



September 16, 2022

Dear Holmdel Public Schools Community,

I hope this letter finds you well. We had another outstanding week in the schools, as our scholastic athletics are in full swing, the Holmdel Theater Guild revealed its shows for the year, and we hosted three successful back to school nights at Indian Hill. I would like to take a moment to extend sincere appreciation to all the parents/guardians who came out to attend. Parent attendance at events like Back to School Night are a testament to the quality of a district, as parental involvement and engagement have proven time and time again to be positively associated with our student achievement.

We will continue our back-to-school nights next week with our youngest learners and I look forward to seeing you all there. *Village*: **Sept. 21** - PreK, K, 1 - 6:30pm, **Sept 22** - Grade 2&3 - 6:30pm

### **Transportation**

In conversations with our parent community, we understand that even now as we close our second week of school, the district continues to experience challenges with regard to district busing. While I can speak personally to the number of pre-existing issues and complications which have been resolved by the transportation department, there are indeed some which remain. Early next week, I will be calling together a task force, including the transportation department, to understand on the most granular level, what are the issues which are being encountered. Next week, independent from my Friday letter, you may expect a more detailed update outlining the findings and recommendation which emerge from the meeting.

### **Revised Health Guidelines**

Enclosed are the [Revised Health Guidelines](#) for the 2022-23 school year. Please take some time to review them. You may reach out to your building principal and/or me with any questions.

### **ICYMI**

**Parent Workshop:** On October 3rd at 7:00pm the district will hold a health curriculum Town Hall. The recently revised curriculum which will be adopted at the September 28th public board meeting will be reviewed. The process for parents exercising choice and discretion in their children's academic program will also be shared that evening.

### **District Assessments:**

- [Start Strong Parent Notification](#)-Testing will commence next week at W.R. Satz Middle School and Holmdel High School. Communications regarding Start Strong testing details have been shared by Dr. Kukoda and Mr. Loughran earlier this week.

- **NJSLA Individual Score Reports** - The district will be mailing home individual score reports from the New Jersey Student Learning Assessments on October 7th. For more information on understanding score reports, please visit [The New Jersey Assessments Resource Center](#).
- [District Assessment Calendar](#) -Please see the District Assessment Calendar for more information.

## High School Open House

Holmdel High School will be holding an open house on October 13, 2022 from 7-9pm. This event is geared primarily towards families and students in eighth grade who are considering attending high school outside of the district at either parochial or county vocational schools. This will be an opportunity to showcase the exceptional resources and quality of our community's high school program as compared to these other educational institutions.

As I had mentioned in my update from last week, September is National Suicide Prevention Month. Sadly, the following day, I learned that a student from Middletown North High School died by suicide. Tragedies like this conjure a range of emotions. As a superintendent, however, amongst other sentiments, they renew and strengthen my commitment, and by proxy, the school district's, to ensure that OUR school district by virtue of its environment is never a contributing factor to a tragic occurrence like this.

In my travels around the district this week, in particular my attendance at Indian Hill School's Back to School Nights, I was continually impressed by the togetherness and warmth of this community. This is a community that prides itself on providing an environment which fortifies its young people. Together, as a school district and as a community, we can ensure that a tragedy like this never happens in Holmdel. As I said to the staff on the opening day of school, "There is no such thing as tough, just trained and untrained". To be a capable and engaged partner in these mental health support and prevention efforts, knowledge is power. To that end, I have linked a helpful article which provides parents with [10 ways to support their child's mental health](#).

I thank you for your time and consideration and wish you a restful and enjoyable weekend.

[#WeAreHolmdel](#)

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Sincerely,



Dr. J. Scott Cascone  
Superintendent