



Binghamton City School District

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February 28, 2022

Dear Binghamton Families,

As we close out February and Black History Month, I'm proud to share that each of our buildings has paid tribute to the achievements and roles of African Americans throughout history. While February is officially designated Black History Month, we do not limit our learning to one month, but rather educate throughout the year. The work this month serves as an important reminder of racial justice and equity. Our faculty and staff remain engaged in these conversations through professional development, recently having taken part in a seminar that helped us understand how to identify and dismantle implicit bias. I am so proud to lead a school district that is truly committed to celebrating and recognizing diversity.

It is truly amazing whenever we have the opportunity to witness the impact that our district programs and community partners are making in student lives. Last week, the BCSD mentor program was featured by Spectrum News in a [touching story](#) about an East Middle School student and her treasured mentor. The pair has been working together each week for several years and built an incredible relationship during that time. It is connections like the one shared by student Hayleigh Scofield and her mentor, fondly known as Miss Janet, that provide students with the support, guidance and attention they need to thrive.

Exciting progress continues in the realms of our athletics and arts programs. As spring sports start up, our incredible students at the Rod Serling School of Fine Arts are preparing for their spring musical, "The Wizard of Oz," which is coming to the Helen Foley Theater March 11-13. So much time and dedication, both on stage and behind the scenes, goes into these productions, and I encourage our entire school community to show your support and attend what are sure to be wonderful performances. Additionally, I'm excited to announce the launching of the district's newest platform to highlight our students, Binghamton City School District's [Showcase Arts website](#). Our Showcase Sports website has been a great success and we're thrilled to provide our fine arts students with that same opportunity.

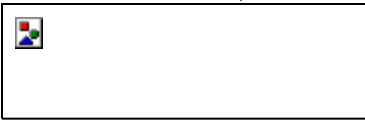
I would like to extend my greatest thanks to all who have provided their engagement and input throughout this school year. The voices of our students and families are critical to our success, and your involvement and energy truly make a difference. Your input has been critical as we've made adjustments and changes to create the best possible learning environment for our children. Beginning in late March, we will be reaching out through a survey to gather the voices of our school community as we draft the district's strategic plan for 2022-2027. We will additionally be convening a group of stakeholders later in the year who will meet to provide insight and feedback on mission, vision and goals of the district.

As our students and schools move forward in a positive and meaningful direction, and the impact of the pandemic continues to wane, I believe we have a great deal to be hopeful and optimistic about. I look forward to seeing so many smiling faces as mask wearing in our schools becomes optional, effective this Wednesday, March 2 due to Governor Hochul and the Broome County Health Departments lift of the mandate. Please know we will continue every effort to make sure our students and staff are learning in a safe environment, and will continue to have in place social distancing and our testing program in place. While this is a welcomed change for many members of our school community, we continue to support our

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students and colleagues, regardless of the decision they make regarding mask wearing. Please continue to show kindness and care for one another. Together, we are stronger, prouder Patriots.

With Patriot Pride,



Dr. Tonia Thompson
Superintendent of Schools

Educating, empowering and challenging all students to become productive, global citizens through innovative approaches to learning.