



185 Peninsula Blvd.
Hempstead, NY 11550

Regina Armstrong
Interim Superintendent
of Schools
(516) 434-4000 Ext. 4011
Fax: (516) 292-0933

Rodney Gilmore, Ed.D.
Associate Superintendent
for Human Resources
(516) 434-4000 Ext. 4021

Ahunna Akoma, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
for Technology
(516) 434-4000 Ext. 4101

James E. Clark
Assistant Superintendent
for Special Programs
(516) 434-4000 Ext. 4014

Djuana Wilson
Assistant Superintendent
for Special Education
(516) 434-4000 Ext. 4091

August 21, 2019

To My Hempstead Union Free School Staff:

Welcome to the 2019 - 2020 school year! I hope you had a relaxing and wonderful vacation. This summer the District has been extremely busy preparing for the return of our students to their classrooms. I would like to thank you for being a resilient team of educators and support personnel dedicated to our students' success. I appreciate all of you who maintain a standard of excellence that promotes and supports students' academic achievement.

Hempstead School District is RISING and spinning a new narrative for our community. It should be noted, as of January 2019, the New York State Education Department provided districts with their accountability status under Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Three of our elementary schools that had been in accountability status for three or more years, are now in Good Standing. Congratulations to Jackson Main, Front Street, and David Paterson Schools! The 2018 Grades 3-8 ELA and Math assessment results demonstrated that more students are performing at higher levels of proficiency.

Our middle and high schools have met their required Demonstrable Growth for 2017-18 and are on track for exceeding their required targets for 2018-19. The high school graduation rate increased from 44% to 57% by August of 2018, and we expect this year's graduation rate to be even higher. For the first time, we had a group of eighth grade students who took the US History Regents, and we are excited to report a 100% passing rate. The rebuilding of Rhodes School is well underway and on schedule to open Fall of 2021. We weathered the Prospect School August 7, 2018 fire, and I am excited to report that Prospect has been restored beyond its original glory and is ready to receive our pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students this September. We are making progress indeed!

All staff is due back **Thursday, August 29, 2019** and is expected to report to Hempstead High School Auditorium, where our welcome back gathering will begin promptly at **8:15 a.m.** Following the convocation, all staff must report to their respective building by **10:30 a.m.** Your building leaders will give you instruction for the remainder of the day. Instead of a continental breakfast, a welcome back lunch will be provided to staff at your work site.

The second Superintendent's Conference Day, **Friday, August 30, 2019** will be used for District-wide Professional Development. Please refer to the attached grid as to where you must report. If you have questions regarding this information, contact your building principal or department administrator.

In closing, as our students return this fall, I challenge all staff to be ready and prepared to receive them. This year, let's all be even more committed to putting "Students First!"

With appreciation and gratitude,

Regina Armstrong
Interim Superintendent of Schools

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Enclosure