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August 20, 2023

Good Evening Everyone,

The final countdown has begun. 10 nights of sleep before the official first day of classes for the 2023-2024 school year. There are certainly a lot of feelings associated with that and I am optimistic that most of them are positive.

Beginning this new school year, we are officially entering Year 1 of our new WPS Strategic District Improvement Plan which was developed and approved last year. An updated articulation of our Mission/Vision and Core Values is included within this new plan. They are reflections of our district beliefs and the priorities that we have identified for our future. All of our School Improvement Plans for this upcoming year were created last spring and are connected to this district strategy. Of course, the purpose of all of this work is to translate into the everyday experiences and outcomes for our students and staff in a meaningful way.

While classes don't start for over a week, our fiscal year began in July and we have been hard at work preparing for students' return. Starting in July, we have had a number of people transition into different leadership positions throughout the district. Some are new to Westford Public Schools while others were already with us serving in another role:

Assistant Superintendent, Courtney Moran

Director of Special Education and Social Emotional Learning, Gerard Coughlin

Gr 3-5 STEM Curriculum Coordinator, Jennifer Cataldo

Principal, Nabnasset Elementary School, Nina Balfe

Principal, Westford Academy, Dan Twomey

Dean, Westford Academy, Amanda Welch

Assistant Director of School Finance, Irene Musoke

We welcome them all to their new roles along with all of the new employees that will be joining us throughout the district within our different schools.

As I mentioned to all of our staff in an earlier message, there are a lot of emotions around going back to school. Excitement, concern, enthusiasm, confusion...all of that in the span of minutes. You can help prepare the students in your households by talking with them as to what they can do to help contribute to the positive environments they would like to experience this year. Reminding them that they are members of a larger school community and the responsibility we all have in taking care of those around us. Together we can create learning environments in which everyone can thrive. Its success is connected to our ability to build positive, supportive relationships with each other. That focus allows us to strengthen the sense of belonging everyone has as members of Westford Public Schools.

Finally, all of your patience has been greatly appreciated while we navigated through our first end of year reporting utilizing our PowerSchool data. Each year all of our student and staff data gets reported to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and it was only certified this past week. This delay impacted our ability to rollover everything into the new school year which in turn impacts communication and the ability to access current information.

However, at this point we are finally moving right along and ready for the new year.

Get plenty of rest, the adventure awaits!

Chris

Christopher Chew, Ed. D

Superintendent

Westford Public Schools

Source URL: <https://www.westfordk12.us/district/superintendent-schools/news/moving-right-alongupdate-wps-8-20-23>