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Tiffany Lucey

**Supervisor of Instruction and Educational Technology,
Life Skills, Business, Careers and Technical Education
Toms River Regional Schools District (Ocean County)**

With over 20 years in education, Tiffany Lucey has spent the past decade at the [Toms River Regional Schools District](#) serving as the District Supervisor of Educational Technology, Life Skills, Business, Careers and Technical Education. A sustainability leader, she is on the Toms River Regional Schools District Green Team and the municipal green team known as the [Toms River United Sustainability Team \(TRUST\)](#). With an expertise in business, math and computer science, combined with the hands-on educational environment she has developed in the school district, she inspires staff and students, equipping them with the knowledge and skills they need to excel in a digital world. Tiffany champions unique interdisciplinary, problem-based maker approaches to learning that maximize equitable access.

“Sustainability is everything for our future. My advice is to start where you are and take action. Change happens in incremental steps. I’m lucky to see the results of my small steps through the achievements of our students,” Tiffany explained. “When you bring a student, who lives in a coastal community, to see the ocean for the first time, you realize the amazing opportunities we have to make a difference in someone’s life. My goal is to show kids what is possible and to open the doors to let the light shine in. Learning does not have to be bound within the walls of our schools, but in our communities and outside where data can be collected out in the field.”

Tiffany is extremely bright; she taught herself programming in middle school when the first personal computer arrived on the market. Excelling in math, she spent the first ten years of her career working in banking on Wall Street. Raised by her parents to be a hands-on problem solver, she decided she really wanted to teach, and changed her focus to education. “I value student-centered, problem-based learning. It’s important that students know it’s ok to fail, and we want them to develop the grit to get back up and try again,” Tiffany said. As an educator, she has taught middle school through college-level students in the areas of economics, mathematics, biomedical technology and computer science.

As the Supervisor of Educational Technology for Toms River Regional Schools, Tiffany helps teachers use technology in their classrooms, link curriculum with instruction, and communicate student needs with school leaders, all while writing grants to get the needed alternative sources of funding. “It’s my job to look at the big picture and find the best options to implement our creative projects. I listen to those around me from the students in the classrooms and hallways to the teachers and staff. I’m able to wear many hats and perform different roles. This flexibility and comfort in the chaos mentality helps me do what I do,” she said.

Tiffany is active in the community; she leads the [Toms River Regional Schools Career Academy](#) Advisory Board and served on the Toms River Inclusive



Healthy Communities Committee, the Ocean County College Advisory Board and the [IEEE Site](#) Committees. She is the Board Secretary for the Toms River Community Arts Project.

Over \$1 Million in Grants: With shrinking budgets and cuts in education, Tiffany has an impressive track record in securing grants for her district that provide incredible experiences for students and staff. “All of my grants are written through the lens of sustainability,” Tiffany said. “This has resulted in some great projects for the students and District.” The grants have included the National Endowment for the Arts STEM to iSTEAM Making Grant; the Jay and Linda Grunin Foundation Elevate Toms River Principals’ Innovation Challenge Grant; the Office Depot Makerspace Makeover (\$60,000); the Office of Naval Research Computer Science Funding Grant (\$762,000); the Hovnanian Robotics Labs and Business Academy Learning spaces Grant (\$150,000); Perkins Programs of Study Grants (\$405,000); New Jersey Department of Education Middle Grades Grants (\$207,000); Artist in Residency New Jersey Grants Program in Dance, Digital Arts and Fine Arts (\$42,000) and Sustainable Jersey Grants funded by the PSEG Foundation and NJEA (\$88,000).

Sustainable Jersey Grant: Looking Outside and Inside Project: Most recently, Tiffany developed and wrote the successful grant proposal to secure a \$10,000 [Sustainable Jersey for Schools Grant](#) funded by the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA); the grant was awarded last month. Through the "Looking Outside and Inside" project, High School East's existing garden and open space will be made more accessible with walkways and additional routes for wheelchairs in the outdoor learning lab. New benches will be designed and installed by students learning construction within the United Way of Monmouth and Ocean Counties Youth Career Pathways grant-funded programs at High School South (Project SPEAR-IT) and High School North (NorthSTAR).

The inclusive project will bring together virtual reality and an outdoor learning lab. STEAM Engineering Academy students will design spaces and experiences with the school's multiply disabled students. Using technology like AutoCAD, Arkio and Unity, students will collaborate on designing the space through virtual reality before bringing it to life in actual reality. “This project is so special to us because it helps define who we are as a school, through the ingenuity of our STEAM Academy students and the inclusivity it fosters with the involvement of, and focus on, our special needs population,” said High School East Principal Erin Anders.



In addition to this grant, the Toms River Regional Schools District and its schools have received ten additional Sustainable Jersey for Schools grants, many of which Tiffany has facilitated: Mobile Breakfast Academy (\$4,000); Wolbachia Summer Research Project (\$10,000); Improving our School Garden and Greenhouse (\$2,000); Setting the Stage for Outdoor Learning (\$10,000); Play It Again, Toms River (\$10,000); Pollinator Gardens (\$2,000); Investigating Food Crop Sustainability with Corn Genotype to Phenotype Teacher Workshop (\$10,000); OurSpace Courtyard (\$10,000); Rocket Retreat Room (\$10,000); and Rising Tides, Rising Sounds, Lighting the Way (\$10,000).

Sustainable Jersey Digital Schools Star Recognition: Tiffany helped create the [Sustainable Jersey for School's Digital Schools](#) program and reviews action submissions. Pursuing [Digital Schools Star recognition](#) represents a commitment by districts and schools to assess current practices and implement effective and sustainable uses of digital tools, content and strategies. In addition, Tiffany was a reviewer of Sustainable Jersey's [Remote Digital Learning Roadmap](#), prepared by long-time mentor, Marc Natanagara, EdD, who is the former Toms River Regional Schools Assistant Superintendent. The Roadmap is a primer and practical guide for New Jersey schools, districts, and teachers to help them implement remote and hybrid digital learning programs.

Jersey Shore Makerfest: Representing Toms River Regional Schools, Marc Natanagara and Tiffany co-founded and led the innovative Jersey Shore Makerfest. In a 3,000-square foot makerspace area, creative minds of all ages attended the event to play and work with a variety of tools and materials. The area was surrounded by over 75 booths organized by students,

educators and community members who consider themselves makers. Inspirational EdTalks took place every half-hour on the main stage and workshops were held in LearningSpaces. The press called it a "free-wheeling celebration of creativity and imagination" that's "equal parts MythBusters, science lab, county fair, and art studio." Tiffany said, "over 14,000 attendees, young and old, joined us over the five years that we held the fest. The event had an important sustainability commitment. We used materials that are recycled or recyclable, minimized the event's waste and encouraged refillable water containers." Makerfest has evolved and is now sustained as the TRExcellence Expo. Through her role on both municipal and district Sustainable Jersey green teams, she has brought the Township Green Team and Save Barnegat Bay as long-time partners to host the township green fair. Tiffany has worked with staff to develop makerspaces in each of the 19 Toms River Regional Schools. She has also presented at World Makerfaire and the International Society of Technology Educators, as well as numerous other professional learning organizations.



Equity and Access: Tiffany designs opportunities to engage underserved populations in all of her projects and grants. Tiffany was an advisor to the [Toms River Field of Dreams \(TRFOD\)](#) and participated in a team writing a grant provided by RWJ Barnabas Health. The TRFOD project revitalized a 3.5-acre parcel of Bey Lea Park (North Bay Avenue) and delivered a park designed to benefit special needs individuals of all ages, abilities and needs. Many students and staff from across the district provide service and support to this facility.

Tiffany said, "I like the phrase, 'A rising tide lifts all boats.' Supporting equity and providing access to all is a win for our school district. These resources help us all to prosper." At the onset of the pandemic, Tiffany guided the District as they made the transition to virtual learning. As a digital navigator, she made it her mission to get people connected and able to navigate the Internet. She immediately reached out to contacts at Comcast to advocate for increasing equitable outreach. Comcast responded and opened more than one million public Wi-Fi hot spots to the public including non-Comcast customers. The company also augmented their Internet Essentials program, a national broadband adoption program for low-income Americans. Although many were involved, Tiffany's advocacy helped achieve this national impact.

2023 Sustainable Jersey for Schools Certification: Tiffany was part of the district green team that helped Toms River High School North achieve [Sustainable Jersey for Schools certification](#) in 2023. She completed two of the district level actions that helped the high school achieve certification: [Equitable Access to Digital Learning](#) and [Digital Citizenship](#). For more detail on the sustainability actions the school completed review the [2023 Toms River High School North \(Ocean\) Certification Report](#).

Career and Education: Tiffany loves to learn and was the first to attain a degree in her family. She earned a Bachelor of Business Administration and Marketing from Hofstra University. She then completed a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) in Finance from the Graduate School of Business Administration at Fordham University and is All But Dissertation (ABD) in a PhD/MA in Economics from the Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at Fordham University. She spent ten years working at Kidder Peabody (now UBS), PaineWebber and Fleet Banks. She received her teaching credentials at Kean University and New Jersey City University and became a middle school math teacher in the South Plainfield School District. She was teacher of the year at Union County Vocational Technical Schools before coming to the Toms River Regional Schools District. Tiffany is a NASA buff and was selected by NASA for two summer experiences studying heliophysics in Puerto Rico as part of an interdisciplinary cohort implementing and designing lessons while learning about data.

More about Tiffany: Tiffany lives with her husband Joe and their cat, Aurora, who is named after the aurora borealis, Northern Lights. Follow Tiffany's work on LinkedIn (www.linkedin.com/in/tiffanylucey/), www.trschools.com and X (@TiffanyLucey).