



# Superintendent's Report

**October 29, 2024**

We mourn the passing of our recently retired Spanish teacher, Mary Jo Martino. She will be remembered always for her love of teaching Spanish to students and her ever-present smile. Our sincere condolences to her family. May she rest in peace.

Last week, three Board trustees, Janice Yeoh, Jia Lee and Edmund Cho, along with our Business Administrator, Floro Villanueva, and I attended the New Jersey School Boards Workshop in Atlantic City. We attended lots of interesting sessions, including on Board leadership, fiscal management, and the use of artificial intelligence in education. We also attended inspiring keynote presentations by John Quinones of ABC News and Sonia Manzano, the actress, screenwriter and author who played Maria on *Sesame Street* for 44 years.

I am pleased to share that Charlene Gerbig, a third grade teacher at Hillside Elementary School, has been selected by New Jersey Department of Education Commissioner Kevin Dehmer to serve on the Working Group on Student Literacy recently established through a new law signed by Governor Murphy. The purpose of the working group is to provide recommendations on the implementation of evidence-based literacy strategies, the use of appropriate and reliable instruments for universal literacy screening, and the selection of high-quality literacy instructional materials. We should be proud that Ms. Gerbig was selected to represent the northern part of the state in this important work! Congratulations, Ms. Gerbig!

From the work we did last year on creating a framework on culture and climate, one item we planned on doing was sharing monthly articles with faculty a monthly article focused on fostering a positive school climate. The articles are intended to spark thought, dialogue and collaboration among our team, helping to build our skill set as we support our students and one another. In September I shared an article on how to help students handle conflict and in October the article was on infusing Social Emotional Learning into all classes. We will continue this practice throughout the year and will keep you informed of this work.

Save the Date! The Closter PTO has announced their annual gala will be held on March 21, 2025, at the Edgewood Country Club. This year's theme is Viva Las Vegas. Don't miss out on the fun – mark your calendars now!

Schools will be closed on Thursday, November 7, and Friday, November 8, 2024, for the New Jersey Education Association conference.

Vincent Mc Hale