

# MONTCLAIR PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT

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### Superintendent of Schools

*Community Message SY 23-24. No. 2*

**Jonathan Ponds, Ed.D.**

September 28, 2023

Dear Families/Caregivers and Staff,

This message focuses on technology and infrastructure upgrades -- a topic that is so fluid that by the time we write about it, the landscape changes and there is something new. However, we want to give you a glimpse of what is happening behind the scenes to provide fundamental tools so our students and staff can operate efficiently and effectively.

#### *What's New in Technology 2023-2024*

##### **Infrastructure Upgrades**

Enhancements noted here provide equitable access and connectivity, increase productivity, optimize communications, and safeguard our district network and resources.

We are pleased to announce that we have successfully entered year three of our 1:1 Chromebook Initiative. All students in grades K-12 have a Chromebook. Each year students in Kindergarten, Grades 6 and 9 receive a Chromebook. These Chromebooks follow the student over the course of three to four years. To date, approximately 2,500 Chromebooks have been distributed to our students.

What good are Chromebooks without proper connectivity? The Technology Department has upgraded every school building with state-of-the-art wireless (Wi-Fi 6 Meraki) access points. This major enhancement will provide students and teachers ubiquitous access to online content at a quicker and more efficient pace than ever before.

In addition, the Technology Department is in the process of assembling mobile charging stations for our elementary schools. Each elementary school will be receiving five stations to be used in the classroom to assist with charging student devices. We will continue to expand this initiative each year until every classroom is equipped with one.

Several upgrades have been accomplished at MHS. The LGI room has been outfitted with a brand new audio system that will enhance student, teacher and guest presentations. The MHS Media Center has been equipped with new Chromebox computers and 27-inch monitors.

Safety and security always remain a top priority. Our emergency notification system is fully operational. All classrooms are now equipped with phones capable of sending and receiving alerts. Camera upgrades in the main building of MHS, George Inness Annex and Woodman Field have been finalized. Our security staff and school administrators can view cameras on demand. New technology has been outfitted at security front desks at each high school building along with a state-of-the-art command center on the main campus with new furniture and screens for monitoring inside and outside of our high school buildings.

The Technology Department has invested a lot of time in securing our network. We have acquired a brand new firewall with threat protection. Lastly, we continue to back up our data using a myriad of methods that will further safeguard student and staff data privacy.

### **Technology Projects on the Horizon**

Some projects on the horizon include updating our server infrastructure in our main data center and refreshing some of our computer labs as well as updating our security cameras at Glenfield Middle School. In addition we will be looking to design and launch a new website that will be user friendly and provide our Montclair community with up-to-date information, resources and alert messages.

### **Meet some of our Technology Team**

These upgrades don't happen by themselves. We are proud of our highly competent technology staff and thought you might like to see who is behind the servers, wires, laptops and connectivity. To the right are two District technicians finalizing the security center.



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*As I said in my first community message, we are committed to educating our youngest learners through high school in innovative, challenging and engaging ways. Our mantra remains focused on, "All Kids can Learn, and All Kids are Special!"*

Sincerely,  
Dr. Jonathan Ponds