

February 22, 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians, Staff, and Community Members of Rocky Hill Middle School:

As you are aware, Dr. Cynthia Eldridge is out on medical leave through April 19, 2021. I know all of you will join me in wishing Dr. Eldridge well and a speedy recovery. Dr. Eldridge has been a champion for the students of Rocky Hill Middle School and the Clarksburg Cluster. Her dedication and commitment make a difference for each and every student.

I am pleased to share that Dr. Deborah R. Higdon will serve as acting principal at Rocky Hill Middle School effective February 22, 2021, through Dr. Eldridge's return in April. Dr. Higdon is an educational leader with 37 years of experience. She started in education as a school nurse. She became a teacher and taught high school students for 11 years before becoming an assistant principal. For the last 11 years, she was the principal of Lakelands Park Middle School in Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS). As principal, Dr. Higdon's responsibilities included leading the teaching and learning of 1,200-plus students. Through analysis of student achievement data and identification of root causes, student achievement increased and was sustained for years, making Lakelands Park a top performing school in MCPS. For three years, she led the professional learning community of the school system's 40 middle school principals that had an academic impact on 36,000 middle school students. Dr. Higdon has presented at the National Middle School Association Conference, the Association for Middle Level Education and Maryland State Department of Education. She is the co-author of the article, "Courageous Conversations for Cowards." Dr. Higdon has received many awards including being selected as Principal of the Year by the Montgomery County Junior Council and she was selected as a Claes Nobel Educator of Distinction.

I would be remiss if I did not take an opportunity to acknowledge the leadership and support of Mr. Matt Parker, assistant principal, for steering Rocky Hill Middle School in an outstanding manner for the past three weeks!

In my role as director of learning, achievement, and administration, I have been consistently impressed with the sense of community, family involvement, and culture of high expectations at Rocky Hill Middle School. I will work closely with Dr. Higdon and the administrative team to ensure a smooth transition for the re-opening of schools, as well as any ongoing support that is needed.

Sincerely,

Eric Wilson

Eric A. Wilson

Director of Learning, Achievement and Administration

Office of Teaching, Learning and Schools-School Support
and Improvement