

2019 Message from the Superintendent **C. Lauren Schoen, Ed.D.**

We had some great opportunities to #CelebrateMahwah during the 2018-2019 school year! It is important that we continue to build relationships in order to attain the ultimate goal - student growth and achievement. We cannot overlook the importance that the district has placed upon growing our digital learners/citizens.

The 2019-2020 school year will be grounded in the theme: **#MahwahConnects**

The **#MahwahConnects** encapsulates the following relationships between: staff to student, student to student, administration to student, administration to staff, school to school, and all of us to the Mahwah Community. Partnering with these human connections, technology allows us to create opportunities for our students to connect with: each other, content, and experiences within our schools and beyond, to our community outside of our classroom walls.

We are excited to share that our district continues to change, develop, and transform as we maintain our high-quality education, while meeting the ever-evolving demands of our current time. Facility, resource, and curricular enhancements have taken place over the course of the summer.

Over 1,900 laptops have been provided to the students and staff at Mahwah High School and Ramapo Ridge Middle School. We believe that use of educational technology and access to information are an integral part of the educational program for all students. The goal of the Mahwah High School's 1:1 and Ramapo Ridge's modified 1:1 laptop initiative is to develop college and career readiness, as well as to prepare students for their future in a digital society. It does not start there, though! We are extremely fortunate that we have resources and curriculum and talented teachers at the elementary level, building and developing our students into global thinkers, developers, and collaborators who can fully take advantage of the programs and facilities that they will experience at the secondary level to come.

The Mahwah High School community will be opening our new STEAM facility, Thunderbird Think Tank (T³). The Thunderbird Think Tank, like Mahwah itself, is *a meeting place* - blending science, technology, engineering, art, and mathematics in an innovative way that empowers our students to research, to design, to engage, to collaborate, and to ultimately build visionary ideas and each other. This facility will allow us to offer our students Career Pathways (comprised of sequenced elective course concentrations) in Biotechnology Research and Health Sciences, Engineering and Technology, Information and Computer Science Technology, and Visual and Integrated Design in a state-of-the-art learning space.

The success of our district is a result of exemplary teaching, as well as the high-quality curriculum that is developed, evaluated, and revised. Educators across all schools have spent time this summer researching, writing, and planning in order to ensure the quality of the new curriculum matches that of the teachers who are delivering it. Curricula was written

for grades and subjects spanning K-12th grade. At the elementary level, Language Arts/Word Study was the focus. The Ramapo Ridge Middle School team has revamped the encore/exploratory courses, creating a balanced program of study that is appropriate for middle school students in the areas of STEAM and the humanities, containing courses titled: Image Sound and Story, Mind and Bot, Digi App, Dress Code, Rethink, Reimagine and Redesign (R³), and Project Citizen. The Mahwah High School team not only worked on curriculum related to those programs supported by the Thunderbird Think Tank (T³), but also, the school as a whole. We are extremely proud of the work that has been done over the summer and we look forward to supporting our teachers and staff in implementing this curricula to new heights!

The above highlights serve as a glimpse into our work over the summer and what is to come.

We look forward to the many **#MahwahConnects** opportunities with you, our students, and our community in the upcoming 2019-2020 school year.