

December 2018

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As you read this correspondence, I hope that you had a wonderful Thanksgiving holiday and are enjoying the holiday season with friends and family. Sewanhaka remains proud of its students' accomplishments in academics, athletics and the arts. The District remains committed to extend every effort to ensure that its students are afforded the opportunity to continue to be provided with a diversified educational experience.

Currently the District is working diligently toward the development of the annual operating budget for the 2019-20 school year. The eighth year of the legislation, regarding the cap on the school tax levy, has continued to present additional challenges as the District strives to maintain its excellent programmatic offerings for all students in grades 7 through 12. It is anticipated that the cap on the 2019-20 budget will be below the 2 percent limit outlined in the law. As in the past, we will continue to remain steadfast in our determination to minimize the effects the tax cap will have on the instructional programs of our District.

At this time during the school year, our high school seniors are involved in the application process for acceptance into the colleges and universities of their choice. The high school guidance departments have continued to report that our students are applying to top tier colleges and universities. The District is confident that our students will continue to be accepted into the colleges/universities of their choice. Since our students are enrolled in a rigorous academic program and most are involved in a variety of co-curricular programs, we feel confident that our students are prepared effectively for their post-secondary careers.

As you are aware, the District is in its third year of implementing the student one-to-one initiative. In September, all students in grades seven through twelve were issued their personal iPad. The instructional staff and building level administrators should be commended for the manner in which they are implementing this new initiative. In addition, since the parent portal has been opened for ongoing access, the communication process regarding each student's academic progress has been significantly improved. I encourage parents/guardians to visit the parent portal on a regular basis.

Finally, as in the past, I encourage you to attend one of the schools' holiday concerts that are scheduled throughout the month of December. Our students perform in bands, orchestras and choruses and I know that you will join me in congratulating them for the outstanding work that they do as they perform in these various ensembles. The concerts for each school and grade levels are highlighted in each school's calendar.

In closing I would like to continue to reiterate that it has been my privilege to serve as Superintendent of Schools in such a wonderful District. I will continue to work diligently during the upcoming budget season to ensure that our student programs and activities are maintained in the future.

In closing, I would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one a happy holiday season and a healthy and prosperous New Year!

Sincerely yours,

Ralph P. Ferrie, Ed.D.