

Sachem Central School District
Holbrook, New York 11741

MEMORANDUM

TO: Members, Board of Education

FROM: Charles J. Murphy, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

DATE: August 17, 2007

RE: **Board of Education Goals and
Strategic Action Plan 2007-08**

Ladies and Gentlemen:

For the past two years, the district's administrative team has developed strategic action plans to target specific areas within the broader goals established by the Board of Education in the ongoing pursuit of large scale school improvement. During this time, tremendous strides have been made in making Sachem an even better place for students to learn than ever before. A number of initiatives have been launched both instructionally and operationally and we continue, on a daily basis, to assess progress and explore additional avenues in the school improvement process. Indeed, our school budget has been developed with this in mind, one, I am happy to say, has been supported by the community we serve as being educationally sound, cost effective and taxpayer sensitive. Once again, my cabinet and I have developed a strategic action plan that we believe not only furthers the goals established during the past two years, but also raises the bar even further.

Educationally, we are making tremendous strides. In our elementary and secondary programs, a number of initiatives have been implemented and we are starting to reap the benefits of these programs. Test scores are on the rise, more students than ever before are pursuing Advanced Placement and college level coursework while still in attendance at our high schools and students are receiving academic intervention services when remediation is needed to ensure that, in fact, no child is being left behind.

For the 2007-08 school year, significant strides are being taken in several areas. At the elementary level, we continue to see the positive effects of the new language arts program instituted a few years ago. This year, a new elementary mathematics program has been adopted as well, one that will lay the foundation for students as they move on to the rigorous secondary mathematics program set forth by New York State. More emphasis than ever has been placed on literacy in our schools. No longer is it acceptable to think that the teaching of reading and language arts is the responsibility of a few select individuals. Rather, this is the responsibility of every teacher in our school district. To

further this concept, ten literacy coaches have been added to our program to ensure that every one of our teachers is fully prepared to take on this challenge. More emphasis has been placed on professional development than in the recent past. Again, our staff must be prepared to meet the educational challenges to ensure that Sachem's students are ready to compete in the 21st century.

The 2007-08 strategic action plan cites specific strategies to be taken for each of our five goals. Not only are strategies identified, but specific implementation steps, timelines and, most significantly, methods of assessment are outlined.

The goals are:

1. Enhance Student Achievement and Quality of Instruction
2. Improve Parent, Community and Staff Communication.
3. Improve Fiscal Responsibility and Accountability Throughout the District.
4. Provide Safe and Secure Schools.
5. Technology Integration.

I think you will agree that we have made tremendous strides in each of these areas in the past two years. Naturally, our work is never done as we are constantly looking to improve and fine tune every aspect of our operation. Many of the initiatives indicated in the plan are on-going and we will continue to gather evidence to be sure that we are heading in the right direction. As with any new initiatives, results might not be immediately evident, but "slow and steady wins the race" must be the mantra that we subscribe to. If, in each year, we are able to show steady student progress, fine tune our business and personnel operations, demonstrate that our schools are a safe and orderly place to attend and reach out to more and more factions of our community then, indeed, we are on the road to overall school improvement. We continue to main high standards for our staff and students. The support and resources from the Board of Education is genuinely appreciated. In return, we continue to pledge to make the Sachem Central School District the best that it can possibly be.

The process of change is a slow, steady one. We have already seen significant improvement in a number of areas. Most importantly, we must always keep our "eye on the prize", namely the children of this community. By providing them with the most appropriate, fiscally prudent, educational program that we possibly can, THEY will become our greatest spokespeople as they go out into the world as proud, well prepared Sachem graduates.