



Yorktown Central School District



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Dear Parents and Guardians,

I hope this letter finds you well and enjoying the final days of summer recess. As I prepare this letter I begin to realize the bittersweet emotions that accompany the close of summer. I then am reminded of the overwhelming joy that teaching and learning bring, and the bittersweet feelings quickly evolve to excitement and enthusiasm.

This was a very busy and exciting week in the Yorktown Central School District. On Monday we held our administrative retreat. We focused our work around the vision of the District, and engaged in a thoughtful dialogue around teaching and learning. I am deeply proud of the work of our administrators, and am delighted to work with an extraordinarily talented team. This very productive day set a remarkable tone for the remainder of the week.

Our administrative team devoted a tremendous amount of time and attention to the hiring process to ensure that we hire only the very best to work with our students. On Tuesday, we held our new hire orientation to welcome those who are new to the Yorktown Central School District. Our new hires participated in a series of engaging seminars to better familiarize themselves with the operations and child-centered philosophy of the Yorktown Central School District. I am confident that this group of professionals will make the District proud for many years to come.

Wednesday was truly an exciting day for all as we officially welcomed our faculty and staff to the new school year. Our Opening Day Ceremony celebrated the great work already happening in the District while also forging a path forward to the world-class learning environment we aspire to provide for our students. I left the opening day ceremony inspired; knowing that our students will enjoy their very best school year in the capable hands of our highly talented staff.

Thursday was possibly the most exciting day of all. Our faculty and staff welcomed Dr. Michele Borba, author of *Unselfie*, to the District. During her opening presentation, Dr. Borba shared the importance of instilling empathy in our students as well as strategies to ensure children are attuned to empathetic dispositions. The hundreds in attendance left the presentation feeling inspired and

committed to the importance of empathy in our instructional practices. Dr. Borba also facilitated additional small group sessions throughout the morning.

Needless to say, this has been a very busy and exciting week for the Yorktown Central School District. As we prepare for the opening of schools, we know that Tuesday, September 5 will be upon us very soon. We are delighted to welcome back our students. Each of the faculty and staff members with whom I have spoken have expressed a sincere excitement and genuine enthusiasm to meet their students and begin the joyous work of teaching and learning.

As you arrive at our schools next week, you will notice several facilities upgrades to each of our campuses. Our outstanding facilities team and custodians devoted a tremendous amount of time to ensure that our facilities are in optimal condition for the return of students. Of special note is the careful attention we provided to revamping some of our instructional spaces throughout the District to ensure that our physical classroom space was best aligned to the instructional practices and thinking demands we hope to cultivate. We take great pride in our facilities, and have worked tirelessly to ensure they meet our very high standards of excellence.

In addition, as in years past, the Yorktown Police Department has graciously offered to be present on September 5 to ensure a smooth opening of our schools. Having the Yorktown Police Department present to assist in the safety of traversing our campuses is wonderful, especially for those who are new to our schools. Chief Noble and I had a great meeting this summer, and his support of the Yorktown Schools is truly outstanding. I look forward to working with Chief Noble and his staff throughout this school year.

Finally, I hope you take time to enjoy this final weekend of summer recess. As I noted earlier in this letter, the end of summer always marks a bittersweet time. However, I am confident that the talented and dedicated teams in our schools will ensure a terrific return for all--full of joy and enthusiasm.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr. Hattar", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Ron Hattar