



OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Avon Public Schools

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Gary S. Mala
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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Dear Parents, Staff and Concerned Citizens:

I hope this message finds you well and having enjoyed the summer months. As you know, we begin another school year with all of the hopes and dreams for our children to pursue. I am excited and invigorated to welcome you, our children and all of the faculty and staff back for the start of the 2013-2014 school year.

As I reflect on the last school year, I realize what we have accomplished together in such a short time due to the extraordinary efforts of you, our families, residents and supporters, our student and most notably the efforts of all of the district's faculty and staff. The Avon Public Schools continues to be blessed with an exceptionally talented staff who time and time again rises to the challenge of the ever-changing accountability associated with public education. I wish to personally recognize and thank all staff for their efforts to make the Avon Public Schools nothing less than exceptional places to learn and grow.

Thank you for your patience as we work to begin a new school year that will include additional changes to better serve the needs of our children. As noted in my end of the year communication to you, we took steps to align future school calendars beginning with the 2014-2015 school year to begin shortly before Labor Day and to modify scheduled school breaks with the goal of making more efficient use of our required 180 days of instruction and to facilitate ending the school year earlier in June. Also, we are presently reviewing ways to limit the number of early dismissal days to minimize the effects on instruction.

One of the most significant changes implemented to better serve you and your children was providing you access to 2013-2014 teacher assignments and class schedules at the conclusion of the last school year. I am pleased that all positions with the exception of 1.7 elementary world language teaching positions have been filled as of today. We are pleased to welcome over thirty (30) new staff members to the district including three new building principals, one new assistant principal, a district director of pupil services, and a cadre of certified and non-certified staff that bring years of experience to our district from other CT communities, states and countries. Yesterday, I, along with the district's leadership team, had the privilege and honor of welcoming our new staff with the start of a week-long new staff orientation program.

Among the most significant accomplishments achieved and scheduled to commence this year are full day kindergarten with a half day option, world language (Spanish) instruction in grades kindergarten through 6, and newly added courses and sections to the Avon High School Program of Studies in social studies, English, and applied education. Plans at the high school also include establishing a pilot internship program for grade 12 students and the implementation of an Advisor / Advisee program.

As was noted at the end of the last school year, one which I characterized as a year of tremendous growth, I am pleased to once again acknowledge and recognize the work of our staff who emerged to assist with meeting 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, as well as the individuals, including members of the Board of Education, parents and students, who volunteered to serve on search and selection

committees that implemented rigorous, comprehensive processes to screen, interview, research and identify individuals to serve in key leadership positions.

With the requirement to fully implement the reform efforts as directed by our state to improve public education and the many facets of a public education organization, we will continue to advance the district's curriculum revision schedule as it has been approved to align with the Common Core State Standards, we will implement revised evaluation systems with all certified staff, we will prepare our students for a new generation of state-wide standardized assessments, we will continue to implement an aggressive and proactive plan to integrate technology into instruction and operations of the district, we will complete the final steps to prepare Avon High School for the NEASC Accreditation visitation and we will insure the implementation of comprehensive professional development programs for all faculty and staff. As is the case during any school year, many other things are pursued, planned and implemented. We will share these pursuits in subsequent communications.

There are other pieces of information about which you may have questions as we poise to begin the New Year. In an attempt to provide you with this information in an efficient manner, we are directing you to the following links.

- District Strategic Plan: <http://www.avon.k12.ct.us/page.asp?PageID=106&catid1=85>
- Bus Routes: <http://routes.dattco.com/pubavon/default.aspx?load=addressInput>
- New Staff Listing: <http://www.avon.k12.ct.us/page.asp?pageid=99>
- School Calendar: http://www.avon.k12.ct.us/backpack/2013_2014_cal_081613.pdf
- Board of Education & Subcommittee Meetings:
<http://www.avon.k12.ct.us/backpack/AvonBoardofEducation2013MeetingCalendar.pdf>

It goes without saying that meeting the challenge of the aggressive agenda committed to when we adopted a new district strategic plan last year requires the commitment of all of us to the stated purpose of our work and our active participation together to make things happen in thoughtful, meaningful and systemic ways. It takes all of us to believe in our trajectory as a district and to work collaboratively to create and maintain a culture and climate of mutual respect and understanding.

Last and certainly not least, 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 in our schools.

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

Enjoy a great start to another school year.

Very truly yours,



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