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September 2017

Dear Parents/Legal Guardians,

The Division of Academic Services and Special Programs would like to welcome all students and families to a new successful academic school year. We are excited to have the opportunity to participate in the education of your children. The division has diligently worked to ensure that the students are provided with a viable and aligned curriculum to equip them with 21st century skills as they prepare for college and career readiness. Teachers continue to be provided with professional development opportunities to enhance their instructional practice to serve the needs of all students.

This year, there are two newly created curricula: Handwriting for grades K-5 and Personal Finance for Grades K-8. Additionally, the English Language Arts department is providing each student in kindergarten and first grade with their own Sight Word flash card rings. The goal is that through repeated practice, students master their sight words. This will ultimately aid their ability to become proficient fluent readers.

Throughout the school year students are exposed to resources both tangible and digital that are culturally relevant to the diversity of the district's population. Schools have been supplied with classroom libraries, novels, manipulatives, intervention resources, science materials, and units of study in mathematics and humanities where applicable. Walking through our classrooms students are engaged in high cognitive demanding task. Students work productively in teams, communicating and collaborating with a focus on creativity and innovation.

There is a strong emphasis for students to reinforce the standards/skills they have learned in class with homework assignments. These assignments may come in the form of digital or print-rich materials. Homework has an important role in improving learning and increasing student achievement. In addition, homework builds stamina for independence and self-discipline which is necessary for life-long learning. There is also a strong emphasis on students independently reading on a daily basis at their level of understanding. Reading expands vocabulary, boosts creativity, improves writing skills, enhances memory and develops analytical thinking.

Families are encouraged to support student learning in the home. This gives families opportunities to observe their children's education and witness what the student is learning. Parents should display excitement and enthusiasm about school in order to inspire students to make the most of their educational journey. Please get to know your Building Principals and your child's teachers as they are truly your partner in educating your child. Developing a rapport with them strengthens the bond between home and school. It also provides a clear message to your child that school is important and everyone shares a vested interest in their education! Get involved and engage in school district workshops and events!

A member of our community has provided the students of Paterson with an incentive program. Students who attain Principals' List and/or Honor Roll in a marking period will be eligible to receive a free fruit bowl or an ice cream sundae at the Paterson IHOP located at 301 Main Street, Paterson NJ, 07505. In order for students to receive this incentive, they must bring their report card for a one time reward in a marking period.

Our priority is to ensure every student receives the tools necessary for academic success. Furthermore, students will be educated on the essential skills and practices required to compete and be successful in college and career ready practices. You can access the district curriculum by going to the following link: http://www.paterson.k12.nj.us/11_curriculum/curriculum.php.

Best wishes for a successful year!

Your Partner In Education,
Susana Perón, Acting Deputy Superintendent (Chief Academic Officer)
and the Division of Academic Services and Special Programs