



Dear Dobbs Ferry Community,

I want to thank our school community for supporting and passing the District's 2024-2025 School Budget. This will enable the district to continue to provide an outstanding education for our students within a sound financial framework, all while maintaining a strong focus on rigorous teaching and learning. Supporting our students, faculty and staff is of the utmost importance, and we are grateful for your ongoing commitment to achieving our mission for each and every one of our students.

Despite having to make reductions across many areas of the budget, we are replacing staff and administration who are critical to maintaining our strong instructional focus.

To this end, we are delighted to announce that we have some exciting new hires at Springhurst Elementary School that were approved by the Board of Education at their May 28th meeting. Rudelina Murray will be the next Springhurst Assistant Principal starting on July 1, 2024. She joins us from Ward Elementary School in New Rochelle where she is currently the Assistant Principal. Prior to this work, Ms. Murray served as an assistant principal within the NYC Department of Education. We also welcome Olivia Kavanaugh as our new elementary school art teacher replacing Stephanie Thyrrre who is retiring at the end of the school year. Ms. Kavanaugh is presently an art teacher in Museum School 25 in Yonkers. She comes onboard at the end of August. We are thrilled to add these two exceptional educators to our Dobbs Ferry professional community. Principal Brown and I would also like to express our gratitude to the respective hiring committees for their time, dedication and thoughtful input during the hiring process.

True to form, our students continue to meet and exceed our expectations in so many areas. This spring, for example, Dobbs Ferry High School will be named a *School of Distinction* by the NYS Public High School Athletic Association (NYSPHSAA). This prestigious award is given to those schools in NYS where all varsity teams have 75% or more of their student athletes with a 90% or above academic average. The School of Distinction status is the highest honor that NYSPHSAA bestows. According to Athletic Director Andrew Klaich, this may be the first time that the school has achieved this status. In addition, on May 29th the high school's new *Tri-M Music Honor Society* inducted 26 student musicians into the inaugural class. These students must meet requirements in academic achievement, music participation, student leadership, community service, and strength of character. Finally, we were thrilled to host our second year of unified sports in bowling and basketball where, playing together on the same teams, our general education and special education student athletes delighted us with their skills, camaraderie, and play. All of these programs and more are supported in the 2024-25 budget.

As we wind down the academic year, we are looking forward to our 123rd Dobbs Ferry High School Commencement at Waterfront Park on Saturday, June 22nd at 10:00 am at the Dobbs Ferry Waterfront. Our graduation along the beautiful Hudson River shoreline is a long-standing tradition and truly the highlight of our school year for students, staff, parents and the community. We will also be holding separate Middle School Stepping Up (for 8th grade students and their families in the HS gymnasium) and Springhurst Stepping Up ceremonies during the last week of school. For the first time, our 5th graders will be starting a new tradition, and celebrating their transition from Springhurst to the Middle School outside on the Springhurst turf field.

All three schools have lots of exciting end-of-year events and annual activities coming up for students including the final Senior Walk, school field days, spring concerts, National Honor Society Inductions, MS/HS visits, athletic team playoffs, Springhurst Salad Day, Alumni Return Day, Senior Awards Night and much more. While Regents testing, IB exams and class finals are also going on, you can still feel the excitement in the air as the weather warms up.

I look forward to seeing many of you over the next few weeks and celebrating the many accomplishments of our incredible students. Congratulations to them and to their families, teachers, support staff, coaches, and advisors.

Sincerely,

Ken Slentz
Superintendent