

# Message from Board Trustee, Kathleen Clancey-McDonough 5-26-20

Dear Neighbors, Friends and Loved Ones,

As I sit writing my letter to you I am once again filled with mixed emotions. The days of distance learning have turned into weeks and now months. However, we finally have an end in sight with the close of the 2019-2020 school year on June 15th. The end of the school year has always brought with it a time to create endless memories over summer vacation and new beginnings for the upcoming school year. The end of this school year however, marks one of uncertainty for so many. Please know that the Island Park School District Board of Education, Administration and staff have plans in place to ease those concerns. In the upcoming weeks we must remain focused on ensuring that our students receive the best education possible. The finish line is in sight, so please do not throw in the towel yet. Our teachers, staff and administrators will continue to provide your child(ren) with the academic tools they need to successfully finish out the school year. We are counting on you as our partners in this process to ensure that your child(ren) see the school year through all the way to the end. We are almost there!

As the weather starts to change, try to find time to enjoy it. I encourage you to take some of your child's work outside when possible while following the proper guidelines from the Governor. Independent reading can be done while laying on a blanket or a lounge chair on your front lawn or at the beach. If your child has a Chromebook, iPad or laptop let them sit outside at your picnic table. The change of scenery and fresh air just might hold their interest a little bit longer. This might be good for their soul and yours, too.

Over the last few weeks, I have had the opportunity to listen to some of our students and teachers during my children's weekly Google Meets. Hearing our students laugh, share stories, ask and answer questions and interact with each other and their educators in a way they never have before was heartwarming as a parent, teacher and Board of Education Trustee. Our children are rockstars! We have asked so much of them in such a short period of time and they have risen beautifully to the challenge. Just like anything else our children have accomplished throughout their milestones, they learn at a different pace. If your child has jumped into distance learning and has been successful since day one, I applaud them. If your child has just now been able to successfully complete their weekly assignments, I applaud them as well. Every accomplishment for distance learning should be celebrated as there was no preparation for this. Distance learning is an all hands on deck form of education. Slowly and steadily we will all get to the finish line together.

Celebrating your child's milestones was something that from day one the Board of Education and administration took very seriously because we felt our students deserve to be celebrated. As we begin our virtual celebrations and ceremonies in the upcoming weeks to highlight their accomplishments our goal of celebrating in person for our eight grade students graduation is one that we hope can be accomplished by us reuniting again August 18th.

For those of you with a child(ren) graduating this year, congratulations! These are milestones that we envisioned quite differently for them since the moment they were born. We envisioned them as co-

captains for Sports Night, attending prom, being inducted into National Honor Society, receiving an award or their diploma; that is all different this year, yet we must try to focus on the positive. We are proud of their accomplishments and determination to see one of the hardest school years any of us has ever encountered during our lifetime. I wish our graduates a lifetime of academic success, happiness and may all of their dreams for the future become a reality. Congratulations Class of 2020!

Respectfully,

Kathleen Clancy-McDonough