



## HILLSIDE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Ready, Set, Excel!"*

*Antoine L. Gayles, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools*

Dear Colleagues:

Welcome back! I hope you all had a relaxing summer vacation and are looking forward with enthusiasm to the new school year.

Now starting my second year, I would also like to tell you why I am so pleased to be part of this district. In looking back on the 2016-17 school year, we can boast of many accomplishments, in the classroom and in athletics, that have resulted in positive outcomes for students. The Boys Soccer Team had a phenomenal season with 1 senior being voted as the top defender in the Union County Conference and 4 players selected to the All Sky Division, 1 Girls Volleyball player was selected as All Conference-Valley Division with another receiving honorable mention. In football, 1 student was selected as 1<sup>st</sup> Team All Group 2, Defense and two students were selected as 1<sup>st</sup> Team All Mid State 38, Offense

In the classroom, professional development on Visible Learning, Project Based Learning, Project Read and MAPs are beginning to reshape teaching and learning. We can see student performance climbing at AP Morris, Calvin Coolidge and George Washington; we celebrated in June as ten Hillside High School students participated in their first ever National STEM competition in Orlando, Fla; Girls Rock Science at Hurden Looker continues to make strides and has partnered with the College of Science and Liberal Arts at NJIT; this summer several WOK students participated in the summer STEM academies at Kean University and NJIT and eleven Hillside High School students have enrolled in the district's first 3 credit college level dual enrollment course with NJIT.

We have made several facilities improvements during the summer, as well, including repaving projects, flooring renovations, district-wide camera upgrades and the debut of the \$6.25 million dollar George Washington addition this Fall. WOK's roof has been repaired and the auditorium is in the second phase of completion that will include a new stage, sound system, curtains and ADA compliant seating.

None of this would have been possible without the dedication of our instructional staff, support personnel, maintenance team and parents who have embraced the challenge to engage students in meaningful, challenging educational experiences in safe environments.

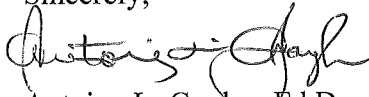
Moving forward, our goal is continual improvement by engaging students in problem-solving and inquiry-based learning activities that transforms them into scientists who seek new knowledge via **experimentation, failure, learning, succeeding**. In 2016, I

asked you to be **Ready**, get **Set** to **Excel**. This year I am asking every member of the school community to **Aspire to Inspire!**

On Tuesday, September 5, 2017, that journey begins at 8:30am. All district staff members will meet for the annual Fall Convocation in the Hillside High School auditorium. A continental breakfast will be provided at 8:00am. Following the morning program, you will return to your respective buildings to discuss expectations for student learning, prepare your rooms or participate in professional development as identified by your building Principal.

Until then, best wishes for a relaxing week. I look forward to working with each of you as we continue our tradition of success in Hillside.

Sincerely,



Antoine L. Gayles, Ed.D.  
Superintendent  
Hillside Public Schools