

FEBRUARY 2017

Greetings to everyone in the MBS Community! It seems like only yesterday that we turned the calendar to the new year and here we are already one month into 2017. I tell people all the time that my biggest source of stress as Superintendent during the winter months is the threat of snow and having to make decisions related to the opening or closing of our district. Of course, when you're the Superintendent in Monmouth Beach, you also have to be concerned with the possibility of flooding in our town. Such was the case on January 24, when a "nor'easter" came rumbling up the coast and soaked our area with several inches of rain that were accompanied by strong winds causing the high tides to turn our local roads into waterways. Ultimately, my decision to open, close, or delay school is based on the constant updates I receive from the police chief, who provides me with road reports that enable me to make what we believe to be the right decision based on the conditions and forecast for the day. It is important for everyone to know that the goal is to open if at all possible except when the conditions are simply not safe for our staff and families to be traveling, or in the case of January 24, when it was not possible for vehicles to get through town without oars and a rudder. With any luck, the remainder of our winter season will be more calm and uneventful.

Switching gears back to the world of instruction and learning, I wanted to report out on an event I attended at Monmouth University back on January 10. The event was the Winter Summit sponsored by the Monmouth County Curriculum Consortium (MC3). The agenda for the program consisted of a keynote speaker along with two sessions of workshops facilitated by educators from various districts around the county. For the first time, two of our MBS teachers submitted a proposal for a presentation that was ultimately approved. The teachers were Nancy Pietz and Kara Sheridan, and their topic was the use of technology at the primary level (K-2). In short, their presentation provided the audience with a wide variety of age-appropriate resources that can be used in the lower grades by teachers and their students. Not only did Mrs. Pietz and Mrs. Sheridan provide valuable information about their resources, but they also included

opportunities for their “students” to interact and apply their new knowledge as part of their demonstrations. Like many other districts, MB has successfully become a 1:1 environment with chromebooks in grades 3-8, but this presentation showcased our commitment to being progressive at ALL grade levels where technology is concerned. On behalf of the entire MBS staff, we would like to congratulate and thank Mrs. Pietz and Mrs. Sheridan for their efforts and their willingness to share their expertise with their colleagues.

Back in December, I learned that Monmouth Beach was one of just 25 districts in the state that achieved 100% success on PARCC testing from the spring of 2016 at the elementary level (3-5) in ELA performance. In other words, all of our students at those grade levels scored in levels 4 or 5, meaning that they were “meeting” or “exceeding expectations” on that portion of the test. In a time where there has been so much negative attention and controversy surrounding the PARCC test, I believe it is important to celebrate our successes and congratulate our staff and students for doing such an amazing job in preparing for this challenging experience. Our Executive County Superintendent made arrangements to have our district, along with the other five districts in Monmouth County that all earned this same distinction, to be recognized at the Freeholders Meeting on Thursday, February 9, 2017. At this event, the Superintendents and Board of Education Presidents will represent our respective districts and graciously accept the official recognition for this wonderful achievement on behalf of our staff and students.

Respectfully,

Michael E. Ettore
Principal/Superintendent