



NEWSLETTER

**Patricia Watkins, PhD
Superintendent**

Hempstead UFSD

**"A Better Future for
Every Child"**

September 2009

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News for You

September 2009

Superintendent's



Message

"A Better Future for Every Child"

Dear Students and Parents:

On behalf of the Hempstead Union Free School District Board of Education, teacher and staff, I would like to welcome you to the 2009-2010 school year. The start of a new school year is always very exciting for students, parents, teachers, and staff. It is a time for new opportunities and enormous possibilities for the coming year and beyond. At this time of new beginnings, I am particularly delighted to serve as the new superintendent of Hempstead Public Schools and to join your community in improving the future of all you, the students in our schools.

The entire school district believes that the education of its children is key to their success. My vision for the 2009-2010 school year is to ensure the success of every student in a safe, challenging, nurturing and academically stimulating learning environment. Therefore, as your superintendent of schools, I will work with our community, our educators, your parents and our partnership organizations to ensure that every child in the Hempstead Union School District is prepared for the 21st century and that he or she receives the opportunities necessary to succeed in the global economy. It is with that in mind, that I want to share with you my Five Core Beliefs:

- Children are our business and they come first
- Parents are our partners
- Victory is in the classroom
- Continuous improvement in teaching, leadership and accountability is the key to success
- Every member shares the responsibility

This is an exciting time for public education in the Hempstead Union Free School District. To improve the future of every child in our schools and to move the school district from "Good to Great" we need the support, commitment, trust and engagement of everyone in our community. Therefore, I invite all members of our community to join us in achieving our mission – a better future for every child in the Hempstead Union Free School District.

As your new superintendent, it is important for me to get to know the community. Therefore, I will be spending time with you the students, your parents, teachers, all staff and community members to listen to everyone's expectations, goals and suggestions for our school district. As we move through the school year, I will share with you, in many different formats, such as community forums and newsletters, the achievements of our school district.

Sincerely,

**Patricia Watkins, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools**



Message from the Assistant Superintendent for Elementary



I am pleased to announce the implementation of the Scott Foresman Reading Street Program and additionally, the Board of Education has recently voted to adopt the elementary English Language Arts curriculum for Grades Pre-k through 5. This is excellent news not only for our teaching staff, but also for all of the wonderful students who attend Hempstead Public Schools.

Scott Foresman Reading Street is a scientifically researched-based reading, language arts program. Reading Street provides systematic and explicit instruction on the 5 core elements critical to reading success, which were identified by the National Reading Panel: Phonemic Awareness, Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Text Comprehension. Reading Street is complete with a fully integrated language arts strand, including writing, grammar, and spelling. The program is designed to meet the needs of all students, including English Language Learners and students with special needs. Extensive instruction support is provided for below, on-level, and advanced students.

The development of the English Language Arts curriculum was a year-long collaborative process involving administrators, teachers, curriculum writers, and technical support from the Long Island Regional Support Center. All teachers will be receiving a copy of the ELA curriculum binder at the start of the school year. The recent unification of the curriculum and inclusion of a pacing guide ensures that no matter what elementary school in Hempstead your child attends, he/she will be utilizing the same materials and learning the same skills/concepts at the same time.

We are expecting a wonderful and rewarding school year and look forward to all parents taking an active part in their child's education. Remember, you are your child's first and most important teacher. Together we can achieve success for all of our children.

Dr. Rodney Gilmore

Help Your Child Practice Reading Aloud



Children are expected to read aloud frequently in school and for many children it's a skill they must practice to be good at. *It's easy to find ways to read aloud if you think about it:*

- **Ask your child to read a recipe** to you while you are cooking.
- **Ask and older child** to read to a younger child.
- **Take turns reading** aloud when you and your child read together.
- **Invite family members to bring a book** to the dinner table once a week and read a favorite section to the entire family.
- **Ask your child to read aloud** from a library book while you are riding in the car. Everyone in the family can take turns reading aloud on a long trip. It's good practice and the miles will fly by.
- **Have your child read you the weather report** from today's newspaper while you are getting him/her ready for school.
- **Encourage children to present "newscasts"** or "special reports" to you, their friends or the whole family, reading from the newspaper sports page, the fashion section, wedding announcements or even from a catalog or their favorite magazine.
- **Have children read aloud from comic books** or strips while imitating what they think the characters might sound like.

An excerpt from the What Parents Can Do at Home to Help Students With Reading Pamphlet published by The Parent Institute

