



August 2017

# GMRSD Board Of Education

## Home of the Jaguars

### SUPERINTENDENT NEWS

Dear Hackettstown and Great Meadows Regional School community members,

As the summer season fades with the start of autumn there is much to do in the upcoming months to continue our success in our commitment to moving our districts forward. Allowing change where necessary has resulted in many of our accomplishments. So, welcome to the start of the 2017-2018 school year!

As I am sure you are aware, the districts have been underway with the feasibility study focusing upon altering the existing send-receive relationship between the districts. This feasibility study will place an emphasis on the Hackettstown and Great Meadows Middle Schools respectively, with the possible merging of the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades between the two districts, if found. Recognizing new obstacles and finding solutions will continue to help us transcend our success. As such, the districts sought the services of former Department of Education Commissioner, Mr. Hespe, to research and present this study. Throughout the summer months my offices have and continue to hold meetings with Mr. Hespe, inter-district administration, and representatives from Liberty, Independence, and Hackettstown Mayor and Councils. The goal of the feasibility study is to discover if altering the send/receive relationship between the districts is feasible academically, programmatically, athletically and fiscally and if not, found how that impacts the 18-19 school budget for each respective Board of Education and township. The feasible study will be presented to the public by Mr. Hespe at our special joint meeting of the Boards of Education on November 21, 2017 at 7pm, in the Great Meadows Middle School gymnasium. I encourage all community members to attend in order to understand and conceptualize factual information presented prior to any final decisions made by the Boards of Education.

At the conclusion of last school year, both districts embarked on several construction and beautification projects. A Strategic Plan objective was to enhance the security at each building. By summer's end, we will have met this goal by installing seven vestibules and security features within all the schools. Aside from the vestibule installations at all three Great Meadows schools, wide scale painting was completed in our continuing effort to advance the district's initiative to create a positive and safe learning and work environment. The Great Meadows Middle School's Media Center was completely renovated and, in the future, will host our Board of Education meetings.

At Hackettstown Middle School and High School, we will also see the completion of our vestibule project and partial roof replacements. Hackettstown High School is also completing a Hall of Fame addition outside of the new gymnasium and "Snack Shack". The "Snack Shack" will help with the fundraising efforts of our Booster clubs while hosting home events. In addition, renovation is underway in our TV studio which will afford our high school students the opportunity to work collaboratively with their peers and staff while learning hands on 21<sup>st</sup> century work place skills. Last, but certainly not least, our high school students, staff, and community members will return from the Labor Day holiday to a 21<sup>st</sup> Century, State-of-the-Art Media Center to enhance their educational experience. Our Media Center will host a ribbon cutting ceremony later this month to honor Mrs. Patricia Miller, a long time Independence resident, an iconic Biology teacher at our high school and former Great Meadows Board of Education member and Board President, by naming the center in honor of her. Once the date is finalized it will be posted on to the districts' websites.

In the world of athletics, on Friday, October 27, 2017, the Hackettstown High School Football Tigers will be hosting Kittatinny Regional High School in the inaugural Hall of Fame game whereby our inductees will be introduced during the half-time ceremonies. The Hackettstown Hall of Fame Ceremony will be held on Saturday, October 28, 2017 at the Panther Valley Country Club. Tickets may be purchased by contacting Mr. Bob Grauso, Athletic, via



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telephone, at 908-852-8150 ext. 252, or email, at [bgrauso@hackettstown.org](mailto:bgrauso@hackettstown.org). The cost will be \$55. Purchasing of tickets will remain open until October 2, 2017. There are eleven inductees being honored so please come out to our Hall of Fame game and/or ceremony in a show of support for their accomplishments.

I would like to welcome some old but familiar faces to our inter-district administrative cabinet and school communities. Former Assistant Principal of Hackettstown High School, Mr. Kyle Sosnovik has been named Acting Principal at Hackettstown High School, effective August 1, 2017. In the Shared Services Director of Curriculum and Instruction position, Mrs. Debra Grigoletti, former Assistant Principal at Great Meadows Middle School, began her new role July 1, 2017. Last, Great Meadows Middle School has hired Mrs. Jessica McDonagh as the new Assistant Principal. I would like to congratulate them on their new positions as they assimilate in their new roles.

Below are a list of reminder dates that will keep you up-to-date with our board of education meetings and other school-related events:

- September 20, 2017 – Hackettstown BOE at 7pm
  - Report of the High School, Mr. Sosnovik/Hall of Fame, Mr. Grauso
- September 26, 2017 – Great Meadows BOE at 7 pm
  - The GATE Program, Mrs. Grigoletti
- October 17, 2017– Great Meadows BOE at 7 pm
  - PARCC Assessment, Mrs. Grigoletti/Student of Month Presentations commence
- October 18, 2017– Hackettstown BOE at 7pm
  - PARCC Assessment, Mrs. Grigoletti/Student of Month Presentations commence
- November 15, 2017– Hackettstown BOE at 7pm
  - The Twilight Program, Mrs. Gesumaria
- November 21, 2017 – Special Joint BOE at GMMS at 7pm
  - Feasibility Presentation, Mr. Hespe
- November 28, 2017– Great Meadows BOE at 7 pm
  - The Twilight Program, Mrs. Gesumaria
- December 19, 2017– Great Meadows BOE at 7 pm
  - Strategic Plan Year End Review, Mr. Mango
- December 20, 2017– Hackettstown BOE at 7pm
  - Strategic Plan Year End Review, Mr. Mango

Hackettstown is entering into its last year of the current Strategic Plan and many of the existing goals in the district's Action Plans have been met and continue to be revised and reinforced. However, the Great Meadows Strategic Plan will conclude in 2019 and we will continue to follow suit with many Action Plan objectives having been met and continuing to be revised and reinforced. Going forward, any decisions made by the Boards of Education with regard to the feasibility study will mold and steer future academic, program, facility and fiscal plans within the 2018-2019 budget cycle and beyond.

Sincerely,  
David C. Mango  
Superintendent of Schools  
Great Meadows Regional and Hackettstown Public Schools



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### CURRICULUM CORNER

Debra L. Grigoletti

Shared Services Director of Curriculum and Instruction

I am very excited to have a new role in the Great Meadows Regional School District as the Shared Services Director of Curriculum and Instruction. For those of you that I have not had the pleasure to meet yet, this will be my 5<sup>th</sup> year in the district and my 18<sup>th</sup> year in education. I hit the ground running on July 1<sup>st</sup> and feel that the transition will be a smooth one.

The new GATE curriculum was approved at the July Board of Education meeting. It is a much deeper and richer curriculum so please take time to review it on our website. I am pleased to announce that we have hired Mr. Bill Nutt to be the District's sole GATE teacher. There will be changes to the nomination process as we move forward in the year, but for the start of the 17-18 school-year the process to enter the GATE program will remain the same. As the process evolves, parent notifications will be sent out.

At our August Board Meeting, the Math and Science curriculums have also been approved and updated to align to the New Jersey Student Learning Standards. These new curriculums can also be review on our website. All of our Science textbooks will be new this year. Central and Liberty students will be utilizing FUSIONS and the Middle School will be using Science Dimensions. Both address the new standards, tie in technology and provide excellent hands-on experiments. Math will continue to use Go Math in the younger grades and Big Ideas at the Middle School as they are still aligned to the new standards.

I am looking forward to the new school year to partner with staff, students and parents to push our students to new academic heights.

### CENTRAL SCHOOL NEWS

#### WHAT'S NEW AT CENTRAL?

Welcome to the 2017-18 school year! Central School has many faces in new places this year. Ms. Romagnoli will be teaching our youngest preschool students. Ms. Washburn is the newest member of our kindergarten team. Ms. Zino will now be teaching 1<sup>st</sup> grade. Ms. Flynn and Ms. Fox join the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade. Ms. Schubert will join Ms. Redus to form a BSI team, as well.

Some new faces to Central are: Mr. Schepis (music), Ms. Levenstein (art), Ms. DeJesus (world language), Mr. Nutt (GATE) and Ms. Makarevich (speech). We welcome them to the Central School family.

#### VESTIBULE ENTRY

We also will have a new look upon entering the building. Our security vestibule will be completed by the start of school and our new arrival and dismissal procedures will be sent out via letter and automated call prior to the first day. On top of that, our library hallway and second floor have been painted, giving these locations a fresh new look for the coming year.

#### HANDBOOK UPDATE

We have made changes to Central School's handbook. Please make sure you read your child's agenda book with him/her to help reinforce our school's expectations and procedures.

#### CONCERT CHANGES AND PK/K GRADUATION

This year's Winter Concert, scheduled for November 29, will feature Grades 1 and 2. This is a change from past years. By making this change, we are excited to announce that our "Spring Concert" will now become a graduation ceremony for our Pre-K and K students. On a yet to be determined night in June, we will celebrate our youngest learners' accomplishments with songs, presentations, and a formal ceremony promoting our kindergarten students. More information will be distributed throughout the year.



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### LIBERTY SCHOOL NEWS

#### LIBERTY ELEMENTARY

Every day is a new adventure. All hands on deck for an exciting school year. Welcome aboard to the U.S.S. Liberty, where learning can take you anywhere. We are tremendously excited to have our students back this September with some new upgrades to the building. Most of our classrooms have received brand new coats of paint and our Media/Computer/STEM Lab looks fantastic!

Throughout the summer, staff members and custodians have helped redesign and update the media center with a fresh and contemporary feel. New vestibule have been installed, and procedures on entering and exiting the building will be sent home shortly.

Liberty's 2017-2018 school year theme will be "Learning Can Take You Anywhere". Each of our staff members have chosen different countries to represent their homerooms this year. We are excited to embark on another festive and creative school theme. Save the date: Liberty's Back to School Night is scheduled for September 26<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm. Please feel free to refer to my Principal's page for updates on future important events.

#### Additional Important Dates to Remember

Picture Day – September 25<sup>th</sup>

Parent Evening Conferences – November 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> Afternoon  
Conferences - November 17<sup>th</sup>

1<sup>st</sup> Principal Forum – October 25<sup>th</sup>

### MIDDLE SCHOOL NEWS

GMMS Parents/Guardians,

I hope you have all had a peaceful, relaxing and safe summer. We have been hard at work setting up for the 2017-2018 school year and are excited to begin working with your children and preparing them for the road ahead. As your children return, they will be able to enjoy a brand new media center which has been renovated and redesigned. Please be sure to stop in during Back To School Night on Thursday, September 28<sup>th</sup> to see the changes. We also added additional security upgrades and have a newly installed vestibule in the main lobby.

We are excited to announce that, in addition to our NASA Build It Club, we are adding an Engineering Club and a Coding/STEM Club, further expanding student experiences in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Please keep a look out for the variety of clubs, intermural and interscholastic sports offered throughout the year.

Finally, we are happy to introduce and welcome our new Assistant Principal, Mrs. Jessica McDonagh who has over 15 years of experience as an educator at the middle school and high school level. We also welcome Ms. Santoro and Ms. Williams to our middle school team.

Once again, welcome back and we wish you and your child an exciting and academically stimulating 2017-2018 school year.





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### District Technology Update

#### Central School

Central School is excited to be expanding its technology resources in order to further achieve our goals. As the first Warren County school to join InnovateNJ in 2015-16, Central is now proud to become a 1-1 school in both first and second grade. Each student in these grades will have a Google Chromebook for daily use at school. This will coincide with our participation in the NJ K-3 Research and Professional Development Program, through which our students and staff will be able to access greater resources and collaborate with schools throughout the state. We also look to build on the success of last year's Crazy 8s and MakerSpace Jr. Clubs, both of which encouraged students to explore using technological resources.

#### Liberty School

This year Liberty is excited to develop a hands-on STEM lab and MakerSpace. Students at Liberty will have access to hands-on, creative, collaborative work environments that are geared towards STEAM, STEM, and engineering opportunities. Liberty's STEM lab will continue to grow and will be located in our newly painted and updated media center. The media center will also house all computer technology education. Students can enjoy STEM activities while having technology readily available at all times within the media center. Our MakerSpace will be located in the 4th grade wing and all students within the building can benefit from its hands-on student centered learning opportunities. This space will inspire students to become participatory learners to uncover their talents and interests by making, producing, solving, creating and collaborating. Our goal at Liberty Elementary is to inspire students to make, create, and innovate.

#### Middle School

The middle school continues to push and drive technology use among all of our students. In addition to our one to one Chromebook initiative, we are very pleased to highlight our Technology Education Program which has begun the transition into a much more STEM/STEAM driven course. Students in Tech. Ed. will be much more involved in coding and engineering with the addition of programmable drones and Spark Bots. We have also added a Maker Space section for engineering to build obstacles for our drones and Spark Bots. Please follow us on Twitter @gmmstech and Instagram gmmstech for regular postings and updates to see the activities and instruction being provided for your children. Thank you Mrs. Doty for taking the lead role in this transition to help prepare our students for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### GMRSD Mission Statement

The GMRSD will provide quality educational opportunities that ensure the individual success of all students within a safe and supportive environment and to build life-long learners who will meet society's challenges into and beyond the 21<sup>st</sup> century. To that end, it is anticipated that all students will achieve the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards (NJCCCS) and New Jersey Student Learning Standards (NJSLS) at all grade levels.

### GMRSD Strategic Plan Vision

#### GOAL 1

Provide students with adequate support and experiences to promote growth in all areas.

#### GOAL 2

Intensify the district's commitment to move toward an environment that provides students with 21st Century skills and prepares them for success on a global level by incorporating technology into all settings.

#### GOAL 3

Creating a social and academic environment that is safe and enhances students ability to become forward thinking risk takers, and globally conscious.

#### GOAL 4

Create a top-notch school environment by opening communication paths and engaging parents in the student's academic life. Collaborating with community to access resources.

Great Meadows Regional School District  
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## Dates To Remember

09/01/17-09/04/17 – District Closed

09/05/17 – 1<sup>st</sup> Day Students (Half Day Students PD)

9/06/17 – Early Dismissal (Professional Development)

09/07/17 – Central Pre-K & Kindergarten Open House

09/12/17 – Back to School Night Central Grades 1 & 2

09/20/17 – Hackettstown BOE Meeting

09/21/17 – Back to School Night HHS

09/26/17 – Back to School Night Liberty

09/26/17 – GMRSD BOE Meeting

09/27/17 – 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Parent Open House at HHS

09/28/17 – Back to School Night GMMS

10/03/17 – College Fair at HHS

10/09/17 – School Closed for Students (Professional Development Staff)

10/17/17 – GMRSD BOE Meeting

10/18/17 – Hackettstown BOE Meeting

11/09/17-11/10/17 – District Closed Teacher Convention

11/15/17 – Hackettstown BOE Meeting

11/21/17 – Special Joint BOE Mtg at GMMS

11/22/17 – Early Dismissal

11/23/17-11/24/17 – District Closed Thanksgiving

11/28/17 – GMRSD BOE Meeting

12/08/18 - Early Dismissal (Professional Development)

12/19/17 – GMRSD BOE Meeting