

MONTCLAIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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Superintendent of Schools

Community Message SY 21-22 No. 16

Jonathan Ponds, Ed.D.

February 18, 2022

Dear Parents/Guardians and Staff,

We bridged the digital divide when we became a 1:1 district meaning a Chromebook for every child, and I had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning in action on my instructional walks through our buildings this week. Seeing firsthand teachers integrating innovative technology, students collaborating with their peers, focused on instruction and using Chromebooks to enhance the overall experience was uplifting. The pandemic brought this divide to our attention, and we mobilized our district to conquer this challenge. Thanks to ESSER funding and countless hours of work from our Technology Department, we were able to provide digital accessibility for all students. This is just a glimpse of what 21st century learning looks like, and I am happy to say we have made significant strides that will have lasting impact on our students beyond the pandemic.

As we continue to support this most important initiative, we realize that circumstances change over time. We will continue to support any family in need of internet/Broadband services as well as access to a device at home through participation with the Emergency Connectivity Fund.

Vaccination Clinic

We are hosting a [FREE Vaccination Clinic](#), Sat., **March 5, 10 AM - 3 PM** at the Charles H. Bullock School. First doses, second doses and boosters available. No appointment necessary.

February 23 Board of Education Meeting

- **Gifted and Talented Update**
A Comprehensive Gifted and Talented Education Plan which is equitable and inclusive for our students and in compliance with the Strengthening Gifted and Talented Education Act will be presented.
- **Pupil Services Update**
The Pupil Services Department will be presenting the status of its work for the first half of the school year and providing a look ahead at what is planned for the second half of the year and moving into next school year.
- **Buzz Aldrin Middle School Student Performance**
Buzz Aldrin students will be sending in a video of their performing arts work. These talented students will showcase dance, band and voice.

Watchung Playground and Field

The [official opening of the Watchung Playground and Field Hockey and Boys Lacrosse Field](#) was held this past Wednesday. Seeing the community coming together, especially children and athletes was heartwarming. Having these outdoor spaces to play freely and competitively are key to the growth and social emotional wellbeing of our students. We were lucky to have Montclair TV34 capture the event. If you have a moment, please enjoy the [video of the ceremony](#).

Happy Presidents' Day and enjoy the long weekend with family and friends!

Dr. Jonathan Ponds

Superintendent