Dear Montgomery Township School District Community,

As we continue to settle into the rhythm of the new school year, I am really proud of the incredible energy and dedication demonstrated in and out of our classrooms. The fall months are always a fun and dynamic time, and it has been a joy to see our students not only striving for excellence in their studies and extracurriculars but also growing as compassionate and creative individuals.

From our youngest learners at Orchard Hill building foundational skills to our high schoolers at MHS achieving state-level recognition, there are so many success stories unfolding each day. I would like to share a snapshot of some exciting happenings across our district during the first few months of the school year.

Orchard Hill

Day of Play & Creativity Challenges: This year, we have enhanced the OHES monthly Days of Play by introducing Creativity Challenges. These activities support partnerships with OHES families to encourage imaginative ways to incorporate purposeful planning, problem-solving, and teamwork into our Days of Play. In October, the Cubs used classroom materials to build haunted houses! Some collaborated as a whole class, while others worked in small groups or individually. The outcome was a display of our Cubs' incredible imagination!





ECC Fall Fest: Students at our Early Childhood Center recently participated in the 3rd annual ECC Fall Fest. There were wagon rides, pumpkin scavenger hunts, and fall-themed sensory boxes to explore, and other fun activities. A huge thank you to the UMS Unified Club for their participation in making Fall Fest an unforgettable experience for our students!



Learning Through Exploration: This fall, OHES teachers have designed a variety of learning experiences that promote exploration, problem-solving, and healthy risk-taking. Students are empowered to use their foundational knowledge as they engage in problem-based learning challenges that encourage collaboration and critical thinking. In kindergarten, our young scientists investigated the needs of animals and designed their own shelters based on specific criteria. In second grade, our young mathematicians developed creative solutions through collaboration and the application of previously taught skills, using a variety of tools to support their thinking.





In the Classroom – Language Arts: It's a busy time of year for our Orchard Hill readers and writers!

Kindergarten readers are currently immersed in the world of emergent storybooks, which include classics you may be familiar with, such as The Three Billy Goats Gruff, The Little Red Hen, The Three Little Pigs, Caps for Sale, Harry the Dirty Dog, The Carrot Seed, and Corduroy. First-grade readers are learning how to get to know characters by performing their books, noticing what characters do, say, think, and feel, retelling the stories they read, and reading with fluency. Finally, second-grade readers are busy becoming experts in nonfiction reading and informational writing. They are working on identifying text features and forming information as they read, using new vocabulary words to grow their knowledge and compare and contrast texts on specific topics.

In the Classroom – Mathematics: In kindergarten and first grade, we have discovered how numbers are all around us, building upon patterns of numbers. In Kindergarten, we are working with numbers beyond 5, and in first grade, we have worked with numbers beyond 10. We have practiced emerging addition and subtraction strategies while working with dominoes and will use these strategies with more formalized addition and subtraction throughout the year. In second grade, we have developed addition strategies to memorize tricky facts. We have made connections to building larger numbers through the story of Jack and the Beanstalk, and relating our work to place value.

Village Elementary School

Week of Respect - October 6-10: During the week of October 6-10, VES celebrated the Week of Respect! Each day, students participated in morning meetings, discussions, and activities that highlighted the importance of kindness and respect. Villagers began the week by learning what respect looks and sounds like in our school community, then explored how to show respect for ourselves and others. Midweek, students focused on respecting diversity by celebrating the many unique qualities that make each of us special.

The week concluded with a fun “No Drama, Pajama” day, reminding students that staying calm helps to solve problems peacefully. Through these activities, students practiced the skills and attitudes that help build a caring, welcoming school environment.

MHS Peer Leaders visited some of our classrooms to share lessons on respect. In addition, VES school counselors facilitated classroom lessons focused on emphasizing that we treat each other with respect and kind words so that everyone can feel safe and comfortable in school.





Digital Citizenship Week - October 20-24: Each year during the third full week of October, our VES students participate in Digital Citizenship Week, an annual campaign to promote a healthy, balanced, and positive approach to media and tech use among young people. During the week of October 20-24, Villagers learned about building healthy habits around technology use through videos presented on the VES Afternoon News. The topics include balancing technology time with other activities, protecting your privacy, identifying and preventing cyber-bullying, managing distractions, spotting fake news, and decoding media messages. We are looking forward to seeing how students put this learning into practice so they can engage with technology in thoughtful and healthy ways.

Halloween at VES - October 31: Halloween at VES was so much fun! The day started with the annual *Readers' Theater* assemblies that included staff acting out the story, *Pig Pumpkin*, in an interactive read-aloud. The day continued with fun and creative class parties coordinated by our outstanding MES PTA Room Representatives. We thank them for their effort and positive energy!







Back to School Kickball Showdown - October 22: The MES PTA and the MMS PTO in conjunction with MTEA hosted the K-8 staff kickball game, which was a huge hit. It was a fun and energizing way to build community across buildings, and we are grateful for our supportive students and families who cheered us on. Village School staff demonstrated great teamwork, effort, and school spirit!



Indigenous and Native American Heritage Month: In November, Village School celebrates the rich culture, traditions, and contributions of Indigenous and Native Americans to our community. Class lessons and read-alouds also develop an understanding of the Lenni Lenape, cultural understanding, and land acknowledgments. The celebration continues with culminating nature appreciation and reflection walks through Skillman Park.

All third graders traveled to Waterloo Village and Winakung - a native Lenape Woodland forest in Stanhope, NJ, with exhibits and hands-on activities about life in a Lenape village. This engaging trip is a team favorite and supports the third-grade social studies unit on Lenni Lenape culture in this region.






Lower Middle School

Fall Social: The past few weeks have been filled with pride and celebration at LMS! At the end of October, we hosted a fabulous Fall Social that brought our school community together on a Friday night. Students filled the building with energy and laughter as they danced, played games, and enjoyed time with friends.

Veterans Day Ceremony: On Sunday, November 9th, LMS played an integral role in the Montgomery Township Veterans Day Ceremony. Our 6th graders opened the event with a stunning solo rendition of the national anthem, followed by a quartet from our choir who performed patriotic songs that were both harmonious and moving. Our 5th graders then shared heartfelt letters expressing what Veterans Day means to them. These messages deeply touched the audience and became one of the most memorable moments of the ceremony.

Red Ribbon Week: During Red Ribbon Week, LMS students embraced the opportunity to learn and reflect on the importance of making healthy, responsible choices. Throughout our Morning Meetings, students participated in engaging lessons and activities that reinforced this year's theme. Thanks to the generous support and donations from our PTO, students also enjoyed fun prizes that added excitement and school spirit to the week's learning.

Treating Others with Respect: We are so proud of our students for representing LMS with such respect, responsibility, and kindness in our community! One example where we see students exhibiting these traits is our Interact Club. Members of the club recently spent the day spreading joy at the *Stonebridge at Montgomery* retirement community center. Students sang, danced, played board games, and read stories with our Montgomery neighbors-and the smiles were endless.





Upper Middle School

Camp Mason: A little rain at the start of the week didn't dampen students' spirits. They embraced the outdoors and collaborated through a variety of challenges. One highlight was the *Action Socialization Experiences* program, which helped them build communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills. These experiences prepared students for a week filled with teamwork, resilience, laughter, and lasting memories. The trip concluded with the traditional bonfire—a special moment for reflection, connection, and celebration—as our 8th graders look ahead to the next chapter of their middle school journey. Ask any 8th grader, and you'll hear all about the fun they had!



Pumpkin Day: Our 7th graders celebrated Pumpkin Day, a fun, fall-themed event focused on community building and connection. Students signed up for activities with friends, carved and decorated pumpkins, and worked together to strengthen their sense of belonging here at UMS. We hope all of our 7th graders are feeling connected, valued, and proud to be part of our community.

AMC 10: This fall, we are proud to share that 60 students participated in the American Math Competition. This competition provided an opportunity for our students to see how their math abilities measure up to their peers outside of Montgomery Upper Middle School.

Care Days: UMS closed out Week of Respect with our two Cougar Care Days. Our students participated in an important lesson on the difference between intent and impact when making jokes. On Friday, November 14, UMS held its first school-wide rally. This rally focused on the importance of respect in our school community. Students shared what respect means to them as middle schoolers, and they participated in fun and respectful team competitions. The rally concluded with a performance by students from our Dance Class.





Student Council Socials: The UMS student council hosted two social events this school year. In October, students gathered on the back field for a Fall Fun Night with a movie and backyard games. In November, students returned to the dance floor for the Neon Dance Party!



Montgomery High School

Academic Highlights: The students of Montgomery High School continue to be among the highest-achieving students in the state. Our students rank among the top of their peers in SAT and Advanced Placement Tests. The Class of 2025 mean SAT score of 1330 was 301 points above the national mean. Our AP test scores were equally impressive; 53% of the 1,595 AP tests taken achieved a top score of 5, and 96% earned a score of 3 or higher. MHS had 15 finalists, 15 semi-finalists, and 80 commended students in the 2025 National Merit Program. Additionally, MHS had 114 students earn the Seal of Biliteracy recognition.

The 2025 Athletic Season: This fall, our MHS athletic teams showed incredible dedication, skill, and school spirit. Our football team had a historic season, advancing to the State Sectional Final for the first time in program history. While the outcome wasn't what we hoped for, we could not be prouder of our athletes, coaches, and supporters who made this journey possible. As all of our Fall Sports come to a close, we want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our students, staff, families, and community members. Seeing so many of you in the stands this season truly embodies Cougar Pride. We look forward to seeing you again this winter, cheering loudly and representing MHS with spirit and pride!



MHS Marching Band: What a season for the MHS Marching Band! Our talented student-musicians swept every competition this year and crowned their incredible journey by winning the 2025 NJ State Group V A Championship. Their hard work, passion, and teamwork have made our entire MHS community proud. Congratulations to the band and directors for a record-breaking, unforgettable season. Cougar Pride has never sounded so good!



Garba & Bollywood Dance Night: On October 17th, the Sensasian Club hosted its annual Garba and Bollywood Night in the MHS Commons. The fun-filled evening was attended by nearly 200 students, with many people dressed in traditional and colorful outfits and participating in Garba, a traditional style of rhythmic dancing. Attendees also enjoyed a DJ playing a variety of popular Bollywood dance songs and a selection of delicious foods, including samosas.



MHS is Proud to be Recognized as a National Unified Champion School: Inclusion, friendship, and teamwork are what green and gold are all about! We are incredibly proud to be recognized as a Special Olympics National Unified Champion School, a distinction that highlights the heart and spirit of our students. Every day, our students are proving that together they can make a difference by breaking down barriers, building meaningful connections, and fostering a culture of acceptance and belonging. Through their dedication, leadership, and compassion, they are showing our entire school community that true success is not just measured in scores or trophies, but in the ways we support and uplift one another. Montgomery High School is stronger, kinder, and more united because of these efforts, and we celebrate every student who helps make that vision a reality.



Thank you for your continued partnership and support. Your involvement is truly vital to our district's success. I look forward to sharing more about events and happenings across MTSD later this school year!

Sincerely,

Mrs. Mary E. McLoughlin
Superintendent of Schools