



*Excellence in Education*  
**ROCKVILLE CENTRE SCHOOLS**

**Board of Education • 128 Shepherd Street • Rockville Centre • New York 11570**

*John O'Shea, President • Christine Ferazani, Vice President • Kelly Barry, Secretary • Tara Hackett • Erica Messier*

October 8, 2021

To the Rockville Centre School District Staff, Parents and Community Members:

I hope this letter finds you well. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to those of you who may not know me. For more than twenty years, I have been the Assistant Superintendent for Business and Personnel in the Rockville Centre School District. During my tenure, I have had the good fortune of working side by side with Dr. Johnson and have learned a great deal from him on what it takes to run a successful school district. I am proud to be part of a team of talented and experienced administrators, teaching staff and support personnel working together to educate the children in this District.

Recently, this District has faced some challenging times. We have faced adversity before. The recent twentieth anniversary of September 11th should serve as a reminder of what we have overcome in the past. I was here in Rockville Centre in 2001 when this occurred. It was a devastating time for this community, with many lives lost and children who had to grow up without a parent. Twenty years later, all of these children have graduated from our schools. The solemn reminder of this anniversary also reminds us of the resiliency in the community and the ability our students, and all of us, have to overcome adversity.

As the Acting Superintendent of Schools, my main goal is to provide stability for all of the children and the staff during the Board of Education's search for a new Superintendent. The COVID pandemic has provided some challenging obstacles over the past year and a half, and the District has met those challenges head on. I have been working in the District every day since the pandemic began, coordinating security, maintaining the business office functions and ensuring buildings were open and being maintained with a skeletal staff. There will continue to be debate over both sides of the masking issue and the District will continue to follow mandates and directives from the Governor, the State Education Department, the CDC and the State and Local Departments of Health. We will update the community on any changes in these mandates and directives as soon as they become available.

I would also like to make a statement on two issues that have come up within our community recently. The first is in regards to racial threats and harassment. There is absolutely no place for this within the Rockville Centre Community or anywhere else. It will not be tolerated and any allegations of it will be investigated and dealt with appropriately.

The second issue is in regards to teaching Critical Race Theory within our schools. We do not now, nor do we plan to, teach Critical Race Theory in any of our classrooms. Our administrators are carefully monitoring content in our curriculum and lesson plans. Students are taught to be critical thinkers. Students are taught about racial issues. Students are taught to theorize and question. However, it should be clearly stated that they are not being taught Critical Race Theory.

I kindly ask for your support in the coming months and will work to the best of my ability to lead this District. My goal will always be to support our students, staff and community. Thank you.

Robert Bartels  
Acting Superintendent of Schools