



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Avon Public Schools

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Gary S. Mala
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

June 5, 2013

Dear Parents, Staff and Concerned Citizens:

I hope this message finds you well and enjoying the last part of this school year. My hope is that the month of June is filled much joy and happiness as we celebrate the accomplishments of your children. I am grateful to be a witness to such extraordinary student and staff efforts.

Let me begin by thanking you for your patience as we work to conclude a school year that has surpassed an ending date with which we are all comfortable. As you may or may not be aware, we are taking steps to align future school calendars. Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, the first day of school will begin before Labor Day. We also intend to modify scheduled school breaks with the goal of making more efficient use of the required 180 days of instruction which will enable us to end the school year earlier than the recent past. Additionally, we are reviewing ways to limit the number of early dismissal days to minimize the effects instruction. I will communicate the results of our work in this area once any future calendars have been approved by the Board of Education.

Among some of the additional changes implemented to better serve you and your children, parents of secondary level students (AHS & AMS) will be provided access to their child's schedule for the 2013-2014 school year beginning next week via the PowerSchool portal. Parents of our elementary school students will receive information on June 27th specifying class assignments for next school year. As with any year, there may be vacancies existing at the time schedules were created; in these cases, the assignment will be noted as "to be determined."

As I am sure you are aware, a number of new program options are supported by the 2013-2014 school operating budget. Included in these options are full day kindergarten with a half day option, world language (Spanish) instruction in grades kindergarten through 6, and a number of newly added courses to the Avon High School Program of Studies. Current plans also include establishing a pilot internship program for grade 12 students at Avon High School. The Communication Subcommittee of the Board of Education is hosting a brief information session on the evening of June 20th beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the AHS Auditorium. This will provide an opportunity share details regarding what the 2013-2014 school year will bring in the way of improvements to your school district. In addition to this session, I am planning a more frequent series of electronic communications highlighting the most frequently asked questions regarding each of the program options listed above and other topics that may emerge between now and the middle part of August.

This year has been a year best characterized as a year of tremendous growth. I am pleased to acknowledge and recognize the staff who have helped us with the many, new state requirements in the area of curriculum revision (Common Core State Standards), evaluation of certified staff, the NEASC accreditation process at Avon High School, the realignment of staff leadership positions to support improved communication in and between schools, managing school leadership changes, the work associated with the district's efforts to improve professional development for all staff, and to integrate the use of technology at all levels. Meeting the challenges of such an aggressive agenda requires the participation of many and the support of a common purpose. Just as we take every opportunity to thank those who serve in the armed forces and the first

responders in our local law enforcement, fire and emergency management offices, I ask you to join me in extending a sincere “thank you” to those who serve our children in our schools. As you well know, the staff who work directly with students each day are the single most important factor in achieving the mission of our schools.

Thank you all for your continued support and for the privilege of serving you and your children.

Enjoy a great week.

Very truly yours,

A cursive signature of the name "Gary" in a stylized, flowing script.

Gary S. Mala
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