

## PALISADES PARK BOARD OF EDUCATION

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*Dr. Joseph Cirillo*  
Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Parents, Guardians, Faculty, Staff and Students:

I hope this letter finds you well and excited about the beginning of another school year. Nothing is more important as we embark on the many activities involved in opening our beloved schools than revisiting our mission which guides our daily activities.

*“The Palisades Park School District is committed to meeting the evolving needs in a nurturing environment of mutual respect, preparing graduates to value life-long learning and develop skills and attitudes to make meaningful contributions as responsible members of a diverse community, ready to compete in a global economy.”*

While preparing graduates is an important component of our mission, it’s no accident that it comes after... “meeting the evolving needs in a nurturing environment of mutual respect.” This concept has always elevated our school district above many others and is the foundation of “The Family Atmosphere” in which we continue to cultivate year after year.

Yet, distractions from outside our learning community could sometimes strain our cohesiveness and unity. Therefore, as I welcome you back I want to focus on emphasizing respect. Helping our students develop self-respect and respect for others is our top priority. This is why our new wellness center is integral to our mission and key to student achievement. Physical and emotional wellness, cooperation and collegiality, teamwork and sportsmanship, professionalism and proficiency, all stem from respect and unite us in a common goal.

Writer Roy T. Bennet once wrote, “Attitude is a choice. Happiness is a choice. Optimism is a choice. Kindness is a choice. Giving is a choice. Respect is a choice. Whatever choice you make-- makes you. Choose wisely.” We want every student to grow in knowledge and skill in all subject areas, but our most important mission is to grow citizens of character who respect themselves and others and contribute to our community in a positive way. So, lets present the best choices and model on a daily basis how to choose wisely to build a better Palisades Park for us all. I know this is intrinsic to your personal mission and is therefore already a part of who you are as educators, parents, guardians, and students.

In addition to welcoming you back to school, I’d like to introduce you to our new administrative team members who will be assisting us in attaining our goals in the new school year. They include: Mr. Roberto Mendez, Director of Special Services, Mr. Joseph Spafford, Director of Athletics, Mrs. Krista Voohris, Vice Principal at Palisades Park

Jr./Sr. High School and Mrs. Angela Spasevski, School Business Administrator. These administrators were selected from among a pool of highly qualified applicants when they rose to the top due to their exceptional qualities and experience. I hope you'll join me in quickly making them feel at home.

We will begin the 2018-19 school year with staff returning on September 4th and 5th and students returning on September 6<sup>th</sup>. I also invite you to keep abreast of all of the latest news regarding the Palisades Park School District on our district website at [www.palpkschools.org](http://www.palpkschools.org) on twitter @pphtigers @ECCPalPk, @PalPkLindbergh on my personal twitter feed @drjosephcirillo. I look forward to working side by side with you as we strive to fulfil our mission. I wish you a healthful and enjoyable last few days of summer vacation.

Dr. Joseph Cirillo