

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As the new principal of Saucon Valley High School, it is with great honor and pride that I join our dedicated faculty, parents and students to begin 2010 with great anticipation for a successful and joyful second semester. I look forward to getting to know each of you as we work together to guide your child towards lifelong learning and achievement. Please accept this letter as the first step towards establishing a strong and effective working relationship between your home and my office. With the start of a new year it is especially important for all of our students to consider what their expectations are for the coming semester. As parents, we foster this learning moment by discussing our children's goals with them in regards to academics, attitude and behavior. If possible, take a moment to write these goals down and place them in a location that can be reviewed on a periodic basis. Positive goal-setting is the first step towards long lasting achievement. To that end, I have included a few of my guiding principles as I work to orient myself with the Saucon Valley High School community.

- 1. The purpose of public education is to help create literate, participating citizens in our democracy.** Keeping focus of what the purpose of public education is is crucial to establishing the mission of the building.
- 2. All students can learn.** This is not a rhetorical concept from No Child Left Behind. Rather, it is a deeply held belief that if appropriate learning environments and supports are provided, nearly all children can learn at high levels of proficiency. There is ample research to help us understand how children learn and what motivates student learning. Similarly, there is ample research to help guide teachers in best practices. This philosophy is the cornerstone to improve student achievement.
- 3. Standards-based educational programs must be partnered with a holistic approach to educating all students.** The standards-based approach asks schools to clarify what we want our students "to know and to be able to do." The standards-based approach however, falls short in educating the whole child. The missing piece is what we want our students "to be." To that end, we must be careful to safeguard areas such as the arts, physical education, and community service as we focus on proficiencies based on high stakes testing.
- 4. Teachers are the key to our success in meeting our goals.** I believe that what teachers do with and for students every day is the core of the success of the high school. Building small learning communities is vital to establishing a collaborative environment that fosters student achievement. Other staff members complete our team as they support the work in the classroom. Administration needs to create opportunities for collaboration and professional development.
- 5. The child is the center of decision-making.** Our decisions must always be based on what is best for children. Deviation from this concept will be detrimental to student learning.

I am very proud to serve as the principal of Saucon Valley High School. We will continue to develop a team atmosphere within our staff and a family atmosphere with our students. We appreciate all the community has done to provide for our students and we work hard every day to fulfill our obligation to providing the best possible education for our students. Please feel free to contact me with any questions that you may have concerning our high school.

Best wishes for a great 2010!

Eric D. Kahler
Principal