



August 20, 2019

Dear Parents/Guardians,

The parent portal opens tomorrow morning and that always signals a near close to what I hope is a great summer. Our 2019 graduates are packing for their new experiences in great places of learning, as our teachers are knee deep in preparation to welcome their new learners. Soon our doors will open to welcome the classes for the 2019-20 school year, and I am particularly anxious to meet the Class of 2032, our youngest learners.

This summer, many of our teachers participated in professional development activities to support the major initiatives for the school year. I could feel the enthusiasm across the room as 85 Grade K-5 teachers began training for our literacy program with Teachers College this week. They are getting ready to **Move Mountains in Literacy** this year, and I could not be more appreciative of the time they are spending in preparation for that heavy lift. Training for the Go Math series in K-4 classrooms is well underway to reduce the pull-outs for training during the school year. ICT teachers and their regular education partners were also trained to further enhance their classroom practices. Earlier in the summer, I attended the Stony Brook University News Literacy Summer Institute where a POB team of secondary instructors, led by Maria Carnesi and Jeff Yagaloff, was engaged in writing curriculum modules for integration for our grades 7-12 English and Social Studies programs. These efforts will grow citizenship and social responsibility among our students. I accompanied a team of administrators to a New York State Social and Mental Wellness Symposium to strengthen our support for all children. Yes, indeed, we are ***Moving Mountains***, as our new theme for the year beckons us to do in all areas of our District.

Our safety and security practices have received our full attention and you should know that we have extended security hours through to 10pm in all of our buildings. All visitors to our schools will need to go through our visitor management process during and after school hours. We have added a mental health interventionist as well as additional support team personnel to address growing concerns for sound mental health practices.

Work on our facilities is still going at a frenetic pace. The high school main office, Social Studies and Guidance Departments have had a make-over and the window installation is underway. Soon Old Bethpage will be able to take advantage of the extended parking lot and new classrooms. POBMS has a new playground and extensive renovations to accommodate the growing enrollment there. The Matlin elevators have been replaced, Judy Jacobs Parkway and Pasadena have new roofs and skylights and vents. We hope to have the Stratford auditorium air conditioned before the end of this school year and new windows installed. This all means that our B & G staff is working at a hurried pace to have classrooms ready for your children in September.

We continue to negotiate in good faith, and I am hopeful that we can come to a swift resolution that serves the needs of our dedicated staff, as well as that of the District, in a timely manner.

During the summer, we received the sad news of the passing of a key member in our family, Ellen Norris. Ellen was a hall aide who greeted everyone with a warm smile on the second floor of Stratford Road. Ellen was one of our graduates with Down Syndrome who inspired me with her work ethic, going above and beyond, as well as her seriousness of purpose. She often gave me marching orders to fix things that she thought needed to be fixed, and she was always on point. In

her honor, I would like to dedicate this year, 2019-20, **The Year of Ellen Norris**. What this means is when we see things that need to be improved, we take the time to bring attention to it, the way Ellen always did, thoughtfully and with passion. She will be remembered for always going above and beyond and giving her all. May her memory be a blessing.

Our team has been enriched with a number of new, talented staff. Included among them are new administrators: Kristin Seidel, AP at Old Bethpage; Leonardo Rivera, Chair of World Languages; Diana Beltrani, AP at POBJFKHS; Sandra Parmentier, Assistant Director of PPS and, of course, our very own Dolores Espinosa who has taken over the reins of the PPS Department. We are in the process of interviewing for a replacement for Eric Haruthunian, AP at POBJFKHS, as he has accepted a position as principal in Port Jefferson. We wish him well as he takes this next journey in his career.

We are so excited for the promise that this year brings and cannot wait to share it with you. Please continue to follow us on Twitter and Facebook and use the website to hear all about the ways **We are Moving Mountains** in our special corner of Nassau County, POB Schools.

Welcome back!! We are #POBproud.

In Gratitude,

Lorna R. Lewis

Lorna R. Lewis, Ed.D.
Superintendent of School