



New Superintendent Excited About Joining Mountainside

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MOUNTAINSIDE —

Janet Walling, the new superintendent of the Mountainside School District, is looking forward to beginning the school year and is grateful for the warm welcome and support that the board, staff and parents have provided over the past two months. During a recent interview, Mrs. Walling explained that she was attracted to Mountainside because of its reputation as a close-knit community, which supports and values its public schools. She noted it is a district with an effective board of education, strong parental involvement and a highly engaged staff. Mrs. Walling expressed her appreciation for the administrators, staff, and custodians who have worked tirelessly over the summer to prepare for the start of the school year at Beechwood and Deerfield Elementary Schools and is looking forward to working with Berkeley Heights and other local districts as the school year begins. Mrs. Walling comes to Mountainside from the Atlantic Highlands School District in Monmouth County, where she worked for 31 years. She began as a special-education teacher, worked in regular education and gained extensive experience in management and administration by serving as interim supervisor for both curriculum and special education.

Mrs. Walling also served as principal of the Atlantic Highlands Elementary School, which served students from pre-kindergarten to sixth grade, for more than a decade. Mrs. Walling's goals align with Mountainside's mission of providing students with the opportunities, experiences, and support needed in order to become strong independent learners. She envisions broadening professional development opportunities for staff; continuing the use of solid instructional practices; and extending the implementation of social and emotional learning strategies, as well as data driven insights to support the needs of what she termed the "whole learner." She said the district promotes a collaborative learning environment, infusing critical thinking, technology and collaboration skills that are critical for 21st century learners. Despite the media's widespread focus on standardized test scores as the sole metric of performance, Mrs. Walling explained that the district's focus is to evaluate a variety of student achievement data in order to better target student learning needs so that every student is provided with the support necessary to be challenged and succeed at his/her appropriate level.