

**ANNA SCIACCA**  
Superintendent of Schools

973-340-5000 Ext 2300  
asciaccia@gboe.org

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Dear Parents/ Guardians:

## WELCOME TO THE EXCITING 2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR IN THE GARFIELD SCHOOL DISTRICT!

As a new Superintendent of Schools, I enthusiastically introduce myself to you as a longtime educator in the Garfield School District. I have served as a teacher, Curriculum Supervisor, Middle School Principal, Assistant Superintendent, and currently Superintendent. It is a privilege to be appointed to the position of Superintendent in Garfield and I am honored by the opportunity to lead this great district, collaborate with the shareholders, and play a significant role in the education of your child.

Parental participation and involvement are essential to your child's success. We need you to be involved and partner with us to educate your child! It is very important that you become familiar with parent portal and check it regularly for information about your child's progress as well as messages from the school. You should also call or email your child's teacher(s), the guidance counselors, and principal with any concerns that you may have about your child. Check the district and school website regularly for important notifications and updated information: [www.gboe.org](http://www.gboe.org).

## **There are changes ahead in the 2019 -2020 school year!**

### BREAKFAST AFTER THE BELL IN ALL PRE-K AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

- ❖ All students in all PreK through grade 5 classrooms will be served FREE breakfast in the classroom after the official start of the school day. If a district has at least 70 % of students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch, they must serve breakfast after the bell. We have three schools that are eligible, Schools 6 and 10 and the Garfield PreK located on Midland Avenue, however, we have made a decision to provide free breakfast in all of our elementary schools because of the importance of eating a healthy breakfast and the connection to academic performance.
- ❖ Typically, breakfast in the classroom takes 10-15 minutes from start to finish and the New Jersey Department of Education has issued guidance stating that districts can count breakfast as instructional time when done during morning activities. We will be serving a cold breakfast each day, consisting of items such as cereal, breakfast bars, yogurt, muffins, fruit, milk, juice, etc.
- ❖ We will no longer be providing breakfast before the bell in the elementary schools. Parents of elementary school students need to be mindful that students will not be able to enter the schools prior to 8:35 a.m.
- ❖ Garfield Middle School and Garfield High School will continue with the breakfast program that is currently in place. Breakfast in the cafeteria before the start of the school day is still available for Middle and High School students only.

### THREE DISTRICT SCHOOLS WILL RECEIVE FREE BREAKFAST AND FREE LUNCH

- ❖ Due to the larger per cent of students that are eligible for free and or reduced meals in the neighborhoods of schools 6, 10 and GPPA 3( PreK located on Midland Ave.), all students in those schools will receive free breakfast and free lunch, under the federal program called the Community Eligibility Provision (CEP).
- ❖ Families in these three schools will not need to complete the Lunch Application but rather a survey. More information will be available on parent portal.
- ❖ Parents of students in all of schools, excluding School 6, School 10, and GPPA 3, will still be required to submit the Lunch application to determine eligibility for free or reduced meals and are urged to submit the application in a timely manner.

## ONE to ONE COMPUTER INITIATIVE in GRADES 4-12

- ❖ ALL students in grades 4-12 will be receiving their own computer device, an HP ProBook X360-11-G3/Education edition and carrying case for their personal use.
- ❖ One to one technology complements project-based learning in the classrooms, broadens learning beyond the classroom, and facilitates personalized learning. It is also effective in preparing our students for tomorrow's workplace where all jobs require the use of technology and technology skills.
- ❖ Individual contracts will be sent home in each school prior to the distribution of the devices. Parents and students must read carefully and sign to have access to the computer.
- ❖ All older computer devices currently available in our schools will be reserved for use with the students in grades K-3 so that each classroom will be equipped with computers.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION IN ALL ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS, GARFIELD MIDDLE SCHOOL, AND GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

- ❖ During the 2019-2020 school year, the Garfield School District will be implementing a program known as *Response to Intervention (RTI)* with all students in K-12. RTI is used by educators to provide students with specific supports to help with their academic and social-emotional learning.
- ❖ Every teacher will utilize procedures to ensure all students have their needs met, whether they be regular education, special education, gifted, honors, ELL.
- ❖ We will be using a universal screening tool for all students to identify most immediate areas of need and provide support to get them on track.
- ❖ Such interventions will be carried out by a classroom teacher, Reading Specialist, Academic Interventionist, or a Guidance Counselor during a small group session, an RTI period or a WINN period. WINN stands for "What I Need Now".

## STANDARDS BASED REPORT CARDS WILL BE USED IN GRADES K-5

- ❖ Grades K-5 will have a new look to their report cards this year. In order to better support RTI, we have transitioned to what is known as a Standards-Based Report Card.
- ❖ A Standards-Based Report card lists the most important skills students should learn in each subject by the end of a grade level. The marks will show whether a student is consistently beyond grade-level expectations, meeting grade-level expectations, approaching grade level expectations or needing support.
- ❖ There will no longer be traditional number or letter grades on the report card.
- ❖ There will be a key on the report card explaining your child's academic progress as it relates to the learning targets for their grade level.

## ALL STUDENTS IN GRADES K-5 ARE NOW REQUIRED TO HAVE 20 MINUTES OF RECESS PER DAY.

- ❖ The school district shall provide a daily recess period of 20 minutes for students in kindergarten through fifth grade in addition to the time allotted for Physical Education.
- ❖ The recess period shall be held outdoors, if feasible.
- ❖ A student shall not be denied recess for any reason, except as a consequence of a violation of the school district's code of student conduct ( no more than twice per week), or based upon the advice of a medical professional, school nurse, or the provisions of a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) and/or 504 Plan.

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"VISION OF CHAMPIONS 2019 – 2024 STRATEGIC PLAN" HAS BEEN COMPLETED!

- ❖ A Strategic Planning meeting was held on May 30, 2019 and attended by more than 300 educators, parents, and members of the Garfield community.
- ❖ A committee of educators, students, and parents met over the summer to use the input from the meeting to develop a strategic plan that will guide our planning and decision making for the next five years and prioritize what is important to the shareholders; educators, parents, residents, representatives of community organizations, elected officials, etc.
- ❖ Regular updates on the progress of the plan will be reported.
- ❖ Check the district website for the "Vision of Champions 2019-2024 Strategic Plan!"

We are prepared for a great year ahead as we embrace change and look forward to a successful school year. Please accept my best wishes for a happy, productive, and positive year for all of our students and families and allow me to share our NEW VISION STATEMENT.....

**"To Encourage, Inspire, and Support Every Individual to ACHIEVE MORE!"**

Enjoy the rest of the summer and be well!

Regards,



Superintendent of Schools