming will run from 8:00 a.m. until 2:30 p.m. District high schools will also be offering a separate credit recovery program beginning June 14. School invitations will contain details of the grade-specific learning opportunities available through the *Building Bridges and Accelerating Learning* program.

Parents who do not receive an invitation by **May 15** but are interested in having their child attend the summer program should contact the child's school.

The *Building Bridges and Accelerating Learning* program will continue to follow all Delaware COVID-19 safety protocols, which include face coverings and social distancing.