

Principal of Shackamaxon 1972-1981

THE TIMES, OCT. 11, 1979

Meet Our Principals

A feature from the SP-F PTA Executive Council

Do you remember what your elementary school principal looked like? You might recognize him best from a distance - because that was where you tried to be - far away! Your principal was the sign of ultimate authority and discipline. If you didn't need discipline or a "talking to", you most likely didn't get too close! Today, all that has changed.

Elliot Solomon, principal of Shackamaxon School, walks through school in his shirt sleeves, saying hello, by name, to nearly every one of the students he sees. Yes, he is the ultimate figure of authority, but on a different level from the old days - a positive one. This tall, slim, friendly man is, in his own words, "a people-oriented person".

The personality of Shackamaxon School is marked by the personality of its principal who liked to have "personal contact with the staff, youngsters, and parents in an on-going basis". He achieves this by daily visits to each classroom, phone calls and conferences with parents, conversations with dozens of children, and interaction with every teacher.

Research shows that a major key to the success of a school is the principal's personal view of his role. In this age of creativity, each principal sees his role differently. To Mr. Solomon, his most important job responsibility is that of being the school's instructional leader. This involves the supervision and evaluation of staff, providing assistance to bring about improvement in teaching methods, and serving as a curriculum coordinator and resource person.

There is an administrative function as well as instructional one in that the principal is also the manager of a valuable physical plant, extensive inventory, and is required to complete numerous tasks required by state, county, and local programs.

Another dimension of Mr. Solomon's educational philosophy in this complex role is his recognition that "children learn in a variety of ways and need different things. In view of this fact, it is best to provide as many options as you can within the framework of the budget and available human resources.



ELLIOT SOLOMON

One way to do this is to try to match learning and teaching styles. Over the year, I've come to accept that teachers work best in the manner in which they're most comfortable. Rather than try to change a teacher's basic approach, it's best to have a variety of types of teachers on staff. In the last analysis, any program is only as good as the people who teach it and the quality of the supervision that goes into refining that offering. While new and current materials are important, they, in themselves, don't guarantee a better program".

It seems that Shackamaxon School is truly personalized by the principal, for he sees the expectations of families, the variety of lifestyles and different approaches to solving the same problem.

Elliot Solomon did his undergraduate training at the State University of New York, received his Masters degree from Hofstra University, and did post-graduate training at N.Y.U. and Hofstra. His major fields of study were curriculum development and supervision.

Before coming to Scotch Plains, he was employed by school systems in Rockland County (N.Y.) and Long Island.

Mr. Solomon lives in South Jersey with his wife, Sandra, and two teenage daughters, Jan and Mara. When he is not at school, he enjoys traveling with his family, cooking, golf and gardening.

The new age of the principal has given us a new outlook on education - one with a personal involvement for each family. At Shackamaxon School, the lines of communication are open, and we continue to put them to good use. The size and contribution of its P.T.A. are a testimonial to Mr. Solomon.

THE TIMES, NOV. 1, 1979

Ozzie returns to schools

The Scotch Plains-Fanwood PTA Cultural Arts Committee booked Ozzie to perform in school assemblies at each of the elementary schools.

This year, he'll do the following shows:

The Great Dinosaurs - Coles School on October 25.

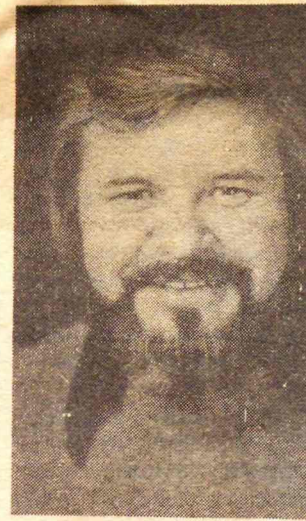
Our American Indians - Evergreen School on October 26, McGinn School on October 24 and Shackamaxon School on October 14.

The Amazing Inventors - Brunner School on October 22 and School One on October 24.

Ozzie Tollefson has created a whole new approach to educational assembly programs for children. He entertains while he teaches. A master teacher with fifteen years experience in the classroom plus an extensive background in children's theatre, Ozzie brings the two disciplines together and builds well structured concepts rooted in basic elementary school curriculum.

His subjects are thoroughly researched and he shares the excitement of his own curiosity with the children. There is plenty of audience participation which the children really enjoy.

But above all his success lies in his superb understanding of young people and the



OZZIE

way they learn.

Children are already asking what show Ozzie will do next year - that certainly proves that learning can be fun.

THE TIMES, DECEMBER 20, 1979

D.C.P.C. is studying School Facilities

In the spring of 1979, the Scotch Plains-Fanwood Board of Education accepted for submission to the State Department of Education a comprehensive Facilities Master Plan. Major proposals within the plan included the possible future closing of two elementary schools in the district, the formation of middle schools and a four-year high school, and the eventual closing of a current junior high school building.

At the time of the plan's acceptance, the Board of Education gave assurances that no portion of the Master Plan would be implemented without further study, public hearings, and separate votes on individual proposals. To that end, in October, the Board called upon the District Comprehensive Planning Committee, a standing committee of local citizens and school representatives, and charged them with the following responsibilities:

1. Validate population projections; recommend whether further study of pre-K population is warranted, and, if so, how it should be conducted.
2. Validate building data in the Master Facilities Plan.
3. Validate rationale for school organizational plan (K-5, 6-8, 9-12) as accepted by the Board.

A short-range time-line with target dates was established for the committee's work.

Since that time, the 16 members of the committee have begun their in-depth studies in three separate sub-committees:

Enrollment Projections: Selma Kaufman, Chairperson; Larry Woodruff, Carol Kraus, Walter Murphy, and August Ruggiero.

K-8 Organization: Chester Janusz, Chairperson; Robert Raths, Shirley Hunter, Carol Larry Woodruff, and Mildred Neylon.

9-12 Organization: Paul Broady, Chairperson; Michael Lauten, Lillian Dettmar, and Bill Gianakis.

The total D.C.P.C. is functioning under the leadership of Walter Murphy, chairperson, with Chester Janusz as chairperson; Carol Kraus, corresponding secretary; and Evelyn Shepherd, recording secretary. Committee work involves considerable time, attention to detail, and thorough analysis, and members have been meeting at least weekly to accomplish their tasks. Although the committee functions only in an advisory capacity, members nonetheless thoroughly review and debate all findings before any recommendations are made to the Board of Education, which has the ultimate decision-making responsibility.

It is anticipated at this time that the initial sub-committee reports, dealing with grade 9-12 organization and enrollment projections, will be submitted in the immediate future. The reports will be reviewed by the Board of Education and district administrative personnel and presented to the public for their reaction and comment. Official action on any measure will then take place at a subsequent Board meeting.

All public hearings will be publicized in advance, and the Board suggests that all members of the public keep abreast of developments in this crucial area of community concern.