

BALDWINVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT
29 East Oneida Street
Baldwinsville, New York 13027

June 18, 2008

JEANNE M. DANGLE
Superintendent of Schools

To the Baldwinsville School Community:

On Monday evening, the Board of Education voted to approve the transfers of principals Steven Frey, Mary Schiltz and Olivia Cambs to other buildings within the district effective July 1. We recognize this represents a significant change for our district and that it has evoked strong emotions among some parents. We firmly believe this restructuring will provide opportunities to move our district forward and would like to take this opportunity to share with you the facts and rationale behind the district's decision to reassign these principals at this time.

The students of the Baldwinsville district are the greatest asset we have. It is imperative that we provide a learning environment that allows all students to flourish and develop their talents and abilities to their fullest. As we strive to inspire students to reach their potential, we must continually assess the alignment of the talent and resources of the district with the changing needs of our students.

The district's Administrative team is one of the essential components necessary to create a school organization that is strong, forward thinking, and meets the diverse needs of our students. The decision to move administrators was not made arbitrarily. All of the district's decisions are student-centered. Our main focus has always been and will always be to do what is best for our students and to continue to achieve academic excellence in our schools.

Each administrator is a valuable staff member of the school district, highly regarded by parents, students, staff, and other administrators. Each is a talented leader. Our district strives to create a culture that inspires excellence at each building while maximizing the strengths of the administrator, instructional staff and support team. These strengths include understanding of curriculum, best instructional practices, deep concern about student well-being and other individual attributes necessary in a dynamic learning environment.

Mr. Denny has served as a model of professionalism and good citizenship for the school community for over three decades. To provide a smooth transition in leadership at Van Buren, the Superintendent recommended to the Board of Education that Mary Schiltz, principal of McNamara Elementary School, be assigned as principal of Van Buren. She was well suited to provide consistent, student-centered instructional leadership at Van Buren, as she has demonstrated at McNamara. During her five-year tenure she has moved a high performing school to even a greater level of achievement. We have since learned that Ms. Schiltz has accepted a position as principal with another school district. However, she did not do so as a result of her being assigned to work with the Van Buren staff, students and community.

The Superintendent also recommended to the Board of Education that Mr. Frey be assigned to the position at Palmer Elementary School. Mr. Frey's leadership for the past sixteen years at Reynolds has created a strong and caring environment at the school as well as high academic achievement. Under his leadership, the staff has guided the students to measurable and sustainable gains in student achievement. His collegial and effective leadership has made an impressive mark on the social and academic development of all of the students whose lives he has touched. He has the personal and professional talents and skills to create a smooth transition for students, parents and staff at Palmer. Palmer has experienced a number of administrative changes over the last several years. By bringing an experienced

and effective administrator such as Mr. Frey to Palmer, we truly believe that Palmer and the district as a whole will benefit immensely from such leadership.

At the same time, however, the Superintendent recognized an experienced administrator was still needed to lead the Reynolds community. That is why Olivia Cambs, principal of Baker High School, will assume the role of principal at Reynolds. Under her leadership, student achievement has increased and the fine arts have flourished. She is an experienced administrator who understands the programs and the processes necessary for achievement for students at all grade levels. She also has a deep understanding of literacy, which is the key to success in all areas of life, and making the connections to reading and writing across the curriculum areas. Under her guidance, Reynolds will continue its many initiatives and traditions, such as the Excellence Team and the fourth and fifth grade Study Skills Program. Ms. Cambs is a caring leader committed to providing all students and staff with the resources, both educational and emotional, that they need and deserve. Mr. Frey and Ms. Cambs will work collaboratively to make the transition for Ms. Cambs a smooth one. We are hopeful that the Reynolds community will welcome Ms. Cambs and work with her to continue the programs the school has enjoyed under Mr. Frey's leadership.

Each move was carefully evaluated based upon the potential benefit to the entire district, the opportunity for each affected individual as well as the impact to the members of each building community. We did not immediately disclose this information to parents due to our contractual obligations with our administrative members. We honored those obligations by giving them an "appropriate time before making the information public". The Superintendent then worked with each administrator to schedule time to address the staff that would be impacted. At that time, we began to share the information publicly.

During this process, we have heard the concerns and input of parents and community members about strengthening our communication. We value the messages that we heard and are committed to improving and enhancing communication processes at all levels. We are always open to residents' comments and concerns and will take all perspectives into consideration.

A hiring committee is being established for the principal positions at McNamara and Van Buren that will include both staff and parent representatives. Each school's PTA will recommend two parents to sit on the committee. Ms. Schiltz and Mr. Denny will assist in making a smooth transition for the new administrators. Mr. Denny has agreed to serve as an interim principal during the transition. An interim principal will be appointed shortly at Baker High School. A search committee for the position will be formed which will also include stakeholder representatives from the school community.

We look forward to working closely with members of each school community and the Baldwinsville community as a whole to ensure smooth transitions in each school. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Superintendent at 638-6043 or jdangle@bville.org.

Thank you for your concern and input as we move forward.

Sincerely,



Kevin Bernstein
Board of Education President



Jeanne Dangle
Superintendent of Schools