

August 9, 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians and Students:

As the days of August all too quickly pass, I hope that your family had a relaxing and enjoyable summer vacation.

There has been a flurry of activity in our school buildings these last two months as we prepare for the 2018-2019 school year. Our fabulous 12-month staff has worked diligently to ensure that our buildings, computers, buses, food services, and curriculum are ready for students in September.

By opening day, our new Middle School addition will be complete. The space is impressive, and students are sure to be wowed by its beauty (and staff by its thoughtful purpose and functionality). Please know, for this year, the addition will be used as temporary space for students while interior renovations of existing classrooms are underway. This means some shuffling throughout the year, and we appreciate everyone's patience. Careful thought and planning has gone into creating a schedule that will cause the least amount of disruption possible. We will carefully monitor the process and make improvements, if needed.

The new school year will also see two significant administrative changes. We will miss the many years of strong, student-focused leadership provided by retiring Middle School principal Dr. Richard Wiesenthal and Duzine principal Debra Hogencamp. Their retirements, however, also create opportunities to infuse new ideas and energy into our already thriving learning environment, and I am excited to see what the future holds. Longtime educator Ann Sheldon, who most recently served as assistant principal at the Middle School, has already been appointed to the principalship at the Middle School, and a search is underway to find a leader for Duzine. We also welcome Daniel Glenn as the new Assistant Principal in the Middle School while we look for a new Assistant Principal for the High School.

Curriculum work this school year continues to revolve around the continuum of well-being and a focus on social-emotional growth. For us to ensure every student achieves their fullest potential, it is essential to recognize that there are many elements of success, and that achievement looks different for everyone. Over the past few years, our Board of Education has worked to expand the definition of what "success" looks like. This has led to the measurement of non-academic indicators of success. The Board's foresight and leadership has positioned the District years ahead of others in this important work.

Open communication between school and home is a cornerstone of academic success. Our faculty and staff are deeply committed to every child, every day, and I encourage you to contact them should you ever have a question or concern. If at any point in the process you do not feel your issue is being addressed, I encourage you to move the conversation to the next level.

I am honored to serve as superintendent of this vibrant school community and look forward to working closely with all of you to continue to expand our District's stellar educational programs.

Enclosed with this letter you will find a copy of the key components of the *Educational Master Plan* along with a packet of materials pertaining to the opening of school. The approved *Educational Master Plan* may be found on the district's website, www.NewPaltz.K12.NY.US and is what guides and directs us to ensure that we maintain our culture, focus, and standards.

Sincerely,



Maria C. Rice
Superintendent