

Statement from Erik Buckley

As part of this year's candidate process, I'd like to share a few thoughts-not about myself, but about the work we're doing together as a district and a community.

For those I haven't met, my name is Erik Buckley. I've lived in the district for nearly 15 years and have two children in our schools. I've worked in education for the past 24 years, and like many of you, I care deeply about the success and well-being of our students.

What gives me real pride is the progress we're making as a district. We've seen meaningful growth in academics, and our Career and Technical Education programs continue to expand-giving students more real-world options and helping them discover paths that reflect their interests and strengths. In some cases, our students are even building parts for NASA - right here at Pine Bush.

That growth extends beyond the classroom. Our arts programs are thriving. Our student musicians, performers, and visual artists continue to shine. Our athletic programs are competing at a high level and building real character along the way. Recently, our athletic department received the Award of Excellence for Exemplary Display of Sportsmanship, Ethics, and Integrity - a well-deserved recognition that speaks to the culture our coaches and athletes have worked hard to build.

Our academic teams are also doing incredible things. This year, our Odyssey of the Mind teams have qualified for the world competition, showcasing their creativity and problem-solving skills on an international stage. Their achievements highlight the dedication and talent present in our schools.

That same dedication can be seen in the outstanding individuals who help make this district what it is. Amy Brockner was recently honored with the Educational Leadership Award, Lisa Quick with the Teaching Excellence Award, and Raven Atria with the Community Service Award by the Mid-Hudson School Study Council. These awards reflect the values we uphold - service, excellence, and leadership in action.

None of this happens without a team effort. Our teachers and families are at the heart of it, but a district doesn't function without all the pieces in place. From bus drivers to aides, cafeteria staff to custodians, administrators to clerical teams - every role matters. Every person contributes to the experience our students have each day.

This is a community where people care, where we work hard, and where we show up - for our kids and for one another.

As we look toward the final stretch of the school year, I want to take a moment to thank our Interim Superintendent, Amy Brockner. Her message - One team, one mission - has truly resonated, and her impact on this district will be felt long after she steps away.

I also want to welcome Joseph Lenz as he prepares to step into the superintendent role this summer. Many of us already know Joe from his work throughout the district. He brings with him a clear commitment to our students and a belief in public education that I think will serve us well moving forward.

I'm grateful to continue serving in this role. The support I've felt from the community means a great deal - it tells me that the work we're doing together is resonating. I approach this role with care, humility, and a focus on what this community asks of us.

Thank you for your continued support, and thank you for supporting our schools.