November Message 2017

Just like that, the first two months of the school year are complete!

It is said that when you love what you do, it does not feel like work at all. Working with our approximately 1100 students, 200 staff, our school board and our school community to provide a safe, respectful environment and a high quality education is my passion, my joy and my life’s work. During my career, I have had the good fortune to serve in many positions in the field (school counselor, adjunct professor, Jr./Sr. high assistant principal, middle school principal, director of curriculum and superintendent). I have also had great joy in coaching (ice hockey, softball, soccer and baseball). I have always viewed the opportunity to positively influence students as both an honor and a privilege. I am grateful to have the opportunity to serve the Mount Markham school community.

The superintendent of schools is employed by the school board to serve as a leader, supervisor and liaison to the school community. I cannot say enough about the outstanding qualities of our school board! In honor of School Board Recognition Week (Oct. 23-27), I would like to take the opportunity to publicly praise and thank our past and present school board members. School board members are elected by the community to serve on the school’s governance team. Through the leadership of the school board, Mount Markham is well known throughout the region and the state for its high quality academic programs, its outstanding faculty and staff; and its outstanding facilities and grounds. School board members are unpaid, yet they dedicate ten to twenty hours or more each month to perform their critical roles. Mount Markham has had and continues to be fortunate to have outstanding school board members who are dedicated to continually supporting progress for our district. Thank you to our current board members: Tom Huxtable (President); Cathy Wheat (Vice President), Chris Burke, Phil Casler, Cynthia Miller, Jennifer Maine and Jay Kulczak.

The Mount Markham school community takes its support of our veteran and active servicemen and women very seriously. An important element of our school program in each building are civic lessons and activities that seek to impress upon our students of the importance of service to country, service to community, respect, sacrifice, and understanding of our nation’s history. On November 9, our elementary school will be honoring our veterans with a breakfast and recognition program. This program has, for years, respectfully honored the dedication and sacrifice of our veterans. I hope that all of our community veterans will plan to join us. For more information, please contact the elementary school office at 315-822-2840.

Student-Athlete is an important phrase in our school community. Our student-athletes have the opportunity to participate in highly competitive play while representing our school and community. I would like to congratulate all of our fall student-athletes, our coaches, our athletic director and our parents for an excellent fall sports season. I would particularly like to thank our seniors and their parents for their dedication to our athletic programs throughout the years. The school board is proud to support a wide variety of athletic opportunities for our students, but it recognizes that the success of these programs comes only with the commitment and effort of our coaches, parents and players! As we move to the winter season, I extend my best wishes to our student-athletes and encourage everyone connected to our teams to focus on highly competitive play, sportsmanship, and conduct that will make all in our community proud.

Finally, I would like to end this month’s message with a plea. I would like to direct my plea to the parents and the guardians of each of our students. As the first academic quarter comes to an end, there will be an opportunity for parents/guardians to conference with their teachers. My plea is for involvement. My plea is for cooperation and collaboration. Please take the opportunity to attend your child’s parent conference or make a special arrangement with one of our wonderful school counselors to visit school and learn about the progress of your student(s). Parents and guardians are the first and most important teachers! Thank you for your involvement and support.

Paul Berry, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools