

GREEN TOWNSHIP SCHOOL DISTRICT

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Dear Parents and Caregivers,

The 2019-2020 school year is off to a wonderful start and we look forward to an exciting and engaging year with all of our Green Hills School families. Over the last few days, I have had the opportunity to visit all of our classrooms and can tell you first hand that your children have jumped into the new school year with enthusiasm.

The Green Township Board of Education will be discussing our 2019-2020 District Goals and Objectives during the September 18th Board of Education meeting. Our proposed goals speak to academic access and equity, communication and collaboration, and resource management. I encourage you to attend.

Along with the topics that you will hear about from your child's teachers, during Back to School Night and from Mrs. Thompson's weekly bulletins, I wanted to provide you with points of interest and events in which you are encouraged to participate.

In the next few weeks, we will be releasing a District Satisfaction Survey that will include many topics related to our school and our district. This survey will give you a concrete method of sharing your thoughts in a wide range of areas pertinent to the programs and services provided here in Green. The results of the survey will be gathered, analyzed and reported to the Board of Education for their discussion and review once the survey is complete.

The District has officially engaged New Jersey School Boards Association to assist with the search for the District's next superintendent of schools. As you know, I will be here in Green through the end of June 2020, and have assured the Board that I am happy to assist with transition when the time comes. There will be opportunities for our stakeholders to be involved in the process of identifying the qualities the community is looking for in its next superintendent. As such, I encourage you to participate in the process as additional information becomes available. We are also planning for several parent workshops during the school year and I will once again hold a coffee chat in the late winter or early spring. Please join the discussion!

This was an extremely busy summer. We were able to make a number of curricular improvements in the areas of Language Arts, Social Studies, Art, Music, Theatre Arts, STEM, Gifted & Talented, and Health. As you probably know, Music instruction is now part of the weekly offerings for students in Grades K-8, and we are already seeing a renewed enthusiasm for the subject among our students. Our Art room was given a facelift with upgraded furniture and equipment and several other rooms now have Smartboards installed where there were none before. We are extremely pleased that our new Social

Studies series *History Alive* was adopted by the Board and is in use in Grades 6-8. This interactive text is a welcome addition to our instructional resources as it encourages inquiry, metacognition and a hands-on approach to learning.

Other areas that have undergone improvement and change are our Intervention program and the delivery of special subject content at the middle school. In alignment with the NJ State Department's recommended process for support to students we have adopted a *Response to Intervention* (RTI) approach. You may recall that there were several pieces in our Focus on Education newsletter last year concerning RTI. In support of this work, we have adopted Leveled Literacy Intervention materials for use with students who are in need of supplemental support in the area of Reading. You will learn more about Intervention programming from Ms. Thompson and her team.

Middle school students had the opportunity in June to choose content areas to study on a cycle basis in the areas of Art, Music, STEM and Theatre Arts. Students are now enrolled in the first of their selected courses. Providing students with opportunities to take charge of some of their learning decisions gives them a chance to make choices based on their own needs and wants, but it also helps students to navigate the school in a different way, work with their peers in varying groups and to think about how they learn best. The level of academic and creative discourse is already on the rise.

Since joining the Green Township School District community last January, I received many comments about the structure of our 20Time program. After careful deliberation and consultation with teachers and administration, we have decided to redesign 20Time. This year, 20Time will be an optional afterschool project for 6th-8th grade students. We believe that this plan addresses the instructional time concerns that had been raised in the past, while still allowing middle school students to engage in meaningful topics that are not typically addressed in depth during regular instruction. All teachers will continue to engage their students in projects that are linked to their instructional initiatives, but not in the same frame as 20time had been addressed in the past.

I want to thank all of our stakeholders for your continued diligence in contributing to the educational process and engaging in meaningful dialogue. Our staff and students truly grow and thrive when our entire community comes together to help us to attain our goals. I look forward to working with you this school year.

Very truly yours,



Dr. Lydia E. Furnari
Interim Superintendent