



Superintendent's Report November 15, 2023

Today is Educational Support Professionals Day! Thank you to our fantastic educational support professionals who keep Closter Public Schools running smoothly daily. This includes our paraprofessionals, secretaries, custodians, maintenance workers, and all others who support our teachers, administrators, and students. These professionals do their part in making our schools exceptional for every child so they can be safe, learn, grow, and achieve. Again, we appreciate you!

Congratulations to the Board of Education candidates Melody Finkelstein and Chris Kwon, who are officially winners in the November 7th election. For the third seat, which had no candidates on the ballot, there were several write-in candidates, and the results for those candidates have yet to be officially determined as of today. The Board of Elections announced that a final count of the write-in candidates may be available by next week. The newly elected Board trustees will be sworn in at the January 3, 2024, reorganization meeting. We will recognize and thank our outgoing Board trustee, Lukshmi Puttannah, at our meeting on December 6, 2023.

On November 3, 2023, the New Jersey Department of Education announced the recipients of the High-Impact Tutoring Competitive Grant, and I'm pleased to share that Closter has been awarded \$67,680. These funds will provide after-school tutoring to third-grade students needing academic assistance in language arts and mathematics. We are now requesting proposals for vendors to provide the tutoring, as the grant requires. I am hopeful that we will be able to begin the tutoring for the students sometime in January. Thank you to Ms. Lori Cohen, Ms. Smith, and Mr. Villanueva for their successful work in writing this grant!

We will undergo state monitoring, known as QSAC (Quality Single Accountability Continuum), in February 2024. Our administrators and staff are working diligently to prepare for this compliance review. We are gathering all the necessary documents to provide the monitors with evidence that we meet the criteria for the sixty-nine indicators they will be checking. The QSAC team will also conduct a walk-through of our school buildings in December to ensure that we are meeting all requirements for safety and security. I thank everyone for their efforts in preparing for QSAC.

At our October 26th Board meeting, the Board approved the district goals for the 2023-2024 school year. We have started work on our goal of planning a comprehensive program that nurtures a safe, inclusive, and supportive learning environment for all students, staff, and administrators. The administrators will be working with the School Safety Teams to analyze data related to HIB incidents and code of conduct violations. They will use this data to identify ways in which school climate could be improved. The School Safety Team at each school will then create a list of suggestions to enhance the school climate through interventions and programs promoting the mental, emotional, and social well-being of everyone in the school. Then, the School Safety Team will present their initial work to the faculty for review, feedback, and suggested revisions. These are just the first steps in developing the comprehensive program and action plan for implementation in the 2024-2025 school year. I will continue to keep you posted on our progress.

Schools will be closed on Thursday, November 23, 2023, and Friday, November 24, 2023, for Thanksgiving. I am immensely grateful for the opportunity to lead as the Superintendent of Closter and thankful for the unwavering dedication of our Board of Education, faculty, staff, and parent community in preserving the excellence of our schools. May your Thanksgiving festivities be filled with joy as you celebrate with your cherished ones!

Vincent Mc Hale