



Morris Hills High School



520 West Main Street • Rockaway, NJ 07866-3799
Todd M. Toriello, Ed.D. • Principal • 973-664-2301

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My Dear Colleagues, Parents and Guardians, and Students,

The midpoint of the school year accentuates the swift and influential nature of time. This midpoint dominates our clocks, calendars, deadlines, and finish lines, emphasizing that tranquility has no room in high school life. Progressing with vigor, guided by a plan and purpose, characterizes the current mandate of the moment. Here we stand, collectively entering the second half, with June on the horizon. The relentless march of time is undeniably formidable.

For me personally, it feels like yesterday that I sat at my desk on “The Hill” in mid-August developing an opening message to launch the 2023 - 2024 school year. The challenge I offered, which connected to our district’s summer read experience, *Butterfly: From Refugee to Olympian*, was housed within our school-wide theme: “Go for the Gold ~ Excellence Has No Finish Line.” As I stated in August, although we may never find ourselves on the exact same life course as the protagonist, Yusra, a Syrian refugee who swims for her life and goes on to compete in the 2016 Olympics as a member of the first-ever refugee Olympic team, her bravery, her self-sacrifice, her determination, her decision-making, her belief in herself are, indeed, forces that may just visit and influence our own lives in similar ways, through similar callings - as students in a classroom, as athletes on an athletic field, as participants in student activities, as friends, as sons and daughters, as teachers, as counselors, as educational support staff, as administrators, as parents, and as human beings. How bold will we be in order to contribute to a better world? How determined will we be in order to make a difference? Will we go for the gold? That answer lies within us.

Since the “race” began in September, this high school has, indeed, been “going for the gold” on all levels. In line with its usual excellence, our staff has consistently exemplified the highest standards in education – displaying competence, compassion, commitment, and professionalism. It’s a testament that any principal would appreciate. Our coaches and activity advisors have created environments fostering challenges, opportunities, success, and growth. The support staff remains pivotal in nurturing our goals. The incredible students have responded with engagement, respect, risk-taking, and spirit. Once again, our parental community has wholeheartedly supported all efforts for growth and advancement. We are truly fortunate. Morris Hills High School thrives because our various dimensions collaborate, relying on each other to accomplish tasks, tapping into our potential, and expecting the very best from ourselves and one another. As we navigate the midpoint of this demanding academic year, I am both grateful and humbled to announce that Morris Hills High School continues to guide those we are privileged to serve. I extend my sincere thanks to all of you for making this an unwavering reality.

There is a considerable amount of time and work remaining before we conclude the 2023-2024 school year. Furthermore, ample time persists to continue striving for excellence, making a meaningful impact, delving into personal growth, and effecting positive change. I urge you, as I challenge myself, to reflect on additional ways to realize these goals as we enter the last semester. Once again, we find ourselves on a shared playing field of both opportunity and responsibility. Let’s navigate the final moments together and successfully finish our 2023-2024 school journey.

Stay well, stay focused, and stay connected to the high school we are blessed to know as ours.

In the Spirit of Partnership,

Todd M. Toriello, Ed.D.
Principal