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Superintendent of Schools

Jonathan Ponds, Ed.D.

For Immediate Release

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Superintendent Ponds Recommends the Appointment of Montclair High School Principal

(Montclair, N.J., November 10, 2020)— Montclair Public Schools Superintendent Jonathan Ponds will recommend the appointment of Jeffrey Freeman as Montclair High School Principal at the November 16 Montclair Board of Education public meeting. Freeman, currently Principal at Edgemont Montessori School, will assume his new role when the leadership transition at Edgemont is underway. The district is working closely with Principal Freeman and the Edgemont PTA on this transition plan.

Freeman is no stranger to the Montclair Public Schools community. He began his career at Montclair High School in 1999 teaching English, before becoming the lead teacher for the Center for Social Justice Small Learning Community in 2013. In July 2018, he was appointed Assistant Principal at Montclair High and three months later was promoted to Principal at Edgemont. "We are very fortunate to have someone as talented and experienced as Mr. Freeman already in the district who can take on such a key position," says Superintendent Ponds. "We are confident that his deep understanding of the district will combine with an unquestionably fresh perspective to lead the high school's team of talented educators to new heights."

A strong instructional leader, Freeman was the clear choice of a search committee comprised of administrators, teachers, parents, and community members. They were impressed by his collaborative, problem-solving skill set and demonstrated commitment to students, their families and school staff. Freeman earned his Bachelor of Arts from Montclair State University in English/Secondary Education and a Master of Science in Educational Administration from The University of Scranton.

During his tenure at the high school, Freeman was engaged with Restorative Justice work and is an advocate for racial equity. "I am looking forward to working with district leadership and

the Montclair High School community to ensure that all students have the opportunity to engage in daily, rigorous learning experiences that result in the highest level of social, emotional and academic success,” Freeman says. “It is clear that Mr. Freeman’s work will be student-centered and he will bring the families, staff and community together to promote high academic achievement, build a respectful social emotional climate, ensure equity for all, and create a safe and welcoming environment where all kids can learn and all kids feel special,” adds Ponds.

Eileen Gilbert, who has been in the district since 1994 and Assistant Principal at the high school for 10 years, will be Acting Principal until Freeman begins his tenure.

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