

## WELCOME BACK TO SCHOOL!

### FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

#### 2006~2007 SCHOOL YEAR

We are all excited about the prospects of beginning a new school year. This is the time when hopes and dreams are limitless. The School Committee, central office, and faculties in each building are looking forward to an enriching and rewarding educational experience for all of our students. We have experienced a significant number of retirements this past June, and have been very active in recruiting "highly qualified" staff to replace our respected and competent veteran members.

At the central office, we have a new Assistant Superintendent, Mary Ann DeMello, replacing Carolyn Cragin, who became the Superintendent for Harwich Public Schools. Mary Ann will be working on a variety of initiatives in the curriculum, instruction, and assessment areas. Also, Bill Drury is our new Technology Director, who will be working on the school district's infrastructure, hardware, software, and training needs.

After an extensive search process that occurred over the course of last year, we have appointed new principals at both the high school and Beckwith Middle School. Gail Van Buren, former principal at Sutton High School has replaced Trent Danella, and Deborah Pincence, former principal of Douglas Intermediate Elementary School, has replaced Tony Ferreira. Also, Michael Rubin, English teacher at D~R, has succeeded Jose Libano as assistant principal. Along with new teachers and support staff in each building, they have been eagerly preparing for the opening of school, and will participate in a formalized mentoring program throughout the course of the school year.

The school district will be focused on a number of goals for the 2006~2007 school year. Paramount among these will be to continue to improve the achievement levels of all students attending our schools. We will strive to increase the percentages of students in the "proficient" and "advanced" categories on MCAS, and provide differentiated instruction to insure mastery of the curriculum frameworks.

With the increasing costs of providing educational services to all of our students, we need to guarantee a foundation budget and funding formula that is adequate, equitable, and predictable. Over the last several years, escalating costs for health insurance, energy, transportation, special education, contractual obligations, and retiree benefits have reduced our capacity to fully fund personnel, textbooks, supplies, materials, equipment, and computers.

The mission statement for the D~R schools highlights the critical importance of collaboration among the “schools, parents, and the community”. With this in mind, we want to utilize our electronic and print capabilities to promote ongoing and continuous communication with all of our stakeholders. We will be accessing our technology to provide relevant data on school, student, and staff accomplishments.

In terms of facilities, it is imperative that we maintain our buildings and grounds to provide a safe and secure physical environment for our students and staff. In that regard, we will be reviewing federal, state, and local regulations to insure that we meet necessary codes and standards.

In order for us to be successful in developing and implementing the best possible educational experience for all students, we need your support, suggestions, encouragement, and feedback. As I indicate each year at both town meetings, the main reason families move to both communities, is due to the quality of the schools. Let’s continue to work together to make this a fruitful and productive school year.

Thanks in advance for your continued support.

Dr. Francis J. Connor  
Superintendent of Schools  
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