OCEAN CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
501 Atlantic Avenue, Suite 1
Ocean City, New Jersey 08226 – 3891
Phone: (609) 399-5150
www.oceancityschools.org

Kathleen W. Taylor, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

**School Starts With A Full Day
Thursday, September 6, 2018**

Dear School Community:

Welcome to the 2018-2019 school year!

We know that as parents/guardians, there is nothing more important to you than your children. We also know that our students deserve a safe and nurturing learning environment every day - from their first days in kindergarten through high school graduation. Ensuring the safety and well-being of our students enables them to grow and learn. We – families and the School District – agree that a strong, well-integrated, two-way communication system is key to this goal. With that in mind, this summer we are utilizing innovative technologies to bolster our communications systems - merging each school and each classroom into one system, and, connecting each classroom with each home via one system.

We are in the process of installing the **AMX School View Unified Campus** that will give the School District centralized monitoring, effective emergency notifications, mobile accessibility, and instant two-way communication with every classroom from one location. A unified school and district-wide alert system provides us with instant capabilities for both two-way audio and video messaging with first responders. This will improve significantly both communication and response time in an emergency. Equally important, the system enables administrators to communicate quickly with school-based teams during a school crisis, optimizing staff coordination and student safety.

The AMX project also has instructional benefits. One benefit is improving teacher-student voice amplification in all learning environments to help student comprehension and information retention. Another benefit is enhancing collaboration between teacher-student and student-student with the ability to share wired and wireless devices in any classroom on the projection system. For more information on the safety and educational features that will benefit our students, staff, and schools, please click here.

The School District also is proud to announce that we have transitioned to **PowerSchool Unified Campus,** which will assist us in unifying and connecting your child's classroom with your home via a single, easy-to-use online software solution. This system provides online registration for both new and current students and will streamline and connect several student information systems. The integration of these tools will increase our data security, while enhancing the experience of everyone involved in the Ocean City Schools - teachers, administrators, students, and parents. **PowerSchool's Learning Management System** enables the District to expand our blended learning content and gives teachers and parents access to course work from any device, at any time. More information will be coming soon from your child's Principal, including a personalized email inviting you to register your child in this system and instructions for setting-up your PowerSchool account. In the meantime, please click here to explore the new system.

For greater security at our Primary School during the day, the School District is upgrading the classroom and interior door locks with an **electronic locking system**, including wireless card access locks on classroom doors. Each Primary School classroom door will be connected to our security system via the wireless network and can be monitored or managed at either the school- or district-level. This infrastructure improvement will enable all classroom doors within the school to be locked within 10 seconds at the push of a button. Both the Intermediate and High Schools' classroom doors can be locked from the outside and inside, unlike the old locking door system at the Primary School. For more information about this new locking system, please click here.

Additional security measures include hiring security staff for the 2018-2019 school year; one staff member for the Primary School and one for the Intermediate School. The High School has two security personnel and two camera security personnel. Under the direction of the School District, our security personnel will also work collaboratively on security methods with the Ocean City Police Department.

For the 2018-2019 school year, we will continue utilizing the **STOPit K12 Solution**. This application enables the School District to be proactive, rather than reactive, in addressing incidents of inappropriate student behavior. When students are comfortable sharing information with adults, more students start asking for and getting the help they need. Students are able to anonymously report issues from bullying/cyberbullying to threats, violence, and drug activity. If you have any questions about STOPit K12 Solutions, please contact Ms. Faye Noble, Social Worker, at 609-399-1290, ext. 8756.

Our students live in a rapid-paced, ever-changing world. To help families stay connected and keep informed, the district is continuing with the **Suite 360°** on-demand video and informational series. Through the school years, families encounter and navigate a range of issues their children are facing, from social and emotional learning to character development to health and wellness. The Suite 360° platform offers students and parents real-world guidance on subjects such as understanding emotional development, learning about health-related topics, identifying and correcting risky behaviors, and keeping lines of communication open and flowing in both directions. For more information please contact your childs guidance counselor.

As part of our ongoing protocols, if you have any questions or concerns about your child, please contact your child's school Guidance Counselor or Social Worker. Keeping your child safe also involves you knowing what your child is doing, what apps and texts are on their phones and who your child is spending time with. As always, please remind your children that if they see or hear "something" that makes them uncomfortable or causes concern, they should tell a staff member immediately. Please also become familiar with the risk factors for childhood and teenage depression and anxiety and know that our Social Workers can guide you and your child in seeking help and seeking answers. For more information, mental health resources are listed on our website www.oceancityschools.org, under each school parent tab or school resource tab.

The Ocean City School District has researched, planned and now is implementing systems to optimize staff coordination, to give insights to parents on classroom activities on a routine basis, and to provide schools and district immediate connection with first responders. In addition, we have hired new staff who will continue to maintain our high academic standards, enhance student learning and support programs. Information about these new members to our school family can be found on our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/oceancityschools.

We assure you that all of our actions are done with a primary focus on keeping our students and schools safe and secure while providing the high quality education you expect and every child deserves. We are grateful for the support from our families and community, who care so deeply about our School District.

We look forward to another successful school year. The first day of school for students is Thursday, **September 6th** – a full day! Enjoy the remainder of your summer.

Sincerely,

Kathleen W. Taylor

Dr. Kathleen W. Taylor
Superintendent