



Dear Parents/Guardians,

This year the Bergen County Technical School District has been building on its commitment to educate the whole child by cultivating a positive school environment that supports the academic, social, and emotional growth of each student. Events, presentations, and activities have taken place throughout the school year, beginning in September when we hosted a presentation for freshman parents by Dr. Tom Kersting who lead discussions on topics such as balancing extracurricular activities with academics and learning stress-relieving relaxation techniques. Earlier this month we hosted a well-attended presentation by Wendy and Steve Sefcik on recognizing the signs of teen depression.

This month we will implement the Sources of Strength Peer Leader Program on all three campuses. Peer Leaders and their adult mentors will be trained in recognizing risk factors and warning signs of depression or suicide; spreading positive messages focused on hope, health, and strength; and connecting students with competent, caring adults. The powerful influence of peers in educational settings has been widely documented, with findings suggesting that student peer groups are the single most potent source of influence on growth and development during high school years and into college. Students are able to develop a network of resources and a strong sense of community through interaction with experienced and well-trained peers who are dedicated to helping their fellow students achieve success both academically, emotionally, and socially. We believe that participation in this program will strengthen our school community and have lasting benefits for all our students.

Sincerely,

Howard Lerner, Ed.D.
Superintendent