



Hopatcong Borough Schools

Dr. Joseph S. Piccirillo
Superintendent of Schools

Learning Today. Leading Tomorrow.

Dear Hopatcong Community,

I hope you are all enjoying the summer and this warm weather.

I am reaching out to formally acknowledge Art DiBenedetto and to thank him for his three years of service as the superintendent of the district. Personally, I would also like to thank him for his friendship and for the mentorship that he has provided me, especially now, as I begin today in my new role as the superintendent. I am proud of the work that we have done together as an *entire district* these past few years and I remain optimistic, energized, and excited about the work that we have ahead of us.

Certainly, the cloud of COVID has loomed over the past two years. But, we have PLENTY to be thankful for and to celebrate. Over the past few months alone, I have learned news of graduating students going to top colleges (and bringing a ton of HS-earned college credits with them). I have learned about our CTE students who have earned industry level certificates (we had our first Cosmetology student earn her certification just last month!). Even after school has ended for the year, the band has been out performing in the community, the athletes have been working hard, and I had the pleasure last weekend of watching some of the members of the Hero Boys run a 5K with their family members and mentors.

From the perspective of our staff, we have had faculty members retire, others become parents or grandparents, and others celebrate weddings, or the high school and college graduations of their children and grandchildren. Some other faculty members even celebrated graduations of their own and have earned advanced degrees! There is a lot to celebrate!

If I have learned anything during my past few years in Hopatcong, it is that this is a special community. This community comes together when things get hard and this community CARES! I mention this now because the summer is a wonderful time to spread the word of the positive things that are happening in our schools in our conversations with our friends in the community. Don't miss an opportunity to share good news with folks at the supermarket, the lake, or the park. There will be many willing to lament about learning loss, masks, social-distancing, etc. and certainly there will be a time for this conversation, but with the recent news of schools coming back full-time, in-person, and with masks optional, now is the time to look to the future with a growth mindset, filled with optimism, hope, and joy.

Enjoy your summer, relax, and get excited! Go Hopatcong!

Sincerely,

Dr. Joseph S. Piccirillo

#chiefbelief