



North Haven Public Schools
North Haven, Connecticut 06473

“As a result of their experiences in the North Haven Public Schools, all students will acquire the skills necessary to meet the demands of the twenty-first century.”



June 2018

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As another school year draws to a close, it's always a good time to pause and reflect on what's been accomplished over the past 181 days. The 2017-2018 school year is certainly one that will go on record as being quite challenging in terms of the weather. It's the only year I can remember in which there were cancellations in both the fall and the middle of May. Despite these weather challenges our administrators, teachers, and students have all managed to accomplish some remarkable things.

We began the year with a fully completed new middle school. Aside from some outside work, including the installation of the synthetic turf fields, the project was officially finished after three years. We owe a debt of gratitude to the middle school staff and students who weathered a great deal of disruption over the past few years as renovations and new construction progressed. The Middle School Building Committee whose members include **Gary Johns, Goldie Adele, Michael Brandt, Miriam Brody, Lou Coppola, Sr., Dave Mikos, Bruce Morris, Walter Nester, Joe Porto, Michelle Spader, and Dyanne Vissicchio** carefully oversaw every phase of the project and continues to meet to make certain all of the educational specifications have been met. The Committee also hosted an Open House for the community in January 2018, welcoming the public to tour the facility and to thank them for the support they've shown for the project.

Once the facility was completed, and the 2017-2018 began, the next task before us was to find an assistant principal to replace Ms. Dolan who retired at the end of the 2016-2017 school year. The search was put on hold earlier in the fall when state funding for the town and the district were uncertain, but in the end, we were able to move forward. We conducted an exhaustive search carried out by a Search Committee consisting of **Mr. Piazza, Mr. Castiglione, Mr. Johnson, a sixth-grade social studies teacher, Mrs. Krischtshun, a middle school special education teacher, Mr. Januszewski representing middle school parents, and Amanda Gabrielle from the Board of Education.** With over 200 applicants for the job, following a lengthy process, the Board of Education appointed **Mrs. Brigit D'Angelo**, a North Haven resident, a graduate of North Haven High School, and an experienced teacher and administrator with the New Haven Public Schools. Mrs. D'Angelo started in the district in January 2018, immediately following the December recess. She's been a welcomed addition to both the school and the district leadership teams. Mrs. D'Angelo's appointment drove home the point that sometimes what you're looking for is right in front of you!

Our new Director of Educational and Informational Technology, **Mrs. Jennifer Kozniewski**, began in North Haven on July 1, 2017, and in the one year that she's been here she's managed to accomplish a remarkable amount setting us well on our way into the twenty-first century. With her guidance, we've

introduced a new chrome book initiative at the high school that we'll continue to expand until every student has his/her own device. In addition, we've significantly enhanced student access to technology at every level; elementary, middle, and high. Mrs. Kozniewski has also been instrumental in update security plans for each school and central office.

For the first time, all fifth graders across all four elementary schools were afforded the opportunity to attend **Nature's Classroom** in May. They, along with a number of staff members and parent volunteers, spent a week at the outdoor education facility in Colebrook, CT. Many thanks to the staff members and numerous parents who spent the week with students providing them with an extraordinary experience they'll never forget.

Our students continue to achieve beyond our expectations. The district has received both state and national recognition in the areas of art, music, world language, and Future Problem Solvers. Our culinary students from North Haven High School won second place in a cooking competition held in Disney World in Orlando, Florida in April. North Haven Middle School was recently recognized by the Connecticut State Department of Education as the top performing district in the **Commissioner's First Annual Math Challenge**.

We'll begin the 2018-2019 school year with a revised and **updated elementary report card**. Teachers from across the district worked with Tracey Gambardella, our Elementary Language Arts Coordinator, and Jodi Wilcox, our Elementary Math Coordinator to develop a new reporting instrument. Many of the teachers piloted the document during their parent conferences in the spring. Parents were asked for feedback on their impressions of the document and how it might be improved upon. The end result is a new report card that explicitly defines and explains what students should know and be able to do at each grade level. It's intended to provide a clear picture of how each student is mastering grade level concepts.

This is only the "tip of the iceberg" in terms of what we've been able to accomplish through the efforts of so many dedicated administrators, teachers, students, and parents. Thank you all for helping our students to enjoy a rich school experience while, at the same time, achieving at high levels.

One final explanation. Typically, the last three days of school are shortened days. Unfortunately, this year we had to add an additional day, June 21st, because of the high school graduation ceremony. The ceremony begins at 4:00 P.M., but we organize at the middle school and we need access to the building earlier than 2:03 P.M., the usual dismissal time. In addition, if our elementary schools dismissed at their usual time it creates problems for families of children who will attend the ceremony since some buses have not completed their runs by 4:00PM. For these reasons, we added the fourth day **for this year only**. I apologize for any inconvenience this might have caused.

Have a wonderful summer! I look forward to continuing our work together in August. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Robert D. Cronin, Ph.D.

Superintendent of Schools