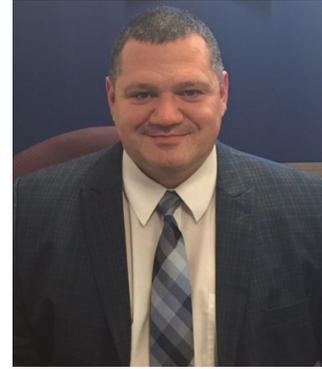


Dear Students and Parents,

Welcome to the 2019-20 school year! I hope you had an enjoyable and relaxing vacation with family and friends. As I look forward, I am both proud and excited. I am proud of the hard work and many accomplishments achieved by students, faculty, and staff during the 2018-19 school year, and I am equally excited about the successes I know lie ahead.



Test scores across the district reveal that hard work and consistent effort on the part of teachers as well as students definitely yielded results. Despite the challenges of teaching the skill of text analysis, students at both Philipsburg Elementary School and Osceola Mills Elementary School demonstrated solid increases in performance on recent standardized tests. Since 2018, fourth grade students at Philipsburg Elementary School have demonstrated an 11% increase in scores in the area of text-dependent analysis on the English Language Arts portion of the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA). Likewise, fourth graders at Osceola Mills Elementary School have increased their scores in the area of text-dependent analysis from 36% to 53% over the past four years. On the fourth grade Science PSSA, 92.9% of students at Philipsburg Elementary scored proficient or advanced. This is an increase of 4.7% from the 2018 scores, and at Osceola Mills Elementary, 85% of 3<sup>rd</sup> graders performed proficient or advanced in math.

At the secondary level, students demonstrated high levels of academic performance in a number of areas as well. As a result of concentrated efforts to help students at the Philipsburg-Osceola Middle School improve their writing skills, every grade level made significant gains overall in the area of text-dependent analysis on the English Language Arts PSSA test. Furthermore, longitudinal pass rates at POMS have increased by 10% in ELA and math over the last 5 years. Finally, senior high students at PO have definitely stepped up where Advanced Placement exams are concerned. Forty-eight students took exams in 12 different Advanced Placement courses with 54% of those students scoring a 3 or higher.

Aside from the positive strides the district is making in terms of academics, various projects to improve facilities are either completed or underway. The high school parking lot has been paved, the track around the multi-purpose field has been refurbished, and repairs to the steps to the baseball field are complete. Next year, we are planning on refurbishing every single science laboratory at the high school.

As a district, we have made a concerted effort to ensure that our schools are safe for our students. With four school police officers moving into their second year of service and metal detectors running smoothly at the middle school and high school, we were fortunate to have received additional funding this year that allowed us to install a surveillance system at the high school multipurpose field as well as secure entryways at both elementary buildings. Additional grant funding through the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency will be utilize to

hire a second social worker which will allow us to address mental health concerns early and effectively. Furthermore, an additional social worker will ensure that we are equipped to provide high quality interventions, services, and resources that meet the social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students.

All areas of the curriculum have been revamped in all grade levels. We are implementing a new science program in the elementary this year, and kindergarten through fifth grade teachers will be reviewing the English Language Arts program to determine if it is meeting the needs of students. Kindergarten and first grade teachers are participating in professional learning that will allow them to utilize scientifically based teaching practices in order to promote and enhance early literacy skills while our districtwide initiative of personalized learning will ensure that all students in kindergarten through Grade 12 are provided with learning opportunities that are not only data driven but tailored to the interests and learning styles of students. At the secondary level, grant funds through PAsmart have been used to establish a new computer science lab in addition to providing professional development for computer science teachers.

I look forward to the 2019-20 school year and the opportunity to work collaboratively with the school board, administration, and staff. I am confident that together we will provide the students of the Philipsburg-Osceola School District with an educational experience that is both engaging and memorable.

Have a wonderful school year!

Dr. Gregg Paladina

Superintendent