



## *Pearl River School District*

135 West Crooked Hill Road  
Pearl River, New York 10965  
[www.pearlriver.org](http://www.pearlriver.org)  
Phone: 845-620-3920 Fax: 845-620-3927  
[pochintestam@pearlriver.org](mailto:pochintestam@pearlriver.org)



**Marco F. Pochintesta**  
Superintendent of Schools

May 10, 2018

Dear Pearl River School Community,

This week, U.S. News and World Report issued their awards and rankings for the best high schools in each state. We are proud to announce that Pearl River High School has earned a silver medal ranking for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row, placing 68<sup>th</sup> out of 1263 high schools in NYS. Last year, Pearl River High School was ranked #76. Nationally, Pearl River High School ranked #642 out of more than 20,500 schools across the United States. This ranking is based on school performance on state assessments and how well we prepare students for college.

We congratulate the students, faculty, staff and administration on this recognition that validates the great work in our high school! I also congratulate our administration, faculty and staff in our elementary and middle schools as this work begins in Kindergarten and continues through the grades. We have an excellent educational program in Pearl River and I look forward to our continued work in evaluating our K-12 program, identifying our strengths as well as areas of improvement, and developing plans that meet the needs of all students.

I am very happy to announce that at the last BOE meeting, Dr. Robert Roelle was appointed to the position of Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum and Instruction effective July 1, 2018. Dr. Roelle comes to the Pearl River School District with a rich educational background and extensive leadership experience.

Dr. Roelle has a bachelor's degree in Education and Social Studies from Millersville University in Pennsylvania, a master's degree in Environmental Conservation Education from NYU, a master's degree in Instructional Technology from NY Institute of Technology, an advanced graduate degree in Educational Leadership from Stony Brook University, and a doctorate from Fordham University in Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy.

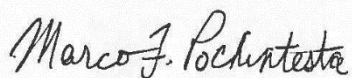
He has been at the Pelham School District since 2006 where he served as a Technology Learning Facilitator, Assistant Director of Technology, Elementary School Principal, and since 2012, Pelham Middle School Principal. Dr. Roelle also has a number years of social studies teaching experience at the middle and high school level. We are very happy to welcome Dr. Roelle to the Pearl River School District.

Lastly, I would like to report on a topic that I mentioned in a previous letter to parents regarding changing the start time of the high school to a later start. A feasibility study was conducted to look at the impact of moving the start time of the high school forward by 30 to 40 minutes. Several items that we needed to consider were potential impacts to our academic program, extra-curricular activity and athletics, contractual obligations and transportation. While most of these items did not reveal a significant issue that would pose an obstacle to change, there was a significant financial implication when considering what changes would be needed in transportation. In order to meet the district's obligation of providing transportation to students who are attending parochial schools and special education placements, we would need additional buses. Our current high school buses have enough time to drop students off at the high school and bring students to outside placements before picking up elementary students. Moving the start time of the high school would not allow enough time to do this and we would have to contract for more buses. The cost was estimated at \$200,000. In developing our budget for the upcoming year, it was not possible to include this amount and stay within the tax cap. While we will not be changing the start time for 2018-19 school year, we will continue our research on this topic by asking both students and parents for their input, as well as speaking to colleagues in the county who have implemented this type of change.

As we are now in the final weeks of the school year, I look forward to seeing families at the numerous events that celebrate our students' achievements. Whether at a concert, academic awards night, moving up ceremonies, or high school graduation, I am proud to be celebrating successes of our students with you.

In closing, I remind all of our parents and residents that school budget vote and school board election will take place next Tuesday, May 15<sup>th</sup> in Pearl River High School's Pirate Cove. Polls are open from 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM. Please exercise your right to vote.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marco J. Pochintesta". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'M' and 'P'.