

September 2009

Dear Community Member:

Last spring, the Cold Spring Harbor community approved a school budget that was carefully constructed to balance new initiatives with fiscal constraint. I am enthusiastic about our initiatives for the 2009-2010 school year because they reflect our focus on the hallmarks of effective teaching and learning: quality class sizes, challenging curriculum, professional collaboration and implementation of instructional methodologies that engage the 21st century student.

This year will mark our inaugural year as a member of the Tri-State Consortium, which is a learning organization comprised of school districts in the Tri-State area that are committed to achieving excellence through self-study, inter-visitation and professional dialogue. We will begin the journey through rigorous self- assessment of our practices in English Language Arts – K-12. With the goal of ensuring a well-articulated philosophy throughout our schools, CSH teachers will have the opportunity to share best-practices not only with colleagues, but also as members of a larger professional circle.

We will also be continuing to develop a new model by which teachers are supervised and evaluated. Throughout the spring and summer months, administrators and teachers have worked collaboratively to develop high standards and define practices that clearly define and measure our professional practices. We agree that, just as students have different needs suited to their individual learning styles, teachers also require different options in order to continue to grow professionally. Once again, a review of current research in this area has contributed to some significant changes that will positively affect student learning.

Our faculty continues to commit to integrating methodologies that utilize new advances in educational technology into their classrooms. Look for increased utilization of *Smartboards*, *ipods* and educational software in all aspects of the curriculum. The use of technology also continues to bridge the divide between home and school thus enhancing a more effective and efficient partnership between parents and teachers.

Ultimately, all of the initiatives listed above would not result in student success were it not for the caring cadre of educators and support staff that are the essence of our school community. Put simply, children thrive when people are not only skilled, but also care. We are energized to begin this school year with the goal of ensuring that each and every one of our students feels challenged, supported and connected to school.

I wish you all a successful and memorable school year!

Sincerely,

Judith A. Wilansky, Ed.D.

Superintendent of Schools