DR. MICHAEL GASKELL

After a 9 year career as a teacher and assistant principal in Paramus, NJ, Mike began as the principal of Hammarskjold in 2006. This was also the groundbreaking for the new Hammarskjold and after 2 years of construction, Dr. Gaskell opened the new school, and the JMPAC.

Dr. Gaskell began his career as a special educator, teaching middle school learners at a significant transitional stage of their life, adolescence. Following his teaching experience, Mike served for five years as a middle school assistant principal. It was after this that he officially "broke ground" with East Brunswick and Hammarskjold. During the largest construction project in East Brunswick in recent history, Mike worked closely with the construction development of the new building, always with a focus on student learning.

Mike has a Bachelors in Communication Disorders from Penn State, a Masters in Special Education from Bloomsburg, a Masters in School Administration from Rutgers and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership from Northcentral. He continues to model the pursuit of lifelong learning through actively providing staff development, often utilizing the resources of the EBEF, and facilitates learning opportunities for classrooms and students.

Mike has always aimed to design a professional learning community for teachers, who could then foster this same learning community with their students. Gone are the days of faculty meetings in the auditorium. Instead, you will see lively, engaging content and student focused meetings, where teachers start with a purpose and end with fulfilling an instructional objective. This is reinforced in articles authored by Dr. Gaskell, and published by ASCD Smartbrief. When the new building opened, Dr. Gaskell was honored to be supported by the many grants from EBEF, which included smart board installations through classrooms for instructional support.

Mike starred in East Brunswick’s 2015 "Celebrity Dance Off", in which over $60,000 was raised for classroom grants. Additionally, Dr. Gaskell played in the Harlem Wizards fundraiser in 2017, which also raised thousands of dollars. All the while, Mike promoted each of these excellent benefits loudly in the community, certainly aiding in the influence of their success.

Mike also serves as a mentor to four principals in other schools and districts. He often uses his experiences working directly with the EBEF to guide his work in leading principals, through the outstanding instructional leadership opportunities offered by the EBEF. A special love for the middle school and challenged child, Mike has written, co-written and supported grants that benefit all children, and especially the child who just needs that extra nudge of support.

Each spring, Mike recruits and promotes the innovative teachers of the district, which is branded as such at the superintendent’s annual State of the District event held each June. Here, Mike leaves his work at Hammarskjold and finds the time to interview and video tape the innovations taking place, thanks in large part to the support of the EBEF for teachers to make use of grants that make their innovation possible.
Last June, Mike coordinated the placement of a Relay for Life memorial bench in honor of the life of a student who lost her battle with cancer, supported by the EBEF. The entire school community came together for this special bonding experience and learned the value of hope and courage, two of the components that EBEF gives everyday.

Mike continues in his work as principal of our middle school, working tirelessly to support instructional excellence, his faculty, the district, and most importantly, the children as the benefactors of EBEF grants.

Mike has as he likes to call them, his “girls”. He has been married to Michele for 20 years and has two adoring daughters, Gabriella, 14 and Danielle, 12. He enjoys parenthood and seeing his daughter grow into young ladies. Mike is grateful for all of the support his parents, Pamela and Charles McMahon, have given him. Mike comes from a large family consisting of four brothers and two sisters.