



HOLMDEL TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION SEPTEMBER 26, 2018

Good evening, everyone! It's hard to believe that the first month of this school year is just about over! Reflecting on how quickly September has flown by reminds me of the opening line of a short poem by Dr. Seuss, that goes, "How did it get so late so soon?"

I want to begin my report with a slight break in protocol and recognize someone who has been an important part of our Holmdel Schools' family for 26 years and whose departure from the district should not go unnoticed or without our deep gratitude. Since this individual's role has been as a service provider we didn't get to announce or have the board accept her retirement in the way we do our own employees. That person is Susan Stanzione.

So many Holmdel students and staff members are better today for having known and worked with Susan. She has been a hard working, consummate professional as a Physical Therapist for 26 years and even though "just a contractor," Susan has always volunteered to get involved in so many areas within our schools - to be honest, it took me a couple of years to learn that she was not one of our staff members.

During her years in Holmdel Susan developed and delivered parent presentations and participated in workshops to consistently enhance her skill set. She was instrumental in starting the STRIVE Program over 10 years ago, and, working collaboratively with the Physical Education department, Susan helped to initiate what is an exceptional Adaptive Physical Education Program. Susan was also instrumental in helping to develop the Special Olympics Unified Game Day event.

While there is no formal action that the board needs to take to let her go to start a new chapter in her life, I did ask Susan to join us here tonight to accept the district's gratitude for all she has done for us and for the difference she has made in the lives of so many students.

Susan - you will be greatly missed and we wish you well in this next chapter of your life. Please join me in recognizing Susan Stanzione for her 26 years of service and dedication to the children of Holmdel.

Now back to my report - I do not want to let this month go by without thanking everyone who helped to set this school year off on a successful note.

First of all I have to say thank you to our Plant, Operations and Maintenance staff, who not only made sure that our schools and grounds were thoroughly cleaned, spruced up and ready for the first day (and each day since), but who also welcomed and worked alongside countless roofing, lighting, HVAC, and paving and field construction contractors as the first pieces of the Holmdel 2020 puzzle began to fall into place. But beyond all of this, this dedicated group of men and women - who contribute greatly to our success - also gave the new Science Labs at Indian Hill and the new Cardio Lab here at the complex some wonderful extra touches as well. The Innovate to Elevate spirit is alive in well in the Plant, Operations and Maintenance department.

Thank you to our administrative team and our administrative support staff members. Our administrators and support staff did a great job of hiring and training new staff, developing class schedules, studying data from the previous years, giving special care to creating class rosters in grades 1-5 that are based on purposeful clustering, checking and rechecking bus assignments and routes, ordering supplies and materials and preparing for a smooth opening.

Thank you to all of our teachers, counselors, nurses, media specialists, child study team members, therapists and paraprofessionals who helped our students transition back to school and to dig into the new year of learning from the moment the first bell rang on September 5th!

Thank you to the Holmdel Police Department for their presence during our first few weeks of school and for working with us to launch our Class III officer program. As our offices are located at Village School, just seeing officer Dave walk the perimeter of the school several times a day has given many, myself included, a greater sense of safety and security.

As you've heard me say before, the safety of our children is our greatest responsibility as a school district. With the addition of Class III officers to complement our outstanding School Resource Officer Jon Martin, we have intensified our focus on safety and security efforts and taken this to an even higher level than before. Thank you to the Board for your support in this and thank you to the Township Committee for working with us to make it happen.

Thank you to all of our families for sending us your amazing children and for preparing them to get back to a healthy school routine and for encouraging them to do their best each day and to be respectful, kind and caring classmates and students.

And thank you to all of our parent support groups who not only provide so much in the way of materials and equipment, but whose support and partnership are key ingredients in our daily successes.

I'm so excited about the year ahead and the goals we have set for our district, especially on the heels of learning that all four of our schools have earned Future Ready designation - the direct result of one of our goals from last year and a testament to the infrastructure built under Mr. Gattini's leadership and put to use in the classroom through through the leadership of Mrs. MacConnell . Congratulations to them and the whole Future Ready team! The next step for us in our Future Ready work is found in this year's goal of establishing a network of partnerships with businesses and organizations within our local community and globally to provide meaningful, real-world experiences for our students via internships and collaborative projects in our Career Concentration program and throughout our K-12 programs.

I'm also looking forward to the work ahead related to the use of data to drive our efforts and the truly important work that we are initiating to examine and evaluate issues related to the social, emotional and psychological health of all students.

And of course, one year to the date of the vote that put it all into motion, it is both exciting to see several pieces of the Holmdel 2020 puzzle coming together and to think about how much we will accomplish by this time next year.

It's an absolute privilege to be Superintendent of this great school district and to be starting my 5th school year as a Hornet. Thank you to the board for your support and tireless engagement in our work. I wish everyone here and everyone listening, a fulfilling year of learning and growth.

Thank you -

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