



# HOLMDEL TOWNSHIP SCHOOLS

## **SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION DECEMBER 18, 2019**

Good evening and happy holidays to all!

One of the most compelling educational keynotes I have ever heard took place right in the auditorium at Holmdel High School a couple years ago. In it the speaker, Thomas Murray, the Director of Innovation for Future Ready Schools in DC. You've probably heard me quote him before. In his keynote address to our staff Murray said the following - "Innovation is not about tools. It's about people, processes, and pedagogy." Reflecting on our agenda tonight and observations I've made in and around our schools this last month, I think Murray hit the nail on the head.

Take a look at Motion six on tonight's agenda - it includes the names of staff members (people) participating in a process to advance their pedagogy by working with a cohort of educators known as the Innovate Holmdel Cohort - a program in its second year here that is changing classroom practices.

Take a look at motion ten on tonight's agenda - nineteen new courses to be offered to our students in the coming years - courses like Introduction to Game Design, Advanced Game Design and Animation, Introduction to Design and Innovation. Automation and Robotics, and Apps and Animation to name a few - many of these building off this successful year of launching eight new courses and a new schedule at Satz.

People, processes and pedagogy led to an innovative opportunity for our ESL students when on December 3rd they participated in the "Read to a Dog" program and people, processes and pedagogy provided the opportunity for students at Indian Hill and Satz to both teach and to learn from a visiting group of Japanese Educators.

These ingredients led to a One Read program at Satz school and an opportunity for all students to skype with author Tom Rogers who shared insights about why he wanted to write a novel set on September 11th and some of the work he is doing currently with Disney studios. The students

were really interested in what Mr. Rogers had to share and asked some really insightful questions. It was a great experience for our students.

People and Processes and Pedagogy has also led us to the point of this week preparing to move our first classes into our new Engineering and Communications Wing. When students return from Winter Break, I know they will be inspired by the new spaces, particularly the new Television Production studio - the envy of a News12 crew that recently visited. Meanwhile I know that Satz and High School students will enjoy new Dance, Theatre and Music classrooms on the Satz side of the complex that will open to them in the new year- all thanks to the Holmdel 2020 Initiative, which had innovation as its key driver.

As we look to 2020 with great anticipation, we are all looking forward to a year of incredible transformation and innovation at the High School and Middle School complex. Stay tuned! It is going to be an exciting year ahead.

In other news, I want to congratulate all of our student musicians from Village to the High School on beautiful performances over the last two weeks. One more opportunity to catch a student performance awaits us tomorrow night at the Satz and High School instrumentalists take their turn on the stage.

I also want to congratulate our 5th and 6th grade students in the Continental Math League. In typical Holmdel style they had perfect scores for their first meet!!

Congratulations to our Nov/Dec Hornets of the Month:

- 4th grade: Mikayla Klotsman; Christian Gomez
- 5th grade: Diana Al-Ola; Owen Beland
- 6th grade: Brooke Dawson; Joseph Castiglione

Congratulations to the Village School and in particular Mrs. Jamie Kenny for coordination of this year's annual Giving Tree! The front hallway was filled with gifts for families, as always the Village School community stepped up and provided a wonderful holiday experience for families identified through Monmouth County's Family and Children's Services!

Congratulations to the school winner of the Satz school Spelling Bee, Raymond Cai. After six long rounds, Raymond prevailed as an impeccable champion. He will represent Satz School on March 16th at Monmouth University at the Regional Spelling Bee. Congratulations and good luck Raymond!

Congratulations also to Allen Fang who is the Satz School Geography Bee Champion. Allen prevailed as the winner after several grueling rounds. He will represent Satz School on March

27th at Rowan University at the Regional Geography Bee. Congratulations and good luck, Allen!

Congratulations to the Fall Sports Teams and to all Victory with Honor Recipients. Thank you for showcasing true character on and off the field.

Kudos to our performers and stage crew for an amazing job during the Fall Play. Families and friends had the opportunity to enjoy three “mysterious” nights in the HHS auditorium.

And of course we want to thank all of our parent groups for the tremendous support they provided this month and all throughout 2019.

On behalf of the district administration and staff, I would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season and a restful, relaxing and rejuvenating Winter Break!

Respectfully,

Robert A. McGarry, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools