

WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Interim Super to Advance Predecessor's Initiatives, and Some of his Own

Nov. 9, 2018 — WEEHAWKEN — Weehawken Township School District's new interim superintendent, Dr. Terrance Brennan, is not a placeholder. Though the veteran educator intends to be a standard-bearer of the former superintendent's initiatives, he has a few of his own ideas in mind.

Brennan was hand-picked by former superintendent Dr. Robert R. Zywicki, who left to become superintendent of another district. Brennan was Zywicki's professor at St. Peters University. The Weehawken School Board ratified the decision with a unanimous vote late last summer. "We can't imagine a better choice than Dr. Brennan as our interim educational leader," Weehawken Township School District Board President Richard Barsa said. "Having taught Dr. Zywicki so much of what he knows, he's the perfect choice to bridge the gap between our last and our next superintendent."

By state law, Brennan, whose first day on the job was October 8, can remain interim superintendent for a maximum two years. "I will support all of the initiatives Dr. Zywicki began, and see if I can throw in a few of my own," he said. That includes assessing strengths and weaknesses. One of those weaknesses, Brennan notes, is standardized test scores. "The

WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE

Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and Advance Placement (AP) test scores need to show some important improvement, and that's what I'd like to make happen.”

Towards that end, Brennan plans to level the academic playing field. “I would like to see the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test offered free to every student here. I've done it as superintendent at Pompton Lakes, and I saw improvement in SAT scores because of it. I want every junior and senior to take the SAT prep class.” Towards that end, he is also drilling down to evaluate the district's elementary school math instruction. District staff is up to the task, Brennan said. “We have hard-working teachers and administrators who are ‘all in’ to improve these test scores. The staff members I've met have a great work ethic. I'm very proud to be working with them.”

Brennan was Pompton Lakes's superintendent for 11 years, after being at the helm of the Middlesex School District for five. “Doing this job for many years, I know what I need to know to run a district,” Brennan said. He earned his doctorate in education specializing in school administration and special education from Teachers College, Columbia University; along with two masters degrees from Columbia in special education and education supervision. He was a member of the prestigious Oxford University's Round Table on the future of public school leadership. He continues to mentor aspiring superintendents as an adjunct professor in St. Peters University's education doctoral program, where he has taught ethics, management and policy. Being an interim superintendent will be familiar to Brennan, who's served as interim superintendent in school districts in Passaic Valley, Franklin Township, High Point, and

WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE

Bloomingtondale. “All districts run the same way,” Brennan said. “What makes them different is their culture. So my first task at hand,” he said, “is to learn the culture of this school district.”

Being the standard-bearer of Zywicki’s initiatives will no doubt come easy to Brennan: As Zywicki’s mentor, many of Zywicki’s initiatives were ones he had learned from Brennan. For instance, Brennan will continue Zywicki’s emphasis on staff education, such as sending teachers to a Columbia University Teachers College reading and writing workshop to deepen their teaching skills, as he did with his teaching staff while a superintendent at Pompton Lakes.

Brennan’s first acquaintanceship with Weehawken was on Weehawken Day 2018 in late September, and he was smitten by the friendliness of Weehawken residents. And as a vegetarian, he was pleasantly surprised that veggie burgers were among the free fare available. “The mayor did a marvelous job of organizing that event,” Brennan said. “And everyone I met that day greeted me very warmly,”

Brennan said he has not experienced the involvement of municipal government with a school district “to the degree” prevalent in Weehawken, and though “open to ideas and suggestions of the mayor, I have always been my own individual in charge as superintendent. The superintendent is responsible for the management of the district, so I will make the decisions based on my expertise.”

###

WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE

Photo on following page

Contact:

Gabrielle Jonas

Communications Director, Weehawken Township

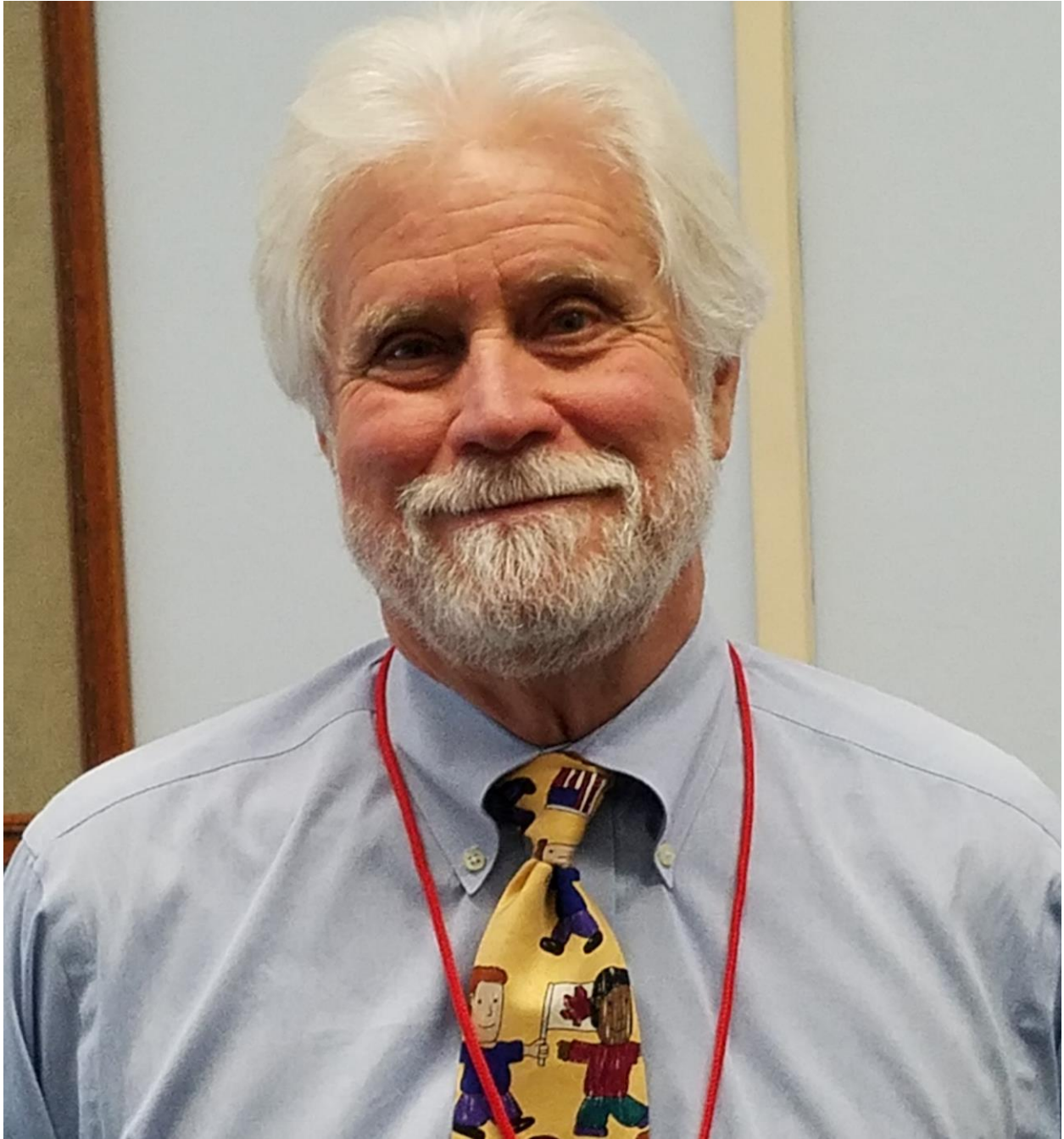
Landline: 201-319-6511 Cell 201-3881378

Email: gjonas@weehawken.k12.nj.us

WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

53 Liberty Place Weehawken, NJ 07086 | 201.422.6125 | WeehawkenSchools.net | [@WeehawkenTSD](https://www.instagram.com/WeehawkenTSD)

WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT NEWS RELEASE



Caption: *Weehawken’s new interim superintendent, Dr. Terrance Brennan, is learning the “culture” of the Weehawken School District.*

Photo credit: *Gabrielle Jonas*

WEEHAWKEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

53 Liberty Place Weehawken, NJ 07086 | 201.422.6125 | WeehawkenSchools.net | @WeehawkenTSD