

Press from:

The New Providence School District
356 Elkwood Avenue
New Providence, NJ 07974
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Subject: **New Providence School District honors their Teachers of the Year**

The four New Providence School District recipients of the Union County Teacher Recognition Program award were honored at the Board of Education meeting on Thursday, March 24, 2022. One teacher from each school was selected from a record number of nominations collected from students, parents and staff.

New Providence High School recognized science teacher Mr. Daniel Dougher. Mr. Dougher currently teaches Honors and AP Biology as well as Dynamics of Healthcare in Society and Medical Terminology. Mr. Dougher had a large part in bringing the two Rutgers courses, Dynamics of Healthcare in Society and Medical Terminology, to NPHS, offering students unique educational opportunities with the prospect of earning college credit. Each year students enrolled in these courses take an exam at the conclusion of the course that determines if they receive college credits and each year all of Mr. Dougher's students not only achieve the passing score required, but perform at the highest levels.

The principal of New Providence High School, Mr. Brian Henry, stated "In only four short years working at the High School, Mr. Dougher has made a profound and positive impact on all of the students he has worked with. "Adaptability" and "flexibility" are two words that come to mind when thinking about Mr. Dougher. He has always been someone who is adaptable to any situation and challenge or obstacle that comes his way. He leads his students by example to assist them in the challenges they face as high school students. Mr. Dougher is flexible in that he works with his students to best assist and support them to make the learning process fun and relevant."

Mr. Todd Bennington was recognized by New Providence Middle School. Mr. Bennington teaches French in the World Language Department. In 2020, Mr. Bennington was recognized for 25 years of dedicated commitment and service to the New Providence Middle School and to the school district. This is the second time that Mr. Bennington has been selected as Teacher of the Year, last winning this award at NPMS 24 years ago in 1998. In addition to teaching, Mr. Bennington also oversees and organizes the

7th Grade end-of-the-year field trip and puts a lot of time and effort into being the advisor for the Drama Club working with students who have an interest in the performing arts.

Mr. Henry, who is also the principal of New Providence Middle School added “Mr. Bennington has always been a teacher that is not afraid to take risks in the classroom and is always looking for new ways to engage his students. He researches and explores meaningful technology and programs to bring into the classroom that provide his students with optimal and exciting educational experiences. He continues to incorporate new learning strategies that engage students in collaborative work by being creative and supportive.”

Allen W. Roberts Elementary School honored Ms. Kathleen Joyce with this recognition. Ms. Joyce is currently a 4th grade teacher, but her tenure in the district spans back many years she also graduated from New Providence High School. She serves on the School Improvement Panel, the Math committee and as a Social Emotional Learning Ambassador. She has taught Title I and ESSER academic support programs, including last year’s summer achievement program. She has been part of the Character Education and School Safety teams and has volunteered with past Theater week projects and much more.

Mr. Jay Richter, principal of Allen W. Roberts school shared “If you speak with students, parents, and other teachers about Ms. Joyce, you will hear about the genuine empathy and caring that she has for all students. Her priority is a classroom with a warm, welcoming and safe environment. She is flexible, patient, and calm, no matter what the circumstances are. She develops relationships quickly with her students through class activities, discussions, and interviews, but also learns about their lives outside of the classroom. She regularly attends concerts, sports games, and other activities for her students.”

Mrs. Jennifer Powers was honored by some very special guest speakers, students from her first-grade class at Salt Brook School. Ten students joined the presentation and shared their favorite sentiments about Mrs. Powers such as “You are kind because you always help us”, “You help me with my math”, “Mrs. Powers is kind because she makes me feel better” and “Mrs. Powers is nice because she said good job to me”.

Salt Brook School principal Mrs. Jean Drexinger added “Mrs. Powers ensures that she knows each one of her students as learners as well as young people and welcomes them with kindness and open arms into her classroom. She knows just how far to push them and guides each one of them to reach their academic potential. Her students know that they can always count on Mrs. Powers to listen and to help them.”

The Union County Teacher Recognition Program acknowledges educators for their commitment to their students and their profession. All four teachers received Golden Apples, a certificate and lapel pin from the district, and will also join their Union County

colleagues for a special ceremony through Kean University in May. [More information on the New Providence School District recipients of the Teacher of the Year award can be found on the district website.](#)