

## NOVEMBER 2018

Greetings to everyone in the MBS community! As I was composing my article last month, we were dealing with a horrible stretch of humidity. What a difference a month makes, or in this case, just a week! It seems like we have finally settled into some comfortable, seasonable weather conditions that will hopefully last as long as possible. Speaking of changes, more progress has been made on the new all-purpose room. As you probably have noticed, the steelwork is well underway and the structure is starting to take shape! As of now, we are still targeting an early spring opening of the room and will hopefully have access to the space for student lunches for the latter part of the school year.

In the world of academics, staff and students across all grade levels have been working hard since the start of the school year in early September. It's hard to believe, but by the time the newsletter is shared with families, our first marking period will be quickly coming to an end. That also means our first round of parent-teacher conferences are also right around the corner. These meetings should be valuable opportunities for teachers and parents to share and receive information about the progress that has been made to date. As a parent, I firmly believe it is important to not only attend these meetings, but to come with specific questions or concerns that need to be addressed. Knowing that the teachers will have plenty of data, work samples, and observations to share, the goal is to make the most of the time spent at these meetings. More than anything, it is important for teachers and parents to remember that you created a partnership back in September, so please approach the conferences as a chance to strengthen the relationships between home and school.

As I explained at the October Board of Education meeting, it's not often that I get to share good news from the Department of Education, but I'm happy to bring everyone this update. Thanks to the efforts of our new Governor and Commissioner of Education, the decision has been made to reduce the amount of State testing for all of our students in grades 3 - 8 starting in the spring of 2019! Although students in those grades will continue to be tested in ELA and math, there will be shorter or fewer sections on both of the tests. This change should have a positive impact on our students and will certainly mean less time taken away from classroom instruction. Notices will go out as we get closer to the test dates in the spring that will provide more details about the testing schedule for all grades.

Looking ahead on the calendar, we will soon be reaching my personal favorite holiday of the year, Thanksgiving. It's not that I don't enjoy all of the other holidays on the calendar, but I have always loved the simplicity of a day that is focused on family and good food! So, before the annual craziness of the holiday season arrives, I hope that everyone takes the time to enjoy spending time with your family and friends, along with a great meal. I am already excited about seeing my college kids and having our whole family together, even if it is only for a few days. I hope all of our MBS families are able to do the same because we all have so much to be thankful for.

Sincerely,

**Michael E. Ettore**  
Principal/Superintendent