GOAL: Increase student engagement, challenge and excitement in the learning process and maximize the potential of every student.

It’s not every year that a school district selects a goal that provides the organization the opportunity to capture the attention and influence the work of the entire staff. But given the process in which we engaged in developing this particular goal (seeking input from parents, staff, and administration, conducting an analysis of quantitative and qualitative measures, and articulating a strong statement of desired outcomes) I believe that this goal and our work on it as described in the narrative that follows has been an organization-wide endeavor.

While the quantitative measures established to assess the success of this goal (5% decrease in the overall absentee rate (Table 1), 5% decrease in 8th grade graduates enrolling in other high schools and continued growth in ratings in five of the components of the Teacher Evaluation model) (Table 2), are not yet finalized, a significant amount of qualitative data represented by the narratives (by school, content area and program) that follow suggest that the goal is being enacted upon to a great degree in our classrooms and in the professional development provided to our staff.

The district organized an extensive Professional Development Day on January 27th during which 10 of the 23 topics offered related directly to engaging students more effectively and at their own level of readiness. All teachers were required to select one of six of the programs which were singularly focused on providing more targeted instruction to students and ensuring a higher degree of engagement. These included: higher order questioning, small group instruction, using data to make instructional decisions, differentiating instruction, co-teaching, and math workshop. Each program was differentiated by grade ranges, K-3, 4-8, 9-12.

In addition, programs for the utilization of Chromebooks to engage students in projects differentiated by grade range, and provided classroom oriented training for teachers just to improve their individual skills. Separate programs on strategies for all teachers working with ELLs and students with disabilities were also focused on engaging those subpopulations of students in general education classrooms.
### Table 1: Average Daily Absenteeism Percentages and Targets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>15-16 Overall</th>
<th>16-17 Target (5% decrease)</th>
<th>2016-2017 Actual</th>
<th>Target Difference After 90 Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PreK 3</td>
<td>9.90</td>
<td>9.41</td>
<td>10.06</td>
<td>-.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PreK 4</td>
<td>10.39</td>
<td>9.87</td>
<td>13.53</td>
<td>-3.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kindergarten</td>
<td>4.88</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>-1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.43</td>
<td>3.26</td>
<td>3.89</td>
<td>-.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>3.64</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>3.14</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>-.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>-.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.60</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>-.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td>5.1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>-3.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>5.62</td>
<td>-1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>8.44</td>
<td>8.02</td>
<td>7.05</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OVERALL</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>4.53</td>
<td>5.58</td>
<td>-1.05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Three main themes emerge from an analysis of the qualitative data reported by our principals and supervisors:

- **Building Educator Capacity to Deepen Student Engagement, Challenge and Excitement**
  - Maximizing teacher use of the Google Platform
  - Developing standard practices for Guided Reading in Grades K-5
  - Implementing the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessments and Unleashing the Power of the Data it Provides to Challenge Students with What They Are Ready to Learn!
  - Meeting Needs of English Language Learners
  - Re-affirming our Commitment to the Co-Teaching Model
  - Developing Teachers’ Repertoire of Strategies to Support Students with Cognitive Disabilities

- **Critically Considering Practices (Past, Present and Future)**
  - Rethinking our Supplemental Programs (Achieve, Math Plus)
  - Exploring the Benefits of the Math Workshop Model
  - Making the Rotating Schedule Make Better Sense for Holmdel
  - Examining Attendance Practices
  - Advancing Small Group Instruction practices
  - Improving Data Practices (MAP, Running Records, Running Records in Math)

- **Teaching and Learning Outside the Box (Innovation and Experimentation)**
  - Developing 10 New Courses for HHS
  - Maximizing the Use of Science Labs for 6th Grade
○ Conducting the First Indian Hill One Read program
○ Developing New Co-Curricular Activities
○ Implementing New Character Education Tools
○ Exploring Distance Learning
○ Organizing a Life Hacks Science Fair
○ Developing an Inclusive Sports Program
○ Piloting Resources designed to Increase Engagement

The narratives below provide greater insight into the activities, initiatives and programmatic enhancements generated in an effort to make advancements towards this goal thus far this year.

**Advancement towards this goal at Village School:**

Village School teachers have taken part in various training opportunities since the beginning of the year to enhance their skills in engaging/challenging students at their individual levels. Based on need and interest identified via a teacher survey, Technology Coach Erin Damji has provided staff with a variety of PD opportunities around the Google platform. Many of these tools have been put into place through Google Classroom to enhance instruction and learning.

All Village School teachers are taking part in Guided Reading training with a trainer from Rutgers. These initial trainings, in conjunction with continued work by Supervisor of Humanities Marilyn Bellis and Reading Specialist Erin Fetter, have provided Village teachers with tools to begin implementing guided reading strategies with during their literacy classes.

There has also been a good deal of training for staff around the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) Assessment. Classroom teachers are beginning to review the data and understand how it can be used to differentiate instruction in order to make sure all students are challenged at just the right level. The school’s new Supplemental Team, led by Supervisor of Supplemental Programs, Denise Wrubel, is using this data to help drive specific instruction in their small group classes to target individual needs. This team meets on a weekly basis to discuss flexible grouping within each individual program, as well as potential for movement between the programs based on student need. The team also reviews and continues to refine program exit and entrance criteria.

The Supplemental Team’s work reaches beyond what happens in the various programs that are part of the supplemental program, as team members also share successful small group strategies with homeroom-based colleagues to help transition some students back into the large group setting for all literacy and/or math instruction.

Assistant Principal Jessica Vierschilling has refined the Intervention and Referral Services (I&RS) process at Village School, allowing classroom teachers the opportunity to provide student data through a Google form that can then be reviewed by members of the supplemental
team and the I&RS team prior to any student meetings. This has brought about more meaningful discussion for parents, teachers, and administration during I&RS meetings.

**Advancement towards this goal at Indian Hill School:**

Indian Hill teachers have been actively involved in piloting programs in Social Studies, Literacy, and Science. Supervisors Mrs. Bellis and Mrs. Killean have been working closely to guide this process in order to select the best programs and resources for our students. For the duration, teachers have been reading in their content areas to update their skills with new content standards while integrating this knowledge in this process. Teachers have also been working on collaborative unit planning to strengthen their curricula in various areas.

English and a Second Language teacher Mrs. Jeannette Malizia trained all Indian Hill staff on meeting the needs of our ELL students. Teachers learned how to embed important and relevant activities and strategies for their English Language Learners into their instruction as they plan their lessons in all subject areas.

In our media center, Media Specialist Lisa McTague has worked with Social Studies teachers to teach 4th graders how to create Google maps that highlights Revolutionary War landmarks in Monmouth County. By accessing and titling a new Google Map, students open a Revolutionary War NJ website and pin local landmarks to their maps. In 5th grade, students have explored various websites that were selected for them to use to write current events articles. This lesson was created as a way to guide students to select more news sites that give them student-friendly and appropriate academic options. In 6th grade, a Google Classroom was created for students to learn how to cite books, online articles, and videos when writing a feature article.

Indian Hill Literacy coaches, Susan Fullilove and Rebecca Waddell, have successfully supported teachers in the continuation of implementing guided reading and the literacy program as a whole. Coaches have modeled guided reading in literacy classrooms and guided lesson planning and conferring templates for implementation, creating before reading menus for teachers to vary their instruction based on individual student needs. Additionally, they have helped teachers construct a ‘strategies menu’ for fiction and nonfiction and modified unit plans to incorporate question stems that will strengthen student understanding.

Students, teachers, and parents participated in “Indian Hill, One Read” a community-wide reading project that encourages students and adults of all ages to read one book. Students participated in thought-provoking discussions and activities with the goal to nurture and further develop the reading community by having everyone read *Save Me a Seat* by Sarah Weeks and Gita Varadarajan. The project was designed to encourage leisure reading, community collaboration throughout Indian Hill School, and to provide a variety of means of participation through book discussions, resources for book discussion groups, and other programs. The
Holmdel Foundation for Educational Excellence (VFEE) generously helped fund the purchase of 100 copies of the book through a $1,000 donation.

Guidance Counselor Eileen Calvert and Media Specialist Lisa McTague taught character education lessons created to complement the book, *Save Me a Seat*. They celebrated the following themes: October (Diversity & Tolerance), November (Conflict Resolution), and December (Friendship). This exciting program culminated with the author visiting Indian Hill School, thanks to the generosity of our PLG.

For the first time, 6th grade science classes are raising trout in their classrooms. Through the Freehold Soil Conservation District, all 6th graders are exploring an ecosystem right inside of their classroom. The NJDEP Division of Fish & Wildlife provided the teachers with all the materials that are needed to raise rainbow trout from eggs to fingerlings. This program teaches students about the importance of coldwater conservation and about how fragile an ecosystem can be. The classes have set up a "trout cam" in the classroom so they can view a live video feed, and observe the trouts' continuing growth and development throughout the year. Teachers are planning a field trip in the beginning of June to release the trout into a water source.

Students will be participating in a special celebration and pledging not to use hurtful names towards each other. “No Name Calling Week” will be commemorated the week of Valentine’s Day and will focus on the act of treating each other with kindness and respect. Physical Education, Art, Literacy and Media will all be participating in lessons that are designed to support this concept. This program will center around the need for people to live in harmony and understand each other’s differences.

Mr. Woods, Indian Hill’s talented resident scientist assembled and presented Indian Hill’s Starlab mini-planetarium, purchased generously as a gift from our PLG. The Starlab holds an entire class inside. Mr. Woods presented to every 4th and 5th grade class. Some of his presentations included: explaining the moon phases, why earth doesn't have a lot of craters and the moon does, the galaxy & solar system, and Apollo missions/landings.

The 4th grade students hosted their first “Life Hack” Science Fair. This project was implemented by science teachers, as students were introduced to the six steps in the scientific method (objective, background, hypothesis, experiment, data, and conclusion) and were asked to think like a scientist. The students had two months to complete a summary, diagram, advertisement, and a prototype of their invention. These “Life Hacks” were then displayed in the Indian Hill Elementary School Cafetorium, where parents, teachers, and students gathered for a series of hands on presentations.

*Advancement towards this goal at William R. Satz School:*
Satz School has conducted several in-house trainings for staff (during faculty meetings) focused on student engagement. Like that which was conducted at Indian Hill, English as a Second Language teacher Mrs. Jacqueline Peters conducted a training session for our staff on preparing them to also meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELL). Teachers were provided with a variety of skills and tips that could be used in instruction, in particular for the cognitively demanding tasks necessary for engagement in discipline-specific areas. Indian Hill Art Teacher Jennifer Polinski conducted an informational workshop for staff on Mindfulness and incorporating Mindful activities into lessons in an effort to help students deal with issues associated with anxiety and stress management. Denise Wrubel also conducted a workshop with our staff members on understanding and utilizing MAP data as a means of providing targeted instruction for students in all Core subjects. Staff members also participated in an excellent professional development program entitled, “Strategies to Support Students with Cognitive Disabilities.” Staff were given a variety of different strategies and approaches for differentiating instruction, increasing student engagement and providing the best possible educational environment for our students.

Many Satz staff members have incorporated unique instructional techniques into their lessons to enhance student engagement and bring more excitement into the curriculum. For example, in Language Arts, sixty students from Mr. Ferraro’s 8th Grade English classes had the opportunity to engage in a distance learning project with HS students in Orlando, Florida. For this lesson, Mr. Ferraro teamed up with his daughter, who is a drama and music teacher at Celebration High School in Orlando, Florida. Working together, they did some team-teaching via FaceTime and watched as students from Ms. Ferraro’s drama class in Florida performed scenes from *A Christmas Carol*. The Satz students not only were able to view a performances taking place over a thousand miles away, but they also had a chance to discuss with their Floridian colleagues the process of putting the scenes together.

Two other Satz English teachers, Ms. Caliendo and Mrs. Smith, utilizing a grant obtained from the HFEE, expanded their already robust classroom library and gave students an opportunity to perform book talks during class and exchange novels they liked with their peers in an old-fashioned book swap they titled the “Holiday Book Bash.”

In Mathematics, Math Plus (a supplemental program) has taken on a whole new look by employing a different model than in previous years. Through the use of a push-in intervention model, the school’s Math Plus instructor is co-teaching in several different 7th and 8th grade Math classes during the course of the day. The push-in model of intervention is an excellent way to serve the needs of all the students in the classroom, including those students who were not specifically identified for the Math Plus program. As a push-in co-teacher, the Math Plus instructor is available to assist in whole group lessons, as well as for small group instruction. With the two teachers working together, groupings can be more flexible and the individual needs of students can be addressed more specifically.
In addition to taking the lead in the coordination of MAP training for the staff, the Satz Guidance Department continues to work on Character Education Initiatives at the school. Together, Mrs. Finnegan and Mr. Bruce have led Spirit Week, Respect Week and No-Name Calling Week. Leading up to the school’s annual Pep Rally, Spirit Week provides students with the opportunity to collaborate and work together as a team to earn Pep Rally points and show their school spirit and pride. At the suggestion of one of the school’s Social Studies teachers, this year the school focused their fundraising efforts to collect a variety of different items for five local organizations in the Monmouth County area. These organizations included: the Keyport Food Ministerium, the Fisher House in Keyport, the local animal shelter, 3 Hearts, 3 Paws, the Middletown Lions Club and the Jersey Shore Work camp.

During Respect Week, the school continued to explore research-based strategies that demonstrate positive outcomes related to the prevention of bullying. The long standing program, *Strive to Thrive*, sponsored by Camp Fire USA and funded through Holmdel Municipal Alliance, presented students with life skills needed to enable them to successfully interact with others and overcome obstacles they may face that could potentially cause them to not reach their goals. Topics included coping with stress, teasing, bullying, choices, cyberbullying, internet safety and responsibility to name a few. These efforts, along with two other Character building initiatives, “Caught Being Good,” and “Student of the Month,” have helped the school lower the number of HIB investigations significantly, by 58% between the 2011-2012 school year (24 investigations) to the 2015-2016 school year (10 investigations). Research demonstrates that when students feel safe in school they are more likely to be engaged and achieve better outcomes.

The school’s character education efforts haven’t stopped there, as this year Satz added “No-Name Calling” week to their repertoire of school wide activities. Students participated in activities in homeroom supporting inclusion and diversity by putting kindness into action. The week culminated with a poster contest where students & staff voted on the artwork that best represented the goals and objectives of the week.

*Advancement towards this goal at Holmdel High School:*

In year two of the rotating schedule, several tweaks to the schedule have resulted in greater student engagement. They include creating uniform blocks of fifty-five minutes for both academics and the unit lunch. This has resulted in a greater use of extra help during the unit lunch period. Additionally, the relaxing of mandatory study halls in 9th grade, in certain circumstances, has allowed students the ability to continue their study in multiple music classes and/or meeting their graduation requirement for Financial Literacy.

Another effort that has resulted in greater student engagement includes a renewed vigilance on student attendance. Revised procedures for late arrival and early dismissals, along with repeated messaging to students and parents, has resulted in a greater awareness of the importance
of getting to class on time, and has lowered the numbers of seniors losing academic credit in semester classes from seventeen in 2015-2016 to zero in 2016-2017.

Holmdel High School has partnered with the teaching staff of Monmouth University to provide professional development in the area of co-teaching. Thirty-two staff members participated in a two-hour workshop in December, and plans are now being made for the Monmouth University team to conduct peer coaching observations for each of our co-teaching teams.

The teaching staff has proposed the introduction of **ten new courses for students to choose from for 2017-2018 school year**. These include such potential offerings as Advanced Acting, Advanced Culinary Arts, Art History, Anatomy and Physiology, Virtual Business, AP Computer Science Principles, Chamber Singers and Honors Literature and Film. The new offerings also include a partnership with Rutgers University for classes in PE/Health that will satisfy a Health Science Career Concentration. These classes, Dynamic of Health Care and Scientific Principles of Nutrition, may be taken for college credit.

Our plans for launching a Career Concentration program are well underway. Rather than a prescribed set of courses or course progression, it is our intent to allow students to construct their own unique concentrations that will include:

1. Planned Coursework - Students must earn a minimum of 30 credits in courses related to the area of concentration
2. Mentorship Experience - Completion of professional or shadowing responsibilities under supervision of an agency mentor
3. Capstone Presentation - Students will synthesize and present what they have gained from their mentorship experience in a PowerPoint presentation that may include picture, video clips, and multimedia as appropriate.

Candidacy for a Concentration will be indicated on the high school transcript with completion noted on the student’s final transcript.

Finally, the introduction of several new **Student Clubs/Activities** (Culinary Arts Club, A.I.R Club) add to the variety of offerings, across all subject areas, available to our students.

**Advancement towards this goal in Language Arts/Literacy/English:**

Our elementary teachers continue to develop and deliver guided reading lessons that are data driven. To support this work, we are setting aside time to analyze running records together, as well as observe and debrief a GR lesson conducted by our consultant from Rutgers Literacy Development Center.
A team of 3rd grade teachers drafted a unit plan for opinion writing based on NJ’s Student Learning Standards that mirrors authentic practices--genre immersion; generating; drafting; revising; editing; and publishing.

Similarly, our 7th grade English teachers got together to draft a unit plan for argumentative writing which is also aligned with NJ’s SLS. They adopted this same instructional sequence.

**Advancement towards this goal in Mathematics:**
A focus in creating more time for targeted small group instruction has been the main topic with elementary school teachers this year. Teachers are exploring various methods for implementing lessons so that they have time to pull small groups of students for remediation, reinforcement, or enrichment as necessary.

First grade teachers are working to improve the quality of data they receive on student addition and subtraction fact fluency by replacing timed tests with running records in math. Here, not only are teachers able to see whether the student is correctly computing their facts, but they are making note of the strategies that the students employ to arrive at answers, so that they can then create future lessons on strategy development as appropriate.

Fourth grade teachers have been collaborating in their unit planning, meeting together to discuss standards based instructional strategies. As a result, they have implemented the use of math notebooks and are engaging students through the use of small group instruction and research based instructional strategies for the content standards.

Teachers in grades 1-6 attended a professional development presentation on the math workshop model and engaged in activities and games that can be used in a math classroom to develop student skills in areas such as concept building, problem solving, procedural fluency, reasoning, modeling, and strategy work.

**Advancement towards this goal in Science:**
A team, consisting of 12 teachers from grades K-5 have been working on developing lessons and designing instruction that reflects the core ideas and recommendations in the new science standards (JSLS-Science) which are to be implemented for the 2017-2018 school year. As such, they have attended professional development on, and are piloting, the physical science units from the science program, *Knowing Science* in their classrooms during the second half of the school year. These units focus on hands on activities where students are engaged in ‘doing’ science instead of just ‘learning about’ science. Through labs, engineering design activities, and other engaging activities, students are able observe, describe and explain phenomena as well as apply knowledge and design solutions for real world problems.
Teachers in grades 6-12 have been meeting monthly to review the evidence statement tables found in the Next Generation Science Standards and discussing the activities, labs and instruction that is currently taking place in their science classrooms, as they relate to the evidence statements, which speak to the ways in which students should be engaging in and experiencing science.

**Advancement towards this goal in Social Sciences:**
Students in grades 6 through 12 are tackling historically intriguing open ended questions by examining primary sources (Document-based Questions) which culminates in a claim based essay and interesting Socratic Seminar discussions.

The 4th grade teachers have revised their Social Studies unit plans to incorporate activities in their newly adopted *Social Studies Alive* Techbook resource. This resource is purposefully designed to engage students in historical thinking by including metaphoric examples (e.g., a tug of war simulation to mirror the French alliance with the Continental Army during the American Revolution), and an online Interactive Notebook.

**Advancement towards this goal in Technology Education**
Increased student engagement in the Tech Cycle class taught by Mrs. McCafferty’s could be seen through a unit on simple machines and catapults. Through research of the Roman Military and structured learning experiences with simple machines, students were asked to work collaboratively in groups to construct their own wooden catapults to see which team could launch a marshmallow the farthest. Students enjoyed using the engineering and design process to complete this project. 7th grade students are learning how to use Tinkercad to create and print a 3d creation and 8th graders are collaborating to create an online safety and anti-cyberbullying commercials.

Students in our recently renamed course, Introduction to Engineering and Design have been using AutoCAD and applying their knowledge and skills to design a “Holmdel HS Student Center.”

**Advances towards this goal in World Languages:**
Teachers at Satz have been working to prepare for our Incoming 7th Grade students by preparing for the WL Fair on Thurs. Feb. 16th at 7 p.m. Parents and students are invited to attend an entertaining and informational evening that will highlight the 5 languages we offer. Our HS WL Honor Societies have put together a short presentation that represents their target language and teachers will be available for a meet and greet afterwards.

Our Spanish teachers (Satz & HS) will be meeting in March to to engage in the second phase of curriculum mapping. This process will help ensure we are able to identify the core skills and content processes and assessments being taught for each level and that teacher collaboration and
articulation is ongoing. Teachers are excited and are looking forward to creating a program that is cohesive, challenging and engaging.

**Advancement towards this goal in our district Media Centers:**

Our Media Centers are continuing to do a wonderful job of helping our students to not just consume information, but to encourage participatory learning and constructing knowledge. At Village School, the Media Specialists have been working on coding and STEM activities integrated with literature with all of the students in grades 1-3. In addition to the above mentioned One Read initiative at Indian Hill, the annual Book Fair is currently happening. At Satz and the High School the media centers are buzzing with students looking for help with various technology assistance as well as help with research. At Satz, Mr. Rothauser has been working with all of the 8th grade English classes to help them conduct research for their philanthropy projects, while at the High School, the student led Makerspace, held during lunch, has given students the opportunity to create and share innovative ideas with each other.

**Advances towards this goal in Special Education:**

Special Education staff members have integrated several new programs to enhance instruction in the district’s resource rooms. The **Visualization/Verbalization Program** focuses on teaching students with reading comprehension and language processing difficulties to build pictures in their minds as they listen to or read text, with the end goal of the students being able to visualize the main idea, get the “whole picture,” and answer higher order thinking questions.

**Framing Your Thoughts** is another program that has been embedded within the traditional Writing Lab curriculum in our resource room programs at Satz. Framing Your Thoughts is a multisensory program that teaches students the fundamentals of writing complete sentences so that they are better able to take their thoughts and feelings and express them clearly and accurately. Our teachers are seeing marked improvement and have been receiving positive feedback from parents.

The Holmdel District is partnering with the **NJ Special Olympics to create inclusive intramural programs for its students**. Plans are underway for a six-week basketball program beginning later this month, and a track/outdoor games session set for our return from spring break. Additionally, plans are being made for the Team UNIFY club to participate in a Youth Leadership Summit, as well as a student video celebrating Disabilities Awareness Week later in the spring.

**Advancement towards this goal in Supplemental Programs:**

The district supplemental team members met for an articulation meeting to share resources and discuss program ideas to best meet the needs of the students in the district’s achieve programs.
This month, the team will meet again to review program entrance and exit criteria and to work together to analyze MAP data to identify areas to continue to support student achievement.

At weekly meeting, supplemental team members at Village School meet to collaborate on the best practices and programs to meet individual student needs, to celebrate students who exit Achieve and to identify the best strategies to support their transitions into the classroom instruction.

*Advancement towards this goal in Gifted and Talented Education:*

Students in the Voyager programs at Indian Hill researched, created and presented projects designed to foster empathy and understanding about other cultures and learning disabilities to student groups as part of the schools One Read celebration.

Working with Ms. Catania, students in grade 4 are “inventing” tools that can change the Earth and creating prototypes of their ideas while students in grade 6 reflected on their progress and identified SMART goals for the remainder of the year with guidance from Ms. Thomas.

New this year, Voyagers students in 8th grade have regular meetings with teacher mentors in various areas of the curriculum.

**GOAL:** Assess and develop a plan to upgrade the district’s infrastructure to continue to provide all students with superior programs in academics, athletics and the arts.

The Holmdel 2020 Initiative has been a product of over a year of efforts on the part of the board, its committees, the administration and the district architect. The process has involved:

- Identification and Prioritization of facilities needs.
- Analysis of debt and available debt service aid
- Establishment and commissioning of an ad hoc committee
- The development of a vision (see below)

The Holmdel 2020 Vision

Beyond our responsibility to protect the infrastructure built by those who went before us, Holmdel has always held steadfast to its commitment to developing healthy, well-rounded, and future-ready graduates. However, not all of our facilities have kept pace with advances in learning and the demands on school facilities that those advances have introduced, while in particular spaces, the aging and dated appearance of the facilities may also no longer inspire learning at the high levels our community expects.
Today’s learning takes place in an entirely new manner, with more personalization and new areas of study and with new tools, techniques, and teaching methods that increasingly do not fit the simplistic designs of 20th century school facilities. While our high school has kept better pace with educational change and the elementary schools have had updates and are most developmentally appropriate, the greatest challenge to creating a true 21st century learning environment exists in the William R. Satz School.

While the Holmdel 2020 Initiative is intended to upgrade and update certain aspects of each of our buildings and outdoor facilities, the greatest need and therefore the greatest focus is on creating a unified 7th-12th Grade facility that will support the transformation of the adolescents who enter it as 7th graders into future-ready young adults. The Holmdel 2020 Initiative will allow us to create a more appropriately flexible, student-centered, technology rich complex that will inspire and promote innovation at every turn and allow our district to optimize the pace and focus of learning for all students.

**GOAL:** Implement effective communications channels to build awareness of district achievements and provide timely information about district activities.

Much progress has been made towards this goal already this year. The following accomplishments are most noteworthy:

- **Media Releases - Development of Communications Network**
  - Total of 34 Media Releases to date
  - Articles published by Asbury Park Press and Two River Times, with extensive coverage by the Patch (25 articles) and the Holmdel Journal.

- **Website Content**
  - New Communications Network developing content on on-going basis.

- **New Initiatives**
  - Superintendent’s Weekly Message to Families
  - Superintendent’s Facebook and Twitter Presence
  - Online Agenda Publication 24 hours earlier than in the past
  - Holmdel Highlighters
    - Board Meeting Highlights for the Public
    - Weekly District-wide updates for Staff

The Community Relations Committee has deeply explored and are committed to the launch of a new website and are in the process of developing a statement of the district’s Brand Identity.
Summary
We have accomplished a great deal on each of the goals we set for ourselves this year and yet there is more work to do in the months of the school year that remain. As Superintendent, I am grateful to our administrative team, teaching and support staff and our students for their daily engagement in making Holmdel the excellent school district it continues to be.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert A. McGarry, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools