



Superintendent's Report

March 5, 2024

Thank you to everyone for a concerted effort in preparing for the QSAC (Quality Single Accountability Continuum) state monitoring that took place on February 27, 2024. I extend a thank you to everyone who worked diligently over the last year to prepare for it - whether it was refining the curriculum, developing pacing charts, identifying grade-level resources, enhancing student services, submitting documents as evidence for the performance indicators, or complying with state regulations – it all made a difference! Our administrators, faculty, staff, and Board all have a vital role in our shared mission of providing the best possible education for our Closter students. I am proud to lead such a talented and dedicated team of professionals. We will not receive our official scores or final report until approximately December 2024. However, we feel confident that we have passed each of the five categories! The next QSAC monitoring will be in three years. For now, let's celebrate that we completed the 2024 QSAC process!

The Closter PTO is sponsoring their annual Read-a-Thon for Hillside Elementary School from March 4 – 18, 2024, and Tenakill Middle School from March 11- 22, 2024. Students can register online by visiting the [Closter PTO webpage](#).

Save the date!! The Closter PTO will host a Gatsby-themed party on Saturday, April 6, 2024. It promises to be a fun evening of elegance and jazz. More information will follow soon. Check out the [Closter PTO webpage](#) for information on this event, the upcoming Spelling Bee, some author book signings, and more.

Tickets for the Porchlight Productions are also on sale on the [PTO webpage](#). *The Addams Family* will be performed by students in grades 6-8 on Saturday, March 9, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. *Shrek The Musical, Jr.* will be performed by students in grades 3 -5 on Saturday, March 23, 2024, at 11:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. Come support our performing artists!

Closter Public Schools will participate in the Bergen County Education Job Fair on Saturday, March 9, 2024, from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Pascack Hills High School in Montvale. This will be an opportunity for us to meet with candidates seeking employment. We have several openings currently and have several anticipated openings for the 2024-2025 school year. Ms. Cohen and I will be representing the district. If anyone in the community is seeking employment, please visit the [Bergen County Education Job Fair website](#).

Our Kindergarten registration for the 2024-2025 school year is underway. All information is on our district website, www.ClosterSchools.org. The link is on the main page – the first banner on the right side, entitled, Kindergarten Registration 2024-2025. If you have questions about Kindergarten registration, please call Ms. Cheryl Boehm at Hillside School.

District Goals 2023-2024 Update

Goal #1: This month, the self-advocacy program will be implemented at both schools. At Hillside Elementary School, the school counselors have prepared two interactive sessions for students in grades K through four. Students in grades three and four will also take a pre- and post- assessment to measure students' understanding of self-advocacy content. At Tenakill Middle School, Ms. Fineman (as part of her administrator internship), with input from teachers and me, created two interactive lessons and the pre- and post-assessments for grades five through eight. The social studies teachers will deliver the lessons at the middle school. The goal is implementing a student advocacy program to instill the requisite skills and confidence to articulate their concerns, seek assistance when necessary, and engage productively with teachers, administrators, and students. Thank you to everyone who has worked on preparing the lessons and assessments and to the teachers who will deliver the lessons. I know this will be beneficial to helping our students develop their self-advocacy skills.

Goal #2: The administrators and the School Safety Teams have completed their analysis of data related to HIB incidents and code of conduct violations. They used this data to identify ways to improve school climate. Each team solicited faculty feedback and submitted recommendations for their school. These recommendations will be drafted into a framework for implementation next school year. The school teams continue working between now and June on items including developing a school-wide classroom management system, expanding the Hillside Helpers program, providing wellness activities for staff and students, researching and selecting a bullying prevention program, and restructuring the middle school Social-Emotional Learning program.

Goal #3: Throughout the year, we have been exploring the options of developing and offering additional courses to students, particularly at the middle school. This has posed a fiscal challenge. Our preliminary 2024-2025 school year budget allows only for an additional school psychologist and an elementary ESL teacher. So, adding additional staff for new courses will not be financially possible. We will continue to explore options working within our current staffing and schedule.

A reminder that tomorrow, Wednesday, March 6, 2024, will be a single-session day for Parent-Teacher Conferences. Tenakill Middle School will dismiss students at 12:25 p.m., and Hillside Elementary School will dismiss at 12:40 p.m. School will be closed on Friday, March 29, 2024, in observance of Good Friday.

Vincent Mc Hale