

Flemington-Raritan Regional School District
Dr. Kari McGann
Superintendent of Schools
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Dear Barley Sheaf Elementary School Families,

On Monday, June 26, 2023, the Board of Education approved my recommendation for Mrs. Amy Switkes as the next Principal of Barley Sheaf Elementary School, effective August 1. Mrs. Switkes served as the Vice Principal of Barley Sheaf Elementary School for three years, from 2017 through 2020. She then became the Vice Principal at Copper Hill Elementary School, where she has proudly served the Copper Hill Elementary School families, students, faculty, and staff.

When asked about the Barley Sheaf community, Mrs. Switkes shared, *"It is my mission to ensure that Barley Sheaf is a joyful place where students, staff, and families feel a strong sense of belonging, connection, and engagement. As the Principal at Barley Sheaf, I will continue to model and foster this joy and be a champion for our school- Every Student, Every Day, Every Opportunity."*

Mrs. Switkes earned a master's degree from Rutgers University in Elementary and Special Education. She also holds an English as a Second Language teaching certification and completed the Principal and Supervisor Certification program through NJ-EXCEL in 2014. Prior to joining our school district, Mrs. Switkes was named the Teacher of the Year in 2015-2016 while serving as a classroom teacher at the Eisenhower Elementary School in Piscataway, New Jersey. Mrs. Switkes has educational expertise in special education with a specialty in Autism. As an educator, she has demonstrated her expertise in producing positive changes in student behavior by applying proven principles and practices that support students with Autism.

Moreover, Mrs. Switkes has shown leadership with our youngest learners in Flemington-Raritan by building partnerships with higher education institutions. She worked closely to enhance the preschool and special class programs for students with disabilities by planning collaboratively with Montclair State University's New Jersey Inclusive Education and Technical Assistance Project. Tools from this project included free webinars and resources provided to educators and parents to support inclusive education practices. Mrs. Switkes has also assisted in coordinating curriculum and professional development opportunities for the music and arts programs district-wide.

In addition, the Board of Education also approved my recommendation for Mrs. Mary Jane Custy to be the next Vice Principal of Francis A Desmares Elementary School, effective August 15. Mrs. Custy has proudly served Barley Sheaf Elementary School families, students, faculty, and staff for the past two years as Vice Principal. While sad to leave Barley Sheaf Elementary School, Mrs. Custy is excited to join the faculty and staff at Francis A. Desmares Elementary School!

As Mrs. Custy transitions to Francis A. Desmares Elementary School, she brings nearly 30 years of experience in education. Since joining our District in 2009, Mrs. Custy has taught in all four elementary schools as a literacy coach

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for the District's core literacy program. She also served as a G&T Stretch teacher for over 10 years prior to becoming a vice principal. Mrs. Custy also knows the Desmares community well; she is a parent of three young adults who are all former Desmares Dolphins.

Mrs. Switkes will be heading a committee to hire the next Vice Principal of Barley Sheaf Elementary School. She will share more information with the Barley Sheaf Elementary School community.

Students, families, staff, and faculty are invited to Barley Sheaf Elementary School on Thursday, August 10, at 5 p.m. for "Popsicles on the Playground" to come together to greet Mrs. Switkes and Mrs. Custy and wish them well as they both begin their new roles within the District.

Sincerely,

Dr. Kari McGann
Superintendent of Schools