

## MAY 2017

Greetings to everyone in the MBS community! As one of the staff members said to me the day we returned from spring break, "We're in the home stretch now". Of course that statement comes with excitement about the fact that the school year is winding down. On the other hand, that statement also causes me to panic just a little every year because I realize that I have plenty of work that I need to finish in a relatively short amount of time. My guess is that the teachers feel the same way as they take a look at their curriculum and think about all that they want to accomplish with their students before the year comes to an end to help get them ready for next year. With this in mind, it is important for you to remain consistent with your children at home in terms of school routines for doing homework and studying for tests. I tell the students every year about the importance of "finishing strong" so that they will end the year moving in a positive direction that will hopefully carry over into September.

Now that we are well into the spring season and enjoying warmer days, I would like to strongly encourage our students to return to the practice of walking or riding bikes to school. If more and more students walk and ride their bikes to school, that should result in fewer vehicles being on the road around town in the morning. Additionally, research shows that giving students some form of physical activity early in their day can have positive effects on their mental and physical health. Finally, if the students walk or ride bikes to school, they also need to manage their time in order to arrive on time. We know as adults, that managing the responsibility of being on time to work/school is a critical life skill that needs to be developed. It is for all of these reasons that I hope parents will join me in supporting the practice of having students walk or ride bikes to school as often as possible!

As many of you know, the first week in May is typically dedicated to teacher appreciation. In my personal and professional opinion, teachers have the most important responsibility of all careers, which is to educate our children. Of course, there is SO much more expected of teachers that goes beyond covering the curriculum and delivering daily academic lessons. Teachers, especially the really good ones, accept and embrace the responsibility of helping their students to develop social skills while also attending to their ever changing emotional needs as well. On top of that, teachers also serve as negotiators and facilitate conflict resolution experiences for their students on a daily basis. In short, I think everyone would agree that a caring teacher can have tremendous influence on the life of a child that can help shape their lives for years to come. For these reasons and more, I hope you will join me in recognizing the efforts of the talented and caring teachers that make up the MBS faculty.

Looking ahead to the rest of the month, our students in grades 3 - 5 will be completing their days of PARCC testing just as our middle school students have been doing in late April and early May. As parents, it is important to encourage our children to do their best work on these tests so we can learn more about their strengths and needs for future planning purposes. Please be sure to have your children get a good night's rest before each day of testing and eat a healthy breakfast so they will have enough energy to give their best effort. As always, if we provide our students with appropriate and positive support, they will likely perform to the best of their abilities.

Respectfully,

*Michael E. Ettore*  
Principal/Superintendent