

Watchung summer projects nearing completion for new school year

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WATCHUNG – Summer is nearing a close and so have all the summer projects in the Watchung School District as the buildings are ready to go for the new school year.

Superintendent Barbara Resko and Business Administrator Bert Arifaj gave a brief, summary update of the summer projects in the district at the Board of Education's Wednesday, Aug. 30 meeting.

"Our custodial crews have been very busy getting the buildings prepared for the opening of school," said Resko. "We've had many different projects completed over the summer and if any aren't completed they're in the final stages, same thing with technology through-

out the district."

Arifaj said there were many projects done across the district over the summer months and while some were minor in nature, he briefly described the major changes that occurred at Bayberry and Valley View Schools.

"From a facilities perspective, we transformed the computer lab at Bayberry into a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) room," said Arifaj. "The upstairs and downstairs hallways were painted at Valley View. The custodial staff circulated around the district to make sure that all bookshelves and handrails were properly secured to hold and or grab.

"All floors in the district have been stripped down of the wax to the base so

that's definitely making a difference. We also recently installed in-house washer and drier for any laundry needs."

In addition to facility updates, Arifaj said several technology changes occurred in the last few weeks in preparation for students entering their classrooms soon.

"From a technology perspective, we purchased and deployed 350 new Dell Chromebooks for grades 5 through 8 at Valley View School," said Arifaj. "We transported the Lenovo Chromebooks from Valley View to Bayberry to replace outdated Samsung Chromebooks which were disposed of. We installed new cables for the new telecenter, the new IP/PA system at Valley View School which the staff actually did training for in

preparation."

"We installed a new server in Valley View and replaced those server racks so that will definitely make it more secure. We also installed new software on all district copiers and facilitated migration from all of our old software to new software."

Arifaj said the custodial and technology crews that worked on these changes over the summer did an "outstanding job" in making sure everything was completed in a timely manner.

"The custodians and technology departments have done a great job getting everything for school ready," said Arifaj. "They worked diligently to make sure everything gets finished in time and our summer staff has been a big help so I wanted to thank them."