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**James J. Montesano, Ed.D.**  
**Superintendent of Schools**

September 8, 2016

Dear Staff,

8:46 AM on Sunday morning will mark fifteen years since the first of a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks against the United States came to pass. The attacks killed 2,996 people, many who lived in the communities of the Tri-State area. The aftermath of this horrific event was felt by every American and many of us suffered the deep and very personal loss of loved ones.

Our Nyack school community was profoundly impacted as two of our alumni, Stacey Sennas-McGowan and Welles Crowther perished in this senseless attack. Under the leadership of our Athletic Director, Joe Sigillo, and the coaching staff, our Athletic Department continues to keep these two outstanding Nyack graduates in the hearts and minds of our current student athletes. Each spring our lacrosse program honors Stacey by hosting a tournament in her name and telling stories of her many accomplishments. Welles' story of heroism on that day is symbolized by his beloved red bandanna. During the days surrounding September 11, our athletic teams will be hosting a 'Red Bandanna' game. On Friday afternoon Welles' parents, Alison and Jefferson, will be attending the High School's pep rally and will address our student body. For those of you new to the Nyack family, I encourage you to read the following article to learn about Welles Crowther:

<http://www.northjersey.com/news/9-11-man-in-the-red-bandanna-s-finest-hour-1.1655090>). A recently released book written by Tom Rinaldi, [The Red Bandanna: A Life. A Choice. A Legacy](#), tells his remarkable story of courage and bravery.

The human experience is filled with different kinds of events associated with life transitions. The events of 9/11 are defined by theorists who study adult development as a 'marker event', or an event that affects large numbers of people simultaneously, such as WWII or the Great Depression. September 11 is a day that unites us in a common bond as Americans who hope for a world of peace and understanding. It is important for our new staff members to learn about Stacey and Welles as they represent the attributes that we strive to instill in all of our students.

Respectfully yours,

James J. Montesano, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

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Attachments