

Fair Lawn Public Schools

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Welcome back to school, students, staff and parents. I hope you had a wonderful summer and are looking forward to the 2016-2017 school year as much as I am.

We had an excellent Extended School Year program this summer at Fair Lawn High School and Warren Point. I would like to thank all of our ESY staff for conducting such an excellent program. The children looked forward to coming to school every day and did not even seem to realize how much they were learning. I know our teachers create a fun, exciting and motivating learning environment during the school year, as well. All of our students should be happy to return to the interesting and educational opportunities that our teachers and district offer.

I wish to welcome our new, highly accomplished, interim Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Ernest Palestis, who will be with us for the 2016-2017 school year. Dr. Palestis has a Doctorate in Education Leadership and has completed post graduate studies at Columbia and Harvard Universities. He began his career as a high school history teacher, and served as a superintendent of schools for twenty years. We all look forward to working with Dr. Palestis. He has our whole-hearted support as we work collaboratively on our mutual special education and district goals.

I am so pleased to welcome Dawn Canestrino, elementary FLEX teacher, Alison Juliano, Preschool Disabilities Teacher, Christina Lazar, TJ School Psychologist, and Shannon Campbell, HS Learning Consultant back to the district. They are outstanding educators and have been missed.

I also want to welcome the following new special education staff:

Craig Barriale - School Psychologist at Warren Point and Memorial Middle School
Allison Danubio - LBLD Teacher at Forrest
Michele Regina Gaffney – HS Teacher
Sarah Goldberg - LDT-C at Edison, Lyncrest and Warren Point
Brande Jeffs – HS Teacher
Caitlyn Keane – Speech Therapist at Edison
Rachel Krinner - Speech Therapist at Westmoreland and Warren Point
Arlene Mitchell - long-term substitute for Carrie Fogel, HS Social Worker
Marcia Neugebauer - HS Speech Therapist
Kristin Perrone – Part-time Resource Teacher at Forrest
Arina Postnikova - Grade 7 Family Model Teacher at TJMS
Hayley Rivlin - HS and MMS Speech Therapist
Jody Rue - Resource Teacher at Warren Point
Rachel Shomer – Part-time Occupational Therapist
Jennifer Tempio - Grade 8 Family Model Teacher at TJMS
Karen Weber – Occupational Therapist at Milnes

As a reminder, we have moved some special education classes around the district to accommodate our very first full day kindergarten program.

Westmoreland School welcomes Ms. Brawer and Ms. Schmidt, CI Teachers, and also Ms. Bertelli and Ms. Canonico, Stepping Stones Teachers.

Forrest welcomes Ms. Tumino, Stepping Stones Teacher, and

Warren Point welcomes Ms. Hesney and Ms. Slyfield, LBLD Teachers.

The schools look forward to welcoming the students and families!

In addition, we have had some changes in assignments. Ms. Howard is teaching LBLD at Milnes, and Ms. Kelly is teaching resource at Warren Point. Ms. Garrett continues in our preschool disabilities AM program, and joins the high school staff in the afternoon. Ms. Mattina continues part-time as a teacher at the high school and will spend the rest of her day providing transition services to our high school students. Our transition program has grown so large, that Ms. Mattina's assistance in the program is necessary to continue to provide the district's high quality vocational and life skills programs.

Our district has the finest staff, and we are so fortunate to have all of our current, returning and new staff with us for the 2016-17 school year. For those of you who do not know Silvia Morgenstein, she is my highly skilled secretary and will do everything possible to help you in my absence as she keeps our office running smoothly. Also in my office is Joan Cosgrove, our knowledgeable special education secretary. Joan is also very willing to help parents and staff, as needed. Silvia and Joan are vital to the multi-functions of our office.

Our FLASE officers have been busy planning many exciting programs, including special school programs, support groups, our annual dance, and much more. I encourage all parents and staff to join FLASE and support their student-centered efforts. We are so fortunate to have this organization in our district; the FLASE leadership works tirelessly to support staff and students.

I'm sure that any help that you can give would be greatly appreciated! My special thanks to Mel Jerchow and Anna Romano, Co-Presidents of FLASE, for a great first year of working together. I look forward to year two.

As I begin my second year as Director of Special Education, please be reminded that Ms. Ciaramella, my insightful Assistant Director of Special Education, and I welcome your ideas and suggestions as we work together to move our department forward academically. We also are pleased to work closely with staff and parents in our mutual efforts to provide appropriate educational programs for all of our students.

I wish everyone a wonderful, safe, and productive school year.

Sincerely,

Michele Perino
Director of Special Education