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Dr. Edwin M. Quezada
Superintendent of Schools

RoseAnne Collins-Judon
Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum and Instruction, School
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Rodney Arthur
Principal
Yonkers Middle High School

Dear Parents/Guardians:

I am honored and filled with excitement to be the newly appointed Principal of Yonkers Middle High School. It is a privilege to have been selected to lead a school filled with rich traditions, high expectations, motivated educators, tremendous school pride and active community involvement.

I have served as an educator for more than 26 years, and remain as passionate about education as I was during my first year working as a teacher in East Flatbush, Brooklyn. I firmly believe that a quality education transcends lives and will position our children to lead industries, influence others and create significant change in communities across our nation. This belief was confirmed for me when I met two rising seniors from Yonkers Middle School this summer. They are impressive scholars with an uncompromised determination to serve others and make their mark on the world.

While the COVID-19 global pandemic has impacted millions of people around the world, and many individuals who are near and dear to our hearts, it has refocused our attention on the importance of family. As a father of four amazing children ages 13, 16, 17 and 25, my wife Tania and I personally can understand and relate to many of the experiences you have had as parents. Our children need to feel physically and emotionally safe in school and home in order to fulfil their true potential.

The leaders of the school district and community-based organizations and I are committed to working closely with parents to achieve this endeavor. As the school year begins, we will provide staff, students and parents with opportunities to engage in workshops on the topic of trauma and available support.

As parents, we are committed to giving our children all the tools needed to build a solid foundation to start life's journey. That means we frequently and willingly make sacrifices for our children and forego our needs. My mother, who immigrated to the United States in 1979 from the West Indies, made the decision to leave her homeland and extended family to pursue a dream and provide her children with opportunities. Because of my mother's determination, commitment and love, I was able to graduate from Boys and Girls High School in Brooklyn, New York in three years, and became the first member of my family to earn Bachelor's and Master's

Degrees. My mother was a single parent who raised three children and taught us the true value and impact of a quality education.

By working collaboratively, I look forward to developing a strong partnership with you - one built on trust, common goals and focused on equal access for ALL of our children. Together we will build on the outstanding work led by Principal Jade Sharp - *Increasing the number of students earning an International Baccalaureate diploma and improving the academic skills of our middle school students*. These will serve as performance objectives for the entire school community.

As we know, parents are every child's first teachers. I believe that by working together, we can make sure your child develops the social and emotional skills required to foster good friendships and navigate social media and other social challenges. It is important our children understand the lifelong impacts of social media, and how poor choices can negatively determine their earning potential and limit career options, whereas positive uses of social media can highlight their value as contributing members in the education and work environments.

Before joining the City School District of Yonkers, I held various administrative positions throughout several school districts in New York State. Most recently, I worked as the Principal of Peekskill High School in Peekskill, New York, where the graduation rate increased by 16 percentage points. Prior to working in Peekskill, I worked in the City School District of New Rochelle for 8 years and held various positions, which included serving as the Assistant Principal of Albert Leonard Middle School for 5 years. I also held the position of Assistant Director of Special Education at the middle and high school levels. In each of my roles, I was charged with supervising teachers and developing programs to improve teaching and learning for all students. My academic background includes a Bachelor's degree in Secondary Education, a Master's degree in Education and a certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies in Educational Leadership and Administration.

I believe that great schools are the results of great teachers and strong partnerships with parents and community members. So, my primary objective this school year is to create an inclusive, safe school environment that permits teachers to maximize their instructional practices and allows students to be intellectually engaged, creative, and work to their full potential.

To achieve these objectives, I will be working closely with our Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Edwin Quezada, the Assistant Superintendents, Assistant Principals, Ms. Sylvia Branchcomb, Dr. Dan Kreiness, Mrs. Yamile Leon, Mr. Darryl Mack, Mrs. Melanie Vancol, Ms. Dawn Williams, and our amazing faculty. We encourage you to get directly involved with our fabulous and caring Parent Teacher Association to ensure that your voices are heard.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve your families and the Yonkers community. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions, concerns, ideas or suggestions you would like to share with me. I can be contacted via email: rarthur@yonkerspublicschools.org or on the phone number listed above.

Respectfully,

Rodney Arthur