

From the superintendent

A new school year approaches



Summer is flying by once again; I hope it has been and continues to be enjoyable for you.

Throughout the City School District of Albany we have been hard at work preparing for another successful school year in 2008-09.

District staff and community partners have made progress in a variety of areas, all with one focus – to educate and nurture all students to be responsible citizens, critical thinkers and lifelong learners to successfully compete in the global community.

Our strategic planning action teams are nearing completion of their work in the seven areas identified last fall by our 25-member Strategic Planning Team: more effectively engaging parents and families, ensuring the emotional and physical well-being of students, high school restructuring, middle school restructuring, communications, using assessment data to drive instruction and curriculum development, and access to all academic and extracurricular programs for all students.

You can read more about our strategic planning process at www.albanyschools.org; you'll find the link in the left-hand menu. We look forward to sharing the outcomes with you this fall.

The PowerSchool Parent Portal that debuted for high school families last January will also be available to middle school families this year. The Parent Portal allows parents and guardians to access the district's student information system to monitor their children's progress and performance in school through information such as daily attendance, assignments and class grades.

Parent Portal includes a tool for e-mail communication between teachers and parents, and an option for parents to receive updated reports as often as they would like. It is part of our continued efforts to strengthen connections to families and students, and to enhance cooperation between school and home.

The Parent Portal uses a secure link and may be accessed under Quick Links on the right-hand side of our home page at www.albanyschools.org.

We are excited to begin the year with the celebration of another great step in our facilities project – the reopening of William S. Hackett Middle School.

The revitalization of this historically and architecturally significant building combines the best of the old and the best of the new in a state-of-the-art learning environment. We

invite everyone to join us for our August 27 ribbon-cutting ceremony scheduled for 4 p.m. that day.

Please look forward to joining us in January as well when we celebrate the completion of our revitalization project at New Scotland Elementary School, the former School 19.

It is my pleasure to welcome you back for the start of another school year. Or, if this is your first year in one of Albany's excellent public schools, welcome! I hope 2008-09 will be a gratifying educational experience for everyone.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Eva C. Joseph". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the left of the typed name.

Eva C. Joseph, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools