April 2019 Superintendent Corner

We are in the final laps of the school year! Over the next three months, our students and staff will work to complete learning standards, reinforce understanding of the standards and assess that understanding. In addition, the end of the year includes many opportunities for us to witness the growth of our students and the dedication of our staff. End of the year concerts, induction ceremonies, recognition programs, Prom, UPK graduation, moving up ceremonies and the Baccalaureate Program will all be highlights in the next three months; of course, the school year culminates with the Class of 2019 Graduation Program on June 28!

To our seniors, I encourage continued focus and effort. Throughout the school year, you have made us proud with your performance in the classroom, on the stage, on the athletic field, and in the community. Some of you have achieved sectional, regional and even statewide recognition! We are confident in your preparation and encourage you to finish as you started—strong, focused, and positive!

To all of our students that will be taking end of the year assessments, completing projects, or other summative activities, I encourage preparation, hard work and focus. Assessment is not a bad thing! In fact, assessment is critical. Each of us will be faced by many tests in life; fortunately, in school, tests are preceded by many lessons aimed at preparation for the test. Many of our students from third grade through twelfth will be completing assessments in the coming weeks that are measures of their understanding of the content taught throughout the year. High school students will take Advanced Placement exams, Career Tech Industry Assessments, College Now and class final exams. For some accelerated middle school students and for all high school students, Regents exams are an important measure of how well our students have learned content and skills that will be important to their development as well as college and career success. In most cases, passing the Regents exam is required for graduation. Students in grades three through eight will take federally required assessments in English Language Arts and Math. Participation in these assessments is linked to federal funding that supports our school district. I encourage all parents to have their students do their best on all assessments as they provide the school and parents with important information about student progress.

I am grateful to our board of education. Our board members are so dedicated to our community. I am repeatedly impressed by their enthusiasm, commitment and understanding of the many complexities of leading the school district. Our board has been working on the school budget plan for the 2019-2020 school year over the last two months. I believe that the board will finalize their budget work in early April and we are hopeful that the state budget will also be completed soon. Budget development is an important and challenging task for the board. Mount Markham relies heavily upon Albany to provide state aid to support our programs; therefore, the board seeks to balance its’ and the community’s desire to provide excellent education programs and opportunities to all of our students, with Albany’s and our residents ability to fund these programs. The complete budget plan will be presented to the community at 7PM on May 14th in the high school auditorium; budget information will be available in each building, past presentations are available on our website and a budget newsletter will be sent to each resident. The annual statewide budget vote and board election will take place on Tuesday, May 21st. Voting will take place from 1-8PM in the elementary school cafeteria. All voters should have identification and absentee ballots are available through the district office.

These last three months of school pass quickly, but there is much to accomplish, celebrate and enjoy. I’m grateful to the community for the support of its school district. I know that our students and staff are working hard and I look forward to what the final months of the school year will bring.