After spending the past eight years with you as the CEO of the Downingtown Area School Direct, I depart with only fond memories. I was extremely lucky to be here witnessing all of the wonderful accomplishments we’ve made since I started as your Superintendent in 2009. Some highlights? The opening of the STEM Academy and the Marsh Creek Center, the introduction of the blended and cyber learning initiatives, the iPad and laptop initiatives, an increase in AP and the addition of IB courses available for all DASD students, more K-12 blended learning formats to prepare our students for college and beyond using digital and regular text in all classrooms, the curriculum leadership model, the robust professional development models in place now, the data team concept used to inform instruction in all schools and five of the last eight years without a tax increase for residents and businesses.

The accolades placing the District on the national map came in bunches from the Washington Post to Newsweek to US News. We had our first National Blue Ribbon School (Pickering Valley), state and even national athletic accomplishments, state and national club accomplishments like Future Cities competition, HOSA and FBLA. We had national honors and recognition bestowed upon DASD principals and teachers over the past 8 years. Add to this the numerous teachers, administrative team members and board members who were invited to speak all across the nation about the great things happening in the Downingtown Area School District. It’s been quite a fun ride.

I’m a very lucky guy. Thank you for your support, encouragement, and willingness to take risks to become a nationally recognized educational destination.

It is my pleasure to introduce myself as your new superintendent of schools as of July 1. I am extremely excited to get to know the district, staff, students and community. For the past 19 years, I have served as the superintendent of the West York Area School District in York County. I embraced the opportunity to come here to Downingtown for several reasons. Most notably, DASD is one of the top school districts in PA with a strong track record of academic achievement. From the many STEM opportunities offered at all levels, to an innovative blended learning program, to a multitude of co-curricular opportunities, DASD students are well prepared for life beyond the school walls.

Clearly, the district has been ‘on the move’ over the past several years and I am anxious to continue the progressive initiatives implemented by Dr. Mussoline. Also, I appreciate the time he graciously spent with me touring the district and introducing me to many of our staff and students. To a person, I was greeted with a warm welcome everywhere we went. So many of those I met remarked, “Downingtown is great place and you’re going to love it here.”

As we embark on this academic journey together, I assure you that I will always focus on the advancement of our district and work together to provide the kind of synergy among our school and community that will make us better than we otherwise would be. I look forward to meeting you over the course of the year and shepherding our district into the future. If you see me at an event, please take a moment to stop and say hello.

I look forward to a superb year together!

Emilie M. Lonardi, Ph.D.
A Message from School Board President Colleen Cranney

Thank you Dr. Larry Mussoline. The district has grown and changed in the eight years since Dr. Mussoline has been the DASD Superintendent. Not one to sit back quietly, Dr. Mussoline has encouraged changes and innovations, and his impact will be felt for years to come.

When he arrived in Downingtown in 2009, there were space limitations in our middle and high schools. His vision for our future not only solved our capacity issues, but also strengthened our academic programs. As a growing district, we needed a third high school so he looked at our oldest facility, renovated it at a far lesser cost than a new facility and created a magnet school that incorporated the STEM disciplines with the global International Baccalaureate program. The STEM Academy has been great success from the start, and, as Dr. Mussoline predicted, the rigor and advanced programming at that high school has been replicated in our two comprehensive high schools. Dr. Mussoline also tackled overcrowding at the middle level by opening a successful Sixth Grade Center - on time and under budget.

Dr. Mussoline will be remembered for many things in Downingtown – his energetic appearances in classrooms, his tireless attendance at so many after school activities and his long, but entertaining snow day messages – but his legacy will be in the area of technology. In this ever changing world where computers have become as necessary as pencils, his vision to ensure that every child has access to this new technology helped initiate our 1:1 device program. Beginning with the iPad initiative at the 6th Grade Center, computer devices are now available to students in our two middle schools and three high schools. iPads are also being used in the elementary level to help differentiate instruction. Staff has been hired to support these technology initiatives and to help our teachers and students make the most of this educational technology. Under his leadership, this was all done without any tax increase these past five years.

Continuing to strengthen his legacy in the area of technology, Dr. Mussoline brought cyber education and blended learning in-house. The “Ivy Academy” blended learning option, now offered to our high school students with plans to offer middle school students a similar opportunity, caught the attention of Harvard University. Thanks to his energy, enthusiasm and leadership, we will continue to progress toward become a distinguished Digital School District. We look forward to continuing this effort under our new superintendent, Dr. Emilie Lonardi.

DASD Board of School Directors

Region 1 – Ted Rauth - Term expires 2019
(Upper Uwchlan 1, 2, Wallace)
Region 2 – David Kring - Term expires 2017
(East Caln 2, West Bradford 2, 4)
Region 3 – Carl Croft, Board Vice President
Term expires 2019
(East Brandywine N1, N2, S)
Region 4 – Rodney Simon - Term expires 2017
(Uwchlan 1, 3, 4, 5, 9)
Region 5 – Colleen Cranney, Board President
Term Expires 2019
(Uwchlan 2, 8, East Caln 1)
Region 6 – Suzanne Simonelli - Term expires 2017
(Uwchlan 6, 7)
Region 7 – Jane Bertone – Term expires 2019
(Downingtown WN, EE, EW, WS)
Region 8 – Barbara Albright - Term expires 2017
(East Caln 2, West Bradford 2, 4)
Region 9 – Jamie Mehler, Term expires 2019
(West Bradford 1, 3, 5)

Front row, left to right: Suzanne Simonelli, Colleen Cranney, Carl Croft, Jamie Mehler, Back Row, left to right: Barbara Albright, Ted Rauth, David Kring, Rodney Simon and Jane Bertone.

The Board, Committee of the Whole and Curriculum Committee meetings take place in the James E. Watson, Jr. Staff Development Room of the District’s Administrative Offices, 540 Trestle Place in Downingtown.
- Committee of the Whole – 1st Wed. of the month at 6:30 p.m.
- Monthly Board meeting – 2nd Wed. of the month at 7:00 p.m.
- Curriculum Committee – 2nd Tuesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. or as advertised on website calendar.
Parent Book Club

DASD held its first parent book club this year. The book chosen for this premiere event was Jessica Lahey’s *The Gift of Failure*. Interested parents were invited to sign up and discuss the book on March 27, 2017. Following the small group sessions, a panel discussion on the entire book was held in the STEM Academy’s auditorium. The panel discussion was led by Dr. Mussoline with valuable input shared by curriculum leaders, teachers and parents.

In April, Jessica Lahey, the book’s author, visited the district to share her thoughts with both middle school students and parents.

1:1 initiative at DHS East and West

The School Board approved a new 1:1 device plan for DHS East and DHS West students entering grades 9 and 10. The district purchased Dell Latitude and MacBook Air computers for use at home and in school. Families will be charged a yearly technology insurance fee of $75 for the Dell and $200 for the MacBook. At the end of their high school years, a student may purchase their device for 6% of the fair market value if they have continuously paid for their technology fee. This program expands the 1:1 laptop program already in place at the STEM Academy and the iPad initiative for 6th through 8th grade students.

LMS Principal speaks to Chinese educators

Lionville Middle School Principal Jon Ross was invited to represent our district at the 110th Anniversary of Baoding No. 17 Middle School in China. DASD and schools in the Hebei province share a unique partnership. Mr. Ross spoke to attendees about the various ways our district schools use technology in the classrooms. The day concluded with the panel of guest speakers answering questions from the Chinese teachers and principals in attendance.

School Board considers Uwchlan Hill’s Future

The Board of Directors have begun the process of determining the future of Uwchlan Hills Elementary School. The Board heard from architects representing the firm Breslin Ridyard Fidaro. Firm representatives presented 5 possible options for dealing with the multiple aging issues plaguing the 43-year-old school. The recommendations included a simple renovation, closing the school, adding a 2 story wing, adding a 3 story wing or building a completely new building.

Happy 50th Birthday to West Bradford

West Bradford Elementary School celebrated its 50th birthday this year. This momentous occasion led to all sorts of educational and research presentations at WB. Each grade level selected a decade to research and present to the school. First grade kicked off the year by starting with the groovy 60’s in October! They researched and made tie dye t-shirts and created a display of decade appropriate music, toys, games, TV shows, movies and current events that covered the hallway.

DAEA and Board Approve a New Three Year Contract

The Downingtown Area School District Board of Directors and the Downingtown Area Education Association, the union representing the district’s teachers, guidance counselors, librarians and nurses, reached an early agreement on a new three-year contract. The School Board unanimously approved the agreement at the November 16, 2016 Special Board meeting. Teachers will get an average annual pay increase of 2.64% and pay 11% toward health care for the length of the contract.

“Negotiating this new contract with the union leadership was a very positive experience”, said Board President Colleen Cranney. “Our Board members and union leaders worked together as a team to reach this agreement. The new contract is both fair to our hard working staff and fiscally responsible to our community.”
**Beaver Creek**

Beaver Creek Elementary School celebrates Constitution Day in September by wearing red, white and blue colors. They invite community members to come to school and celebrate the day with them. 4th graders recite the Preamble to the Constitution. The entire school then sings a patriotic song and student artwork is displayed.

**Bradford Heights**

K-3rd grade Autistic Support teacher Traci Weiss was selected as one of 8 recipients of the State Farm “Teacher as Hero Award.” The award was presented by the National Liberty Museum in May. She was honored by State Farm for helping her autistic students create successful personal connections.

**Brandywine Wallace**

In February, Brandywine Wallace held its second annual PJ Reading Hour to support the Downingtown Library. Families paid an admission fee to enjoy listening to books read by their teachers, Dr. Leib, and local police officers. The event raised over $800 to help the new library that is located on Wallace Avenue in the Downingtown Borough.

**East Ward**

East Ward Elementary had another amazing school year! In addition to a new playground, visits to the Franklin Mint, Colonial Plantation, Keswick Theater, Longwood Gardens and the Reading Public Museum, students were treated to in-school visits from the Philadelphia Zoo, the SPCA, and the Berenstain Bears.

**Lionville Elementary**

In LE’s Art classes, students started the school year by reading the book *Only One You* by Linda Kranz. They then created a mural for the hallway. The story is about a mom and dad fish teaching their son about life, morals and good choices before he goes out into the big ocean.

**Pickering Valley**

The annual Pickering Valley Art Show began almost 30 years ago. This special evening continues to grow and is enjoyed by all of PV’s students and families. Everyone is always amazed at the students’ creations. Each student has at least two pieces of art represented in the Art Show.

**Shamona Creek**

The students and staff at Shamona Creek Elementary School celebrated the construction of new playground apparatus with a ribbon cutting ceremony. In the fall, the school held a very successful fundraiser to update swings and other climbing equipment.

**Springton Manor**

FunDay at Springton Manor Elementary School is the jump start to the summer. Organized by our 5th graders, the day provides music, games and endless laughter. This year’s festivities had a Hawaiian theme with blow-up obstacle courses, wet bucket races, a DJ, limbo, and bagged lunches.
Uwchlan Hills

The Mud Run at Uwchlan Hills Elementary was a blast again this year. This was the 5th anniversary of the event and was attended by almost 350 families. The Mud Run is a great opportunity for all ages to experience an obstacle course run in a fun and safe environment.

West Bradford

Rain cancelled the annual Chester County Special Olympics this year, but that didn't stop West Bradford from honoring its Olympians. Students and teachers gathered outside the hallway with signs and cheered on their friends and classmates as they walked down the hallway to the gym.

Marsh Creek Sixth Grade Center

Marsh Creek homerooms participated in the “Agent of Change” project. Leo Suniaga’s homeroom collected jars of peanut butter and jelly for the Chester County Food Bank. With creative advertising, poems, phrases and facts, his homeroom collected 240 jars of PB and J totaling 400 lbs.

Downingtown Middle School

The fourth annual Unity Day helped raise $15,000 for Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation. Students from LMS and DMS compete in fun and challenging events to earn points with a trophy given to the school with the highest accumulated points. This year, Downingtown Middle took home the bragging rights.

Lionville Middle School

Lionville Middle School hosted its first annual “Law Enforcement Appreciation Day” this year. They heard from several local law enforcement officials about serving the community. Students also watched a demonstration by one of the local K9 units. After the assembly, everyone lined up to say thank you to all of the police officers in attendance.

Downingtown STEM Academy

Almost 600 STEM Academy students along with 150 of their friends from neighboring high schools pledged to stay up all night Friday, April 28th to raise money and awareness for childhood cancer research through the Cure-4-Cam foundation. The event raised over $66,000 for cancer research.

DHS East

Congratulations to graduating senior, Mike Dickson. Mike not only won 4 ChesMont Championship tennis titles and 3 District 1 titles, he also won the PIAA Boys State Singles Tennis Championships in 2016 and 2017!

DHS West

The National Art Honors Society students celebrated the arts in March, inviting DASD’s elementary aged children and their families to DHS West to learn and create. The students shared their skills in pottery making, face painting, crafts, live music and more.
A New Innovation Time for Elementary Students

Starting in the 2017-2018 school year, all 1st through 5th grade students in all 10 elementary schools will participate in a new program temporarily entitled "Innovation Time." (Students will select the final name). This "Innovation Time" will replace the previous Rosetta Stone encore time. Students will participate in this program one day out of each six-day cycle.

The program’s goals are to foster students’ interests, incorporate Habits of Mind strategies, stimulate excitement in STEM related activities, and help increase access to coding, programming, and robotics for all students.

Driven by student choice and personalized learning, students will play a key role in deciding the activities and outcomes. We are very excited to introduce this new program in September.

Mascot Madness

Shamona Creek wins ....again!

As part of the Downingtown Area School District’s Health and Wellness program, special events are held throughout the year to get the kids up and moving. Mascot Madness is a district wide competition that began five years ago. Staff and students in our 16 schools and the Central Administration staff are urged to log in their exercise hours for a three-week period. The top school gets bragging rights. Shamona Creek Elementary School has taken home the trophy for the last four years.

DASD “App” available In August

All DASD parents will soon have access to the new DASD Mobile App. The app is free of charge and can be downloaded for both iOS and Android devices. This powerful mobile app will provide parents with the latest news, menus, schedules, calendars and information, all personalized for every parent. For the very first time you will be able to keep track of all your children’s activities, no matter their grade level, all from your smartphone.

The app connects seamlessly with our email notification system, websites and social media pages. Information is updated nightly so you’ll be able to see up-to-date cafeteria and activity balances, student grades, assignments and upcoming tests anywhere, anytime.

Once the app goes ‘live’ in August, we will send an email with more information about the App, how to download it on your device and how to individualize it for your family.

Chester County’s High School Teacher of the Year

Jerome Nowak and his wife teach ballroom dancing to West seniors.

Congratulations to DHS West teacher Jerry Nowak on being selected as the Citadel Heart of Learning Award’s High School Teacher of the Year. This is an amazing honor for Mr. Nowak as over 1200 Chester County teachers were nominated by the public this year. From the 2700 nominations received, fifteen finalists were selected, with each receiving $500 for use in the classroom. From this elite group, three winners were selected, one from the high school level, one from the middle school and one elementary school teacher. These three teachers each received a Heart of Learning trophy and an additional $1500 to use in the classroom.

School begins on Monday, August 28, 2017
Download a single page 2017-2018 calendar at www.dasd.org
Accolades and Honors

**Washington Post and US News and World Reports**

We are very pleased to announce that all three of our high schools once again made the Washington Post’s list of *America’s Most Challenging High Schools* and the *US News and World Reports Best High School List of 2017*. Our teachers, administrators and school board have worked hard to create an innovative and challenging curriculum utilized by and for all students.

Only 35 Pennsylvania high schools achieved the Washington Post honor with DASD being the only multi-high school Pennsylvania school district to have all of its district high schools nationally ranked on this list.

**LMS wins Future City Competition**

For the second year in a row, Lionville Middle School students captured the first place trophy in the annual Philadelphia Region Future City Competition. The Philadelphia Region has been participating in Future City competitions since 1995. More than 300 students representing 40 or more schools participate each year. LMS also took home first place in 2014.

**DMS Student wins Chester County Spelling Bee**

51 students advanced to the Chester County Spelling Bee championship. This CCIU sponsored event is the qualifying bee for the Scripps National Bee. Sid Sharma, a student at Downingtown Middle School successfully spelled “Estrepe” to win the title and went on to compete in the national competition in Washington. Marsh Creek student Lineesha Kamana came in third in the CCIU competition.

**Lionville Elementary named a PA Distinguished School**

Lionville Elementary School has been named one of Pennsylvania’s Division of Federal Programs Title 1 Schools of Distinction for the 2016-17 school year. There are currently approximately 1800 Title 1 schools in Pennsylvania. Only 96 earned a Pennsylvania Distinguished Schools designation this year.

**DASD Blended Learning Program**

The Ivy Academy is DASD’s blended learning program, and is currently available to students attending DHS East and DHS West. Now in its third year, students attending the Academy meet two out of every six days in person and are expected to work asynchronously online during the other days. The Harvard Business School selected the program as a case study for students in its MBA program. The case explored whether a blended option could one day be the primary way in which students learn.

**Digital Principal of the Year!**

Congratulations to Dr. Nick Indeglio

Downingtown Middle School Principal Dr. Nick Indeglio has been named one of three 2017 NASSP Digital Principals of the Year. The Digital Principal of the Year Award is given each year to three principals who exhibit the best in digital leadership with-in their schools.

**Shamona Creek #1 Elementary School in Suburban Counties**

According to the PA Dept. of Education, Shamona Creek Elementary School had the highest School Performance Profile score of all elementary schools located in the four Philadelphia suburban counties of Bucks, Montgomery, Chester and Delaware. The SPP score is calculated on student performance on PSSA scores, how many students performed proficiently on the tests and improvements made by students who had previously underperformed on these tests.

**Pickering Valley Elementary named a Blue Ribbon School**

Congratulations to the Pickering Valley Elementary staff, students and community on being recognized as a Blue Ribbon National School for 2016. National Blue Ribbon Schools serve as outstanding models of excellence for their respective states. Pickering Valley was one of only thirteen schools nominated by the Pennsylvania Department of Education for this award.

**1st Place Pennsylvania State Athletic Champions**

Aislinn Devlin, DHS West – Girls Cross Country Championship.

Mike Dickson, DHS East – Boys Tennis Singles

Heather McCausland, STEM – Girls 100 Yard Breast Stroke

Doug Zapf, DHS West – Wrestling

DHS East Ice Hockey
Congratulations to the Senior Class of 2017!

Senior Statistics!
- Total number of graduates: 955
- Seniors going on to continue their education - 93.5%
  - 4 year - 84.8%
  - 2 year - 7.3%
  - Technical - .6%
- Students joining the Military - 1.06%
- Students who took one or more AP Courses - 74.7%
- Students who took one or more honors courses - 87%
- Scholarship money offered to our graduates - $58,866,130