



MONTCLAIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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KENDRA V. JOHNSON, J.D., ED. D.

Superintendent of Schools

May 3, 2019

Greetings Montclair Public Schools Families:

I hope all had a relaxing time with your children over spring break. As we gear up for the remaining school year, please see a few highlights and pertinent information so we are normed. As home/school partners, it is essential that we are aligned in our efforts to support, encourage and uplift our students to evolve into their best selves.

To this end, please note:

- May is Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Month. The YMCA has generously offered to give presentations at each of our elementary schools during May. All elementary schools have been scheduled. Further, we will definitely allow families to “opt out” their children if this topic is too sensitive. We want to be respectful of all families, especially families connected with one of our school communities that dealt with a tragedy last year.
- As so many of our young people are struggling with social-emotional problems, we need to keep developing and enhancing processes to assist them by building a strong network of resources and a strong team. This month, I will roll out a Social Emotional Learning (SEL) plan that will commence during School Year 2019-20. With this work, we will have a host of branding efforts to promote awareness.
- School administrators are strongly discouraged from making decisions about classroom activities and changes in placement without first connecting parents/guardians with the teacher. Specifically, if your child reports questions about his/her/their classroom experience, please discuss this with the teacher first. The administrators must ensure they are connecting individuals together who have first-hand information regarding questions.

For context, school administrators are receiving several requests regarding questions/concerns that occur in the classroom but parents/guardians have not attempted to address the question/concern directly with the teacher. In order to promote, encourage and support effective, problem-solving strategies, please bring your questions to the source closest to the concern which would be the classroom teacher.

- Each middle school will have class meetings in the near future. I asked our specialty counselor from Montclair High School and our School Resource Officer to support middle school principals with these conversations. In particular, the following issues will be discussed:
 - The Harassment, Intimidation and Bullying (HIB) policy with an overview of the possible social-emotional ramifications of HIB violations.
 - The District social media policy with an overview of social-emotional ramifications of the possible social media violations.
 - The District's cell phone expectation for middle school students is cellphones should be off and stored while students are in school.

Students will be allowed to ask questions, as we want to ensure students fully understand this content.

- For current Montclair High School and incoming grade 9 families, a communication regarding the May 20, 2019 Transition Plan and a 2019-20 school opening update will be sent by close of business on Tuesday, May 7.
- For Montclair High School families, a personalized note regarding May 24, 2019 is forthcoming. Notwithstanding any weather-related closings from now until May 24, 2019, Montclair High School will close on May 24, 2019 so its school calendar is once again aligned with the rest of the District.
- As a reminder, attendance expectations are governed by New Jersey state law. Should you have questions, please review the link below. We must enforce state expectations.
 - [New Jersey Department of Education \(NJDOE\) attendance overview website.](#)

- The following Community Forums are scheduled:
 - May 8, 2019: Board of Education Community Forum (flyer attached)
Charles H. Bullock School
55 Washington Street
In the Bullock Library at 6:30 PM
 - June 3, 2019: Understanding the 504 Process, 7:00 PM (location TBA)

- All Superintendent “all district” communications can be found on my [Communications and Collaborations webpage](#).

Thank you for your partnership as we continue to work together for the benefit of each and every one of our students.

Respectfully,



Kendra Johnson, J.D., Ed.D.
Superintendent

Cc: Montclair Public Schools staff

