

Mount Arlington Public Schools
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Superintendent of Schools

Fall 2011

Dear Parents and Students,

It is almost September, where did the summer go? I can hardly believe that the school year is about to begin again. It seems as though it was just yesterday when we celebrated graduation and the end of a successful school year. The 2010-2011 school year was a banner year for staff and student learning. The students and staff made us proud and represented themselves, their school and their community in a most exemplary manner. Ms. Crawford was honored with a grant from the Honeywell Corporation, enabling her to spend one week at the "Honeywell Green Boot Camp for Science Teachers". Her efforts will enhance learning opportunities both in our classrooms and for our school district. Additionally, Ms. Crawford's students received 1st place recognition in the Veolia Global Biodiversity Campaign 2011 for their research. They competed amongst 115,000 students worldwide and their work is being displayed in Paris at a global conference. Also, under the direction of Ms. Crawford, Mount Arlington 6th and 7th grade students placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd in engineering, technical documentation and craftsmanship in the Solar Sprint Car Races sponsored by JCP&L, PSE&G and Trans Options Corporation. Additional accomplishments are numerous and are as follows; Band and Choir, as directed by Dr. Aberback and Mrs. Bucher, received "Exemplary" ratings at the Music in the Parks festival at Dorney Park, Miss Hahn was named "Teacher Who Rocks" by WDHA 101.5 FM, the Chess team placed 6th in the County Finals amongst 30 other teams from across the County- a superb effort for their first time competing, the first grade students read over 500 books in the Mayor's Book Club and received \$1000 for new books for their classrooms, Miss Hahn and Mrs. Occhiuzzo's classes received a "Best of the Best" award in the Celebrate New Jersey contest sponsored by the State of New Jersey while three students received individual recognition for their written work, Gateway students celebrated; a 5th place finish in the New Jersey Math League, 2nd place recognition in the New Jersey Consortium of Gifted and Talented students and the World of Free Enterprise in conjunction with Toy's R Us competition for the best print advertisement, 1st, 2nd and 3rd place for best web design, and an honorable mention for written resolution in the Junior Model United Nations competition. Additionally, Mr. Merker's students raised \$1500 for the National Heart Association and Mr. Malakuskie's students cultivated and released trout for the Morris County Trout in the Classroom project. Students and teachers met with tremendous success at every turn. They certainly secured Mount Arlington Schools' position on the road to continuous success!

Additionally, I wish to extend my thanks to Mayor Ondish and Ms. Nita Galati, former Borough Council president, for their efforts in securing a State grant for our community that enabled the Board of Education and the Borough Council to work cooperatively to enhance our community's appearance and "Green" initiatives. Our students, Ms. Crawford our middle school Science teacher, administration, custodial staff and the Department of Public-Works, put forth their collaborative efforts to realize Ms. Galati's vision for a Rain Garden to be planted on the Mount Arlington school grounds. Please take a moment to view it at the corner of Kadel Avenue and Howard Boulevard. This Rain Garden project has made our school grounds more aesthetically pleasing and environmentally supportive. The cooperative efforts between the Mount Arlington Schools and the Mount Arlington Department of Public Works continue to enhance our community.

The summer months have been busy here at school. Our summer staff has worked to prepare for the early September start date readying the classrooms and grounds and making certain that all is fresh and clean for your return. Throughout the course of this summer, several projects have been completed and others are still underway. We are just about ready to begin and hope that you are as well. The office staff has been working to prepare calendars, registration information, student databases and have completed the varied and numerous requirements set forth by the State of New Jersey. Mr. Mason, Mr. Kelly, Mrs. Cummings, Mrs. Pickens, Mrs. Caggiano, Mrs. Reilly and I have worked throughout the summer completing summer objectives and preparing to meet the changing needs of our district. We look forward to another successful school year.

In the area of Buildings and Grounds, all of the typical summer work such as classroom and carpet cleaning, painting, floor waxing, etc. is just about complete and will be ready for the start of school. The Decker School parking lot is being repaved. This has been a long and arduous process but will be well worth the inconvenience once it is complete. I would like to thank the Mayor and Borough Council for their support of this project and their recent contribution to extend the scope of the project to connect the parking lot with the street to make a safe and appropriate segue between the school project and the municipal street. At the Mount Arlington School a new OT/PT room has been outfitted thanks to State and Federal grant dollars and the diligent efforts of our custodial staff.

Larger projects include the replacement of the HVAC system in the 3rd, 4th and 5th grade classrooms. This has been a long awaited project that will finally afford us the opportunity to control the heat and airflow in these classrooms. If you have spent any time in the rooms you will be “jumping for joy”, as I am, to actually have this project completed. We will also be seal coating the Mount Arlington School parking lot in order to keep it properly maintained and safe. I wish to extend my most sincere thanks to all of you who had the opportunity to support our school budget for the 2011-2012 school year, as without your support this important work could not have been completed.

As it continues to be our belief that teachers are the best source of instructional innovation and in preparation to inspire and challenge our students to reach new heights in their learning; administrators, teachers and staff have developed new curricula, replaced instructional items, purchased appropriate instructional support materials and technology, and set forth exciting plans for the 2011-2012 school year. At this time, I wish to extend my thanks to those teachers involved in this monumental effort; Miss K. Alexander, Mrs. L. Alexander, Mr. DeBoer, Mrs. Garcia, Miss Hahn, Mrs. Ochoa, Miss Tybus, and Mrs. Westervelt. An important initiative in Early Literacy was begun this past Spring and Summer and will continue throughout the school year. In preparation for this initiative the Literacy Committee, made up of teachers and administrators, researched new methods of teaching and learning and instructional support materials to enhance the learning objectives in grades Kindergarten through second grade. Many months were spent exploring the possibilities. The summer months have afforded us the time to bring our learning together and explore new instructional methodologies to incorporate into our, already exemplary, program. The outcome of this initiative will be implemented this school year and will be presented to parents at Open House in the Fall. We are most encouraged by our findings and are excited to begin this new initiative with our students.

Traditionally, a portion of this letter is dedicated to extending our congratulations to staff members for their recent accomplishments. I would like to begin by extending my best wishes to Mrs. Angellilo on the birth of her baby girl and Mrs. Walter on the birth of her son. We are always thrilled to welcome new members into our Mount Arlington Schools family! I would also like to congratulate Mrs. Longo as she welcomes a new son-in-law into her family. As well, please join me in welcoming Mrs. Malakuskie back from maternity leave to teach Basic Skills in Reading and Mathematics. Her recent training in the Orton-Gillingham program will afford our students continuity in programming to enhance their learning.

As we approach the 2011-2012 school year we look forward to another technologically inspiring and academically successful school year. I would like to extend my most sincere thanks to the P.T.A. for their efforts in assisting us with all aspects of our preparation in bringing forth a comprehensive plan for our students and teachers for the upcoming school year. In addition, I would like to thank all of you for the efforts you have put forth in supporting our students and our schools. Mount Arlington schools are truly wonderful places to grow and learn in. If you are in need of any further information regarding the upcoming school year, please visit our website at www.mtarlingtonschools.org.

Sincerely,

Jane Mullins Jameson