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# MONMOUTH BEACH SCHOOL

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Michael E. Ettore, Superintendent  
Joshua DeSantis, Assistant Principal  
Denise McCarthy, Business Administrator

September 12, 2018

Dear MBS Families,

During the previous school year, several members of our staff began to provide students with a wider variety of educational experiences that included the opportunity to build, create and collaborate. The term most commonly associated with this type of movement is **makerspace**. In short, makerspace education is a direction and/or a philosophy whereby students are given opportunities to literally “make” products that may be in the form of simple models using hands-on manipulative items, or the products may be more advanced and come in the form of something like a video production.

It is important for everyone to know that our staff is not starting from zero and just now moving in this direction. Most of our teachers have been providing “maker” types of experiences for many years without having those projects be referred to as “makerspace activities.” However, we recognize the need to remain current with our instructional practices and priorities, so we are expanding our commitment to provide students with an even wider variety of maker experiences across all grade levels.

In terms of specifics, our vision is to utilize weekly library/media time for the PK - 2 students to receive more of the maker types of experiences by way of a Leggo board that is mounted in that room. Additionally, Mrs. Stafford will also facilitate other types of small projects that promote socialization, creating and imagination while also continuing to reinforce early childhood literacy topics through children’s literature each week. In grades 3 - 8, the new direction will occur most often in the tech lab when students visit Mrs. LoPiccolo each week. Our goal is to have students in K - 2 develop their basic tech skills, which will allow the students to utilize and expand on those skills in more advanced ways when they reach the intermediate and middle school grades.

By no means will these maker activities and experiences be limited to the library and tech lab. The classroom teachers will also be providing their students with these types of opportunities through the use of student chromebooks and other resources in the room. The goal is to promote an expanded level of cooperative learning and collaboration among students because these are such valuable skills in the 21st century “real world” beyond schools.

I am very excited about having the ability to observe the makerspace activities that will unfold this year and I encourage you to talk to your children about these experiences. Ultimately, my hope and our collective goal is to have students be excited about these experiences, not because they are fun and enjoyable; but because they are challenging, motivating, and stimulating.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Michael E. Ettore". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Michael E. Ettore  
Principal/Superintendent