

DECEMBER 2017

Greetings to everyone in the MBS community! Earlier this fall, a small group from our school community had the opportunity to visit the Knollwood School in Fair Haven. The purpose of the visit was to see how they have transformed their library into a makerspace for the students. Although the traditional library is still in place, complete with a large collection of books for students, there is also a wide variety of materials ranging from personal computers to a station dedicated to hydroponics along with various other types of items that can be used to create and build. And that's the point; students are given a great deal of choice and responsibility when it comes to their learning in that environment. At the helm of this 21st century learning experience was a teacher who served more as a consultant to the students than someone who spent a great deal of class time delivering direct instruction. Needless to say, what we saw made quite an impression on us and as our visit came to an end, we all agreed that it was time for MBS to begin moving in that same direction. However, we also agreed that there needs to be plenty of discussion and planning to ensure that we put appropriate resources in place that will engage our student population in meaningful ways. In the coming months, I will be meeting with members of our school staff, the Board of Education, and the parent community to make plans and set goals for creating makerspace experiences in our school. We hope to provide the students with some initial, simple opportunities later this year and then expand our efforts on a larger scale for 2018-2019.

Each year around this time, we are all reminded about the importance of family and friends in our lives. I realize that the holiday season is also a source of stress, spending, and pressure, but I hope that we can all find the time to enjoy the special moments that come along as well. As most of you know, I am the father of three children and although I no longer have "little kids" in my house, I have not lost sight of the joy that my children bring to our home. Like any other parent, I will have to contend with the challenges that come with the holidays, but I will try to make the most of having my family together and visiting relatives as well. My wish for all of you during this holiday season is that you are able to not just spend time with your family, but also that you recognize and savor the moments of laughter, love, and joy that no one can put a price tag on. So, from my family to yours, I hope you have a wonderful holiday season and a new year filled with good health and happiness.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Ettore

Principal/Superintendent