



Superintendent's Report

June 20, 2024

The 2023-2024 school year has ended, and it was truly exceptional for Closter Public Schools! We started strong with 1,188 enthusiastic students and 15 new hires, setting the stage for a year of growth and achievement. Our community showed tremendous support by passing the bond referendum, allowing us to make crucial facility improvements.

We were thrilled to receive multiple grants this year, including a \$47,940 "Trees for Schools" grant and a \$67,680 High-Impact Tutoring grant, enhancing our environmental initiatives and academic support programs. Our commitment to excellence was recognized nationally when we were once again honored as one of the "Best Communities for Music Education" by the NAMM Foundation.

Our students shone brightly in impressive performances in the Porchlight Productions of "The Addams Family" and "Shrek Jr." and in vocal and instrumental concerts at Hillside Elementary School and Tenakill Middle School. Our 7th grade students secured first place in Bergen County in the New Jersey Math League Contest. The 18th Annual "Exhibit of Art" by Tenakill Middle School students at the Belskie Museum showcased a variety of original, creative works by our 5th through 8th grade artists. Meanwhile, Hillside Elementary School's hallways were transformed into a global gallery with the "Passport Around the World" art show, offering a vibrant display of our younger students' talents and cultural awareness.

We successfully completed our QSAC state monitoring in February, demonstrating our compliance with state standards across all areas. Our commitment to student well-being was evident in implementing new self-advocacy programs and ongoing efforts to improve the school climate, which were part of our district goals.

The year was filled with vibrant community events, including the Lunar New Year celebration, the TREP\$ Marketplace showcasing student entrepreneurs, the fourth-grade egg drop, and the PTO's glamorous Gatsby-themed gala.

Our 4th grade moving-on ceremony and eighth-grade graduation were held at Memorial Field on June 17, 2024. Thankfully, the weather cooperated. Both ceremonies were a wonderful celebration for our students and their families. Thank you to:

- Ms. Smith, Ms. Zanin, Mr. Tantom, and Mr. McElroy for their efforts in planning the ceremonies.
- Our secretaries, custodians, and maintenance staff for all their extra work in preparing the programs, certificates, diplomas, and setting up the stage and chairs.
- Our teachers from PreK through grade eight for preparing our students for their milestones of completing grade 4 and grade 8. Thank you to the teachers who organized and prepared students for the ceremonies, and a special thank you to Ms. Pidi and Ms. Abbey, who prepared musical performances.

- The Closter PTO, KPG, and parent committees for planning and providing the many year-end extras for our students.
- The Closter Board of Education trustees for supporting our students and staff and for their attendance at the ceremonies.
- The Closter Mayor and Council for granting permission to use Memorial Field and to the Closter Recreation Department and the Closter Police Department for their great assistance!

As we wrap up this remarkable year, I'm so proud of our students' academic achievements, our dedicated staff's hard work, and the strong community support that makes Closter Public Schools exceptional.

Our district's summer programs will begin on Monday, July 1, 2024. These programs will provide academic support and enrichment for 18 sessions through July 26, 2024. There will be 57 students participating. We are excited to offer these programs for students throughout July.

Now that summer is here, it is time for our students, faculty, and staff to relax and do something to recharge their spirits! Students are encouraged to continue reading and practicing math during the summer. The summer reading and math skills practice recommendations are posted on the [Hillside](#) and [Tenakill](#) web pages. In addition, the students in grades K-3 received a summer reading book to read over the summer and should be prepared to engage in planned activities for the first day of school in September.

I look forward to an exciting 2024-2025 school year, starting for students on Thursday, September 5, 2024. Our teachers and staff will return on September 3 and 4, 2024.

Vincent Mc Hale