

# MIDDLETOWN TOWNSHIP PUBLIC SCHOOLS

## Office of the Superintendent

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William O. George III, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Amy P. Gallagher, CPA  
School Business Administrator/Board Secretary

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June 13, 2012

Dear Parents,

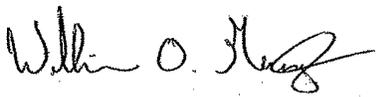
As many of you are aware, our students will be returning to school from summer recess on September 10, 2012. Since there have been some questions and concerns regarding this start date, I wanted to take the opportunity to reiterate the reasoning behind this decision.

Please note that this is only two days later than the start date would have been using our past practices to set the District calendar. First and foremost, this date was selected so that two additional days could be utilized to provide teachers and support staff with targeted professional development for acquiring the knowledge and skills necessary to more effectively teach our students. There are significant national changes in education reform that require extensive professional development for our teachers. National Common Core Standards are now required of all districts in many subject areas and will be fully implemented in all content areas throughout the next few years. New benchmark testing will be established to develop individual student growth models. Researched-based best practices that infuse technology will be communicated through on-going and sustained professional development, beginning this September. In addition, at each grade level there are initiatives, which will require professional development to support successful implementation. For example, we will be piloting a new elementary language arts program, adopting a new middle school mathematics program, and initiating a new block schedule in our high schools.

Secondly, our school calendar has always been dependent upon the dates of legal and religious holidays. This year, Labor Day is not until September 3<sup>rd</sup>, and some religious holidays fall on weekdays. This precipitates a later ending date next school year for most districts. However, please keep in mind that there is still the same number of student days in the calendar, excluding emergency days (e.g. inclement weather days, etc.) that we have always included as per state requirements. Therefore, this does not increase the number of days needed for childcare or supervision by parents for their children when school is not in session.

It is our responsibility to prepare our students to excel in this ever changing, global, and increasingly competitive workforce. Only through reflective, improved teaching practice supported by continuous professional development will we meet this responsibility. The challenge of a thorough and efficient education can only be accomplished with a commitment by all stakeholders to high academic standards.

Sincerely,



William O. George III, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools