June 19, 2020

Good afternoon Brick. This is Dr. Farrell with another weekly message.

Well, here we are at the end of another school year!

Today... Juneteenth commemorates African American freedom and emphasizes education and achievement. It is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. As we celebrate this historic date and the accomplishments of another school year, we are reminded of the importance of taking time for assessment, reflection, and for planning the future. Looking forward, we need to focus on the positive...things are starting to “open-up” a bit and positive change is occurring, and I believe we should be optimistic about the future and for the start of the new school year.

Our District is truly proud of all of our students, staff, and parents. We hope that you enjoyed watching the amazing videos that have been created throughout this virtual time. From celebrations of students engaging in remote learning activities, to staff messages to their students and of course our amazing virtual ceremonies for awards, celebrations, and promotions. This evening we will be releasing the BTHS and BMHS Virtual Graduation Celebrations! We are excited to share with you the extraordinary celebration that each high school has produced with input from students, staff, and administration. The link to the Virtual Graduation Ceremonies for each High School will be posted on the District and on each High Schools website. Please take a moment to look at the sky this evening around 5:00 PM for my Congratulatory Message for the Class of 2020!
A survey has gone out to all Senior Students and their Parents regarding the July 8th in-person Graduation celebration. Please be sure to complete the survey by Monday, June 22nd. We are busy finalizing the plans for the July 8th Graduation Celebrations which will take place at each High School. The two ceremonies at each High School, planned for 4:00 and 7:00 PM, will be conducted in accordance with the guidance from the Governor, the New Jersey Department of Education, and the Health Department. BTHS Principal, Mr. Kleissler, and BMHS Principal, Mr. Barresi, will be communicating the detailed plan to Seniors and their Parents the week of June 29th.

On Wednesday, we were proud to release our Summer Enrichment Catalog filled with virtual clubs for students of all levels. It is posted on our district website and features a variety of enrichment offerings that inspire reading, writing, strategic thinking, and problem solving. There are also environmental clubs, Science Clubs, and STEM clubs. We have clubs that foster cultural awareness and help students practice French, Spanish, and Italian. To foster creativity, we have virtual clubs in the Arts, Dance, Film, Music, Theater, and Sports & Fitness. We have several offerings that foster social emotional learning and that promote mindfulness. There are even workshops for parents. We also have created weekly online support for students who want to complete suggested summer assignments in grades 6-12.

As our school year comes to a close, we would like your feedback regarding our Virtual Learning Model. It is our hope that we can return to our school buildings in September. However, we must prepare for multiple possibilities (fully open; fully remote; a combination of the two) so that we are prepared to adhere to the guidelines established by the NJ Department of Education (NJDOE). To help us plan, please take a few minutes to complete
the survey. Your input is critical to our understanding of the various family needs within our district.

Summer is a season when each school prepares to welcome their new students. This summer we will be engaging in the same preparations, however, we will be working on both an in-person version and a virtual version of Freshman Orientation for each of the High Schools, 6th Grade Locker Night for each of the Middle Schools, Kindergarten Orientation at each of the Elementary Schools, and Pre-School Orientation at each of the Pre-Schools. Dates, times, and other important details regarding these events will be communicated by the building principals in August! Please continue to check the school websites for updates.

John F. Kennedy said, “Every accomplishment begins with a decision to try.” The creativity, perseverance, and dedication to come together during this challenging and unprecedented time is inspirational and awe-inspiring. Moving an operation as big and diverse as the Brick Township Public Schools from "brick-n-mortar" to "virtual" in a matter of days took collaboration, trust, and pure grit! Each and every member of this community...students, parents, staff, administration, and Board of Education should be proud of their contribution to this enormous effort! Thank you to all for the amazing work each of you have done in keeping our community connected, learning, and safe.

This weekend not only marks the beginning of summer but it is also Father’s Day! It has been said that “what we become depends on what our fathers teach us at odd moments, when they aren't trying to teach us. We are formed by little scraps of wisdom.” So to all the Dads out there...thank you... and Happy Father’s Day!
Please enjoy Summer Break...remember to relax, refresh, and recharge and enjoy time with family and friends. Our Central Office Admin Team and I look forward to continuing the journey with all of you in the new school year! We are all in this together and together we will persevere and emerge from this unprecedented time a stronger and united Brick!

Have a great summer! Until September...

Stay Safe & Healthy Brick!

Dr. Thomas G. Farrell

Superintendent of Schools