



# SCARSDALE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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## A Message From Dr. Patrick

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Dear Scarsdale Community,

I extend my deepest gratitude to the Board of Education for putting their trust in me to lead this extraordinary school community. It is truly a privilege and a professional dream come true. To my mind, what makes leading this District so special is the combination of an exceptionally engaged student body and an extraordinary faculty and staff situated in a community deeply committed to ensuring a world-class education for its youth. The collective contribution of goodwill, energy, innovation, and resources cultivates an environment of possibility in our schools. I have been energized by our work over the past nine months, and am excited for the future we will create together. To that end, I would like to take this opportunity to share some preliminary thoughts about what lies ahead for our work as a District.

Upon assuming the role of *Interim* Superintendent, I began a modified entry plan designed to help me better understand the school district as an organization, and to learn about the priorities of each school and district department. While my work on this plan continues, early conversations informed my belief that Scarsdale's mission requires us to lead with urgency and purpose. This is because what we can truly predict about the futures our students will encounter is limited due to the pace at which our world is changing. What we *do* know, however, is that our students will need to master both traditional content knowledge and skills, and an array of other critical dispositions if they are to fulfill Scarsdale's mission by becoming *effective and independent contributors in a democratic society and an interdependent world*.

While our core curriculum--what students learn--is built upon the foundations of a classical education, *how* they learn demands a progressive approach that emphasizes not only this foundation, but also essential "power skills"--critical thinking, skillful practice, compassionate leadership, *non-sibi* contribution, and lifelong learning. Of course, there has been meaningful work done around these dispositions for many years in Scarsdale. As I see it, our present challenge is to determine together how we will adapt our approaches to teaching and learning to match the demands our students will face as they move beyond our community. Fortunately, this is work I believe we are well-equipped to undertake.

A first step in meeting this challenge will be to develop a process that results in the generation of a common vision for our District. This will require the active engagement of our students, faculty, staff, families, and community partners. We will make space in this process to pause and imagine the range of possible futures we conceive of for our students, and that our students desire. Based on this, we will craft a shared vision that articulates how we expect to

students' success. Based on this, we will share a shared vision that articulates how we expect to support our students to become the most effective agents in the construction of their future worlds. Finally, we will use this vision to identify and prioritize strategic goals that will inform our decisions, guide our practices, prioritize the application of our resources, and ever more closely match our programs to our students' needs. To accomplish this, we will need to create multiple avenues for input to ensure we invite the varied perspectives held by our stakeholders. It is my hope that this conversation--focused squarely on our students--will serve to further *connect our wide community*.

In closing, I want to take a moment to acknowledge the remarkable history of educational innovation in Scarsdale. We are all beneficiaries of the accomplishments of generations of Scarsdale educators, giants who have set the standard of success over the preceding decades and established Scarsdale Public Schools as a lighthouse district. One only need count the number of SHS graduates who find their way back to this community to teach or to send their own children to our schools to gauge that success. Indeed, one of the great privileges of being a member of this community is having the chance to contribute in our own unique ways to that success. As we embark together on this next chapter, I ask that you join me in the process of thoughtfully and intentionally building upon our past successes and present strengths to keep our lighthouse shining brightly so as to ensure a future filled with possibility for our students.

In partnership,

Drew