



**Ms. Gail Lanza**  
Superintendent of Schools

## **STERLING PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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Dear Sterling Community School Families,

Another summer has flown by! I hope that you were all able to get some much needed relaxation over the summer.

We have had another busy summer in the District. This year, we welcome two new fourth grade teachers: Trish Espinosa and Kelly Huhtanen, and two new specials teachers: Kate Riotte and Emma Lotreck, to our school community. We welcome Lydia Nottage, a paraprofessional who will be joining our school community this year, and Emily Bonner and Amanda Grimes as substitute paraprofessionals. We are also thrilled to have Sarah LaRose back at our school as a paraprofessional, and Scott Stuyinski returning to Sterling Community School from Plainfield High School where he has been working with one of our students. Our new staff and faculty are very excited to be joining us and we couldn't be happier to have them! Staff and administration have worked diligently over the summer attending to our staffing needs. My thanks to everyone involved.

We are excited with the roll out of our new strategic advancement plan, which was approved by the Board of Education in the spring. Our strategic plan will guide the work of the Sterling Board of Education, administrators, educators, school and community. Our strategic plan is comprised of our vision, mission, values, goals and action steps. Our strategic plan guides decision-making at both the school and district levels. The goals of our strategic plan are our focus, with all other plans, resources, programs and initiatives flowing from and supporting its goals. The district strategic plan is designed to unite our efforts and define our success.

Our core values and beliefs about learning were identified through our strategic planning process and informed by current research-based best practices. They are what we believe is important. They were developed using a collaborative process. This process included administrators, educators, students, parents, and community members who reviewed research-based best practices as well as district and school community priorities in determining our future direction. Our core values and beliefs about learning will drive curriculum, instruction, and administrative practices and will guide our school and district policies, procedures, decisions, and resource allocations.

The building blocks of our strategic plan are its goals. Our strategic planning process developed 6 goals to address the needs that were identified through our strategic planning process. Our District Goals as stated in our strategic plan are the following:

- 1) Sterling Stakeholders will embrace and bring to life a shared mission, core values, vision of a Sterling Graduate and goals

- 2) Sterling students will be engaged and challenged to achieve by actively participating in curriculum, instruction and assessment that is personally relevant and challenging, and embeds critical thinking, communication, collaboration, and problem solving through a student centered focus
- 3) Sterling Community School will build the capacity and maintain a highly effective, well trained staff of lead learners, who think critically, collaborate, and problem solve as demonstrated by their creation of a dynamic, collaborative, respectful, professional learning environment
- 4) Sterling Community School enhances student, parent and staff centered learning with a progressive digital learning environment
- 5) Sterling will cultivate positive, caring and supportive relationships reaching students, family, and community stakeholders
- 6) Sterling will provide a safe, healthy and supportive environment for learning where students build resilience (by reaching and developing philosophies of common language, expectations, practices and understanding)

You can find the executive summary of our strategic advancement plan on the Sterling Community School website in the Board of Education portal.

Our shared vision, mission, core values and beliefs unite all of our work with a common through line and serve as a cohesive force for guaranteeing that all of our activities support our goals. The mission of Sterling Community School is to foster a safe and engaging learning community of critical thinkers, effective communicators and collaborators, creative problem solvers and innovators that will persevere to become self-motivated learners who are responsible, compassionate, contributing citizens in our ever-changing technological society.

We are kicking off the new school year with our 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Welcome Back Picnic for Sterling Community School students, families and staff. It will be in the cafeteria on the 27<sup>th</sup> from 1:00-3:00. The first day back for students is Wednesday, August 29<sup>th</sup>.

Enjoy the rest of your summer! We are looking forward to a great year!

Sincerely,



Gail Lanza

Superintendent/Special Services Director