

July 24, 2009

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Spotswood School District Announces New Superintendent

The Spotswood Board of Education is pleased to announce the hiring of Dr. Walter Uszenski, Ed.D as its new superintendent effective November 1, 2009. Dr Uszenski will replace Dr. John Krewer who is beginning a well-deserved retirement on November 1.

Currently the Superintendent and Principal of the Mannington Township School District, Dr. Uszenski brings a wealth of experience to his new position in Spotswood. He began his educational career as a math teacher in Saint James School in Woodbridge where he ultimately served as principal for that school. He then moved on to the Woodbridge Public School system, where he worked as a Special Education teacher at Colonia High School, principal of Woodbine Ave Elementary School and principal of Iselin Middle School. After serving as principal of Matawan Aberdeen Middle School and just prior to his recent tenure in Mannington, he was the interim superintendent and principal of Liberty Academy Charter School in Jersey City, NJ as well as an adjunct professor of elementary, middle and secondary education at Kean University.

In addition to serving as Superintendent in Mannington, he was also the Director of Special Education and Testing Coordinator for the district. While there, he aligned all curriculum with State Standards and provided leadership to quad-district curriculum integration in Salem High School. A proponent of the Madeline Hunter Model of Direct Instruction and Effective Schools Research, he brings a 12-K mindset with the focus being on students competitively graduating from high school.

“In leaving Mannington, I look with pride at my work with staff in curriculum development – we now have a comprehensive program in Language Arts and Mathematics and an enhanced Gifted and Talented program,” Dr. Uszenski commented on his appointment. “Importantly, each curriculum is aligned with the New Jersey Core Content Curriculum Standards. My focus has been articulation with a clear sequence of learning beginning at the kindergarten level and progressing through 12th grade at Salem Regional High School. Knowing these initiatives are similar to the areas of emphasis within Spotswood, I look forward to the continuity and am eager to begin serving the Spotswood students, staff and community.”

Dr. Uszenski has also been very successful in obtaining educational grants in Mannington, including technology grants which enabled the purchase of 21 new computers and Smart Boards; a Governors Initiative Grant used for staff development; grant monies which established an academic after-school program; ELLI and TARRA grants to help with pre-K, Title 1 and Kindergarten programs; and a REAP grant to help augment outside playground equipment. According to Mannington School Board Vice President Donald Richman, “In tight economic times, he has not only kept all programs but has expanded learning opportunities. He has initiated a number of shared services

opportunities with the saved money going back into programs for kids.” Dr. Uszenski is a strong proponent of shared services where appropriate, and works well with local officials to initiate cost savings.

“From the beginning we were mutually receptive,” stated Mannington Teacher’s Union President Sharon Kellum. “His focus was on academics and a safe, secure learning environment. Proactive, he would always contact me with issues – his style was never to “run over” teachers. He got along very well with staff and community. We will miss most his open door policy at all times. I was most impressed with his strong helping skills with children’s welfare, going beyond academics. He had great ideas on how to reach parents. He is congenial, caring and a friend of teachers, kids and the community.”

Dr. Uszenski is a long-standing member of the Woodbridge Knights of Columbus and the Woodbridge Elks. He has served as an Emergency Medical Technician and a member of the Woodbridge First Aid Squad. He is also a sports enthusiast, having served as a varsity basketball coach and junior varsity basketball, soccer and softball coach.

Dr. Uszenski will be working with Dr. Krewer for 10 days during the month of October to ensure a smooth transition and a seamless handoff on November 1st. Dr. Krewer stated, “Throughout his career, Dr. Uszenski has demonstrated an unwavering commitment to children, high expectations for students, staff and community, strength in human relations and a firm commitment to educational excellence. I am confident with his leadership, our schools will sustain our mission, maintain our focus on effective teaching and the Effective Schools Research – thereby continuing our progress toward educational excellence.”

“The Spotswood Board of Education is very excited that Dr. Uszenski will be joining our district,” said Board President Rich O’Brien. “We carefully considered the feedback from our community as well as our advisory committee and feel that he represents all that is important to our stakeholders. We are thrilled Dr. “U” will be leading our team in keeping All Children Moving Forward.” The Board plans to formally introduce Dr. Uszenski to the three communities it serves – Spotswood, Helmetta and Milltown – and will announce these plans via the media in the upcoming months. In addition, you may go to www.spotswood.k12.nj.us for updates or join the Spotswood School District email blast list by sending a request to emailblast@spotswood.k12.nj.us. Please include your name, child’s/children’s names and schools they will attend next year in the message, if applicable.