



**Yorktown Central School District**



Dr. Ronald Hattar  
Superintendent of Schools

2725 Crompond Road  
Yorktown Heights, New York 10598  
(914) 243-8001  
(914) 243-8003 (fax)

November 21, 2017

Dear Parents and Guardians,

*"Feeling gratitude and not expressing it  
is like wrapping a present and not giving it."*

-William Arthur Ward

I hope this note finds you joyfully anticipating time with family and friends over the Thanksgiving recess. Thanksgiving is a wonderful time to pause and acknowledge those who have inspired us and those who have made our world a better place. As I reflect on the last few months, there is much for which I am grateful. Our schools have the great fortune of educating some of the kindest, empathetic, and talented children in the region. I am grateful to have the opportunity to work with this amazing group of students--all 3,452 of them. I am also grateful to work with an amazing administrative team, faculty, and staff. Since I first stepped foot on the Yorktown campuses as Superintendent of Schools, I felt something special inside of my heart. The feeling is not easily translated to words, but it is the feeling one gets when something "just feels right." Yorktown is that place because of the amazing people who work tirelessly to ensure that students learn and thrive in a nurturing and supportive environment. It is an honor to work with the deeply talented Yorktown administrators, teachers, and staff.

I am also grateful to be part of the Yorktown community. This is a community that rallies around its schools and those in need. Our community attends our school events, supports our fundraisers, braves frigid temperatures to cheer on our athletic teams, and goes shopping to help re-build the life of someone they may not have known who lost all of her belongings in a house fire. To the latter point, the "Fill the Bus" event was an

enormous success. Our faculty, staff, and community filled two buses for the bus driver who lost all of her belongings in a devastating house fire. One person I spoke to, a former resident of Yorktown, drove two hours to donate some household items. She simply said, "I saw your letter on Facebook, and I had to be here."

While our community rallied around this individual who has faithfully and safely transported our children for more than 30 years, there were 11 additional families who lost all of their belongings in that same fire. I have learned that anything that our driver will not use will be shared with those other 11 families first before being donated to a local charity. The Yorktown Central School District and the community not only changed the life of a beloved bus driver, we also changed the lives of 11 additional families who went into last weekend with only the clothes they were wearing and loving memories from the home they lost. I am proud of this district and community!

The "Fill the Bus" event is only one example of the generous spirit that fills the walls of our schools. All of our schools, led by Mildred E. Strang Middle School, participated in a fundraiser to provide support to patients of the Puerto Rico Children's Hospital after it was decimated by Hurricane Maria. In all, 80 pillowcases, stuffed with wonderful clothing, bottles of hand sanitizer, crafts, books, and toys were sent to Puerto Rico today. Two large boxes of supplies also accompanied this shipment. I thank the community for your support. I also thank the amazing Yorktown Central School District Board of Education, administration, faculty, and staff for their generosity in not only donating supplies for this effort, but for also paying for the shipping costs to send these items to Puerto Rico. This act of kindness and generosity will undoubtedly change the lives of many people for years to come.

The Yorktown High School National Honor Society recently led a campaign that netted over 1,000 pounds of candy for United States soldiers. The candy was delivered to West Point this past weekend and will be shipped to troops stationed all over the world. So many brave men and women who are faithfully serving our country will be away from their families this holiday season. I truly hope that when the troops receive the packages prepared by our students, they will know that Yorktown is thinking of them during the holidays and throughout the year. I am very pleased that all five of our schools participated in the collection of candy, and I thank all of those who supported this worthy cause.

There are so many generous activities that take place throughout our schools. I commend the faculty, staff, and students who bring these ideas forward, and the administrators for supporting these acts of kindness. Aristotle once said, "Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all." Our children, through their

service and kindness, are gaining the most wonderful educational experience possible--an education of the mind and the heart.

Personally, I have much for which I am grateful. I am grateful for my family. My wife and children are amazing people who inspire me each day. They give me the most joy in this world. I am grateful to work in the Yorktown Central School District. I have met many wonderful people and have already forged strong relationships with so many people during my time in Yorktown. To think, our paths would not have crossed otherwise. It is not always easy to be the new person on a team, but your overwhelming kindness and outreach have been very helpful and are deeply appreciated. I value your support beyond words.

Finally, I am thankful to have the pleasure of working with the children of Yorktown. I have met or have addressed nearly every student in the District at this point, and they are all wonderful. I have met with dozens of students in my office so I may understand what they enjoy most about going to school in Yorktown. The recurring theme of those conversations is the connection to their school. Children feel a strong connection to their school, resulting in a deep sense of pride in attending school in Yorktown. In the words of one of our YHS seniors, "I love going to school here. I love living in Yorktown. This is the best place to live."

I wish you a wonderful Thanksgiving full of love, family, and joy.

Respectfully,

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

Dr. Ron Hattar