



# Welcome Back!

## MESSAGE FROM THE SUPERINTENDENT

August 15, 2014

Dear South Windsor Families:

It is my pleasure to welcome students and families back from what I hope was a fun-filled summer with time for family and friends. While the classrooms of our school buildings may be a bit quieter over the summer, the central office building is typically very busy. This year the summer task list was particularly robust.

Included in this newsletter is an overview of the many initiatives that have been undertaken since the close of school in June. As you will see, our staff members have been working hard behind the scenes to ensure our buildings are clean and safe, our security posture is strengthened, and the goals of our technology plan are achieved.

In addition to several new administrators and more than 20 new teachers, we are also excited to welcome many new families to South Windsor Schools this fall.

I hope the updates provided within this newsletter are helpful to families. I thank you for partnering with us to ensure that South Windsor maintains its commitment to high quality schools led by talented educators and support staff who are dedicated to the success of the children and families we serve.

We look forward to welcoming your children back on August 27th!

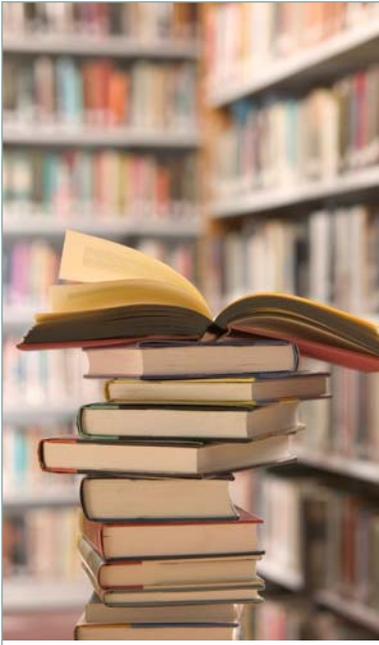
Sincerely,

Kate Carter, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools



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## NEW INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS

I am pleased to report that the 2014-2015 school year will deliver several new instructional programs to our students.

Students excelling in mathematics in grades 3-5 will now have an additional resource to assist them with reaching appropriate levels of rigor in mathematics instruction. We now have a mathematics enrichment teacher, Mrs. Pamela Roberts, who will support all five elementary schools. Mrs. Roberts will not only work with students directly, but will also provide professional development to classroom teachers to assist their in-class efforts to differentiate instruction.

I also am pleased to report that we are restoring art instruction for 6th graders at Timothy Edwards Middle School. Mrs. Laura Gravell will serve all teams at the grade 6 level.

Timothy Edward Middle School has launched a new pre-engineering program for students in grade 8. The program seeks to expose students to the field of engineering through a series of hands-on activities that explore robotics, automation, computer programming and computer aided design. The Gateway to Technology Program serves as a precursor to the high school program where students can select in-depth year-long courses that explore a variety of engineering fields.

Finally, two of our administrative positions have been reconfigured. Mrs. Donna Shea is now the School Counseling Curriculum Specialist for grades 6-12. This position was created to ensure better continuity between middle and high school counseling services. Our former science curriculum specialist, Mrs. Sheryl Mortensen, will serve in a newly formed position as Director of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). This new role will allow for more purposeful integration of these academic disciplines.

## SAFETY AND SECURITY

While facility improvements are critical, please know that a dedicated and well trained staff is equally important to our school safety and security measures. Our staff members take their responsibility for your children's safety seriously and are committed to ensuring that our students feel physically and emotionally safe at school. To that end, refinements and updates have been made to our emergency operations procedures. Extensive security protocol training will occur for all staff throughout the 2014-2015 academic year.

## FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

Our custodial, maintenance and technology departments have been extremely busy this summer. Dozens of staff members have been working to deploy new hardware, install new instructional software, and enhance our infrastructure through a variety of building and campus projects. The following is a sampling of summer tasks achieved to date:

- Installation of additional security cameras at Timothy Edwards Middle School
- Upgrades to fire alarm panels at Pleasant Valley and Wapping elementary schools
- Repair of the formerly deteriorated curbing at Philip R. Smith School
- Installation of a new roof at Pleasant Valley School
- Installation of the next phase of roofing at South Windsor High School
- Paving of parking lot at Board of Education Offices
- Improvements to our wireless networking infrastructure
- Deployment of document cameras in elementary schools
- Installation of new district-wide telephone system

## TECHNOLOGY UPGRADES

Thanks to a generous donation from the South Windsor Public Education Fund, a division of the South Windsor Community Foundation, a new state-of-the-art video distribution system is being installed at South Windsor High School. The system will allow teachers to deliver recorded or live video using their classroom computer, data projector and Sound Field. The video system will facilitate the dissemination of morning announcements, pre-recorded instructional videos, and web-based content for students.



Also at the high school we have hired Mrs. Deborah Matchett as a new Technology Content Coach. Mrs. Matchett will provide professional development to teachers to better ensure the effective integration of instructional technology in our classrooms.

A new classroom-size set of Chromebook computers has been deployed to each school throughout the district. The Chromebooks were purchased through grant funding designed to improve student access to technology and support the administration of the new Smarter Balanced Assessments.

New multi-function copy machines have been installed throughout the district. These new machines include software that will help teachers manage the production of classroom materials in a more efficient manner. In addition to the ease of use, this new and improved functionality will help us keep more accurate records regarding usage and quantity, control costs through duplex printing, and ultimately reduce waste in our commitment to be environmentally conscious.

## SUMMER STAFFING

Each year the Personnel Department is charged with responding to the retirements, resignations, and transfers associated with more than 740 employees in the South Windsor Public Schools district. In addition to overseeing the posting of many critically important non-certified positions, the Personnel Department conducts a large number of searches for new certified teachers and administrators.

This August, we welcome 23 new teachers and three new administrators to South Windsor.

### Administrators

Jessica Kuckel	PK-5 Special Education Supervisor
Colin McNamara	Asst. Superintendent - Personnel & Administration
David Sytulek	Director of Physical Education, Health & Athletics

### Teachers

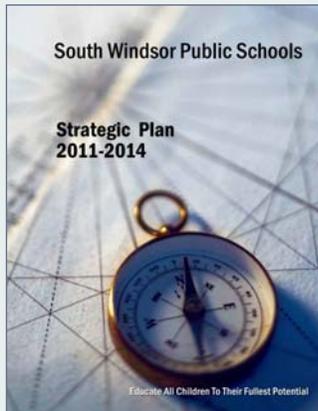
Vanessa Attardo	Visual Arts—Grade 7	Timothy Edwards
Erica Augustyn	Grade 4	Pleasant Valley
Alan Beck	Latin	SWHS
Jessica Bennett	Grade 3	Orchard Hill
Erin Carlisle	Special Education	Timothy Edwards
Chrissie Deitelbaum	Math Interventionist	Timothy Edwards
Jamila Denkeli	Visual Arts	Orchard Hill
Sarah Dorsey	Grade 4	Pleasant Valley
Alena Duffy	Occupational Therapist	District
Sarah Foster	Grade 5	Wapping
Brooke Havens	Grade 3	Wapping
Dave Hodge	Business Education	SWHS
Allison Kaplan	Grade 3	Wapping
Catherine Kavanagh	Reading Consultant	Pleasant Valley
Julianna Lyons	Language Arts	Timothy Edwards
Brie Malone	Grade 4	Philip R. Smith
Laura Mazzarella	Visual Arts—Grade 8	Timothy Edwards
Rian Mckeag	English Learners	Wapping/SWHS
Luke Nowakowski	Grade 3	Pleasant Valley
Steven Potter	Technology	Timothy Edwards
Calli Schechtman	Speech/Language	Wapping
Megan Wojcicki	Spanish	SWHS
Bryant Zilinski	Visual Arts	Wapping



## TEN-YEAR ELEMENTARY FACILITIES PLAN

The 2011-2014 Strategic Plan calls for the “development of a long-range elementary facilities plan that promotes a safe, engaging learning environment that is accessible to all students and community members.” On the March 25, 2014 referendum, approximately 75% of those residents who came out to the polls voted in support of Phase One of the Ten-Year Elementary Facilities Plan. Phase One includes the construction of a new PK-5 school on the Orchard Hill site.

We have been extremely busy this summer attending to the tasks associated with beginning this exciting school construction process. Please look for a fall newsletter that will provide further details and information. My goal is to keep the entire community apprised of the major milestones as the project unfolds so that students, parents and community members stay well informed regarding our progress.



## STRATEGIC PLAN

As previously reported to you, we have made excellent progress with achieving the goals associated with the 2011-2014 Strategic Plan. This fall I will be conducting parent focus groups and attending PTO/PAC meetings to solicit input to shape the 2015 -2018 Strategic Plan.

If you have interest in participating in these discussions, please inform your building principal who will pass on your contact information to my office.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

A copy of the district’s 2014-2015 school calendar was sent or mailed home to all families at the end of last school year. As a reminder, this year we initiated a new consistent early dismissal time for each school. The calendar previously included different release times depending on the reason for which students were dismissed early (e.g., inclement weather, parent conferences, high school exams, K-5 professional development early release days, and the day before Thanksgiving). We now have an academic calendar that provides greater consistency and eliminates confusion for parents.

The newly formatted calendar includes school hours, a marking period summary, and contact information for each school. The 2014-2015 school calendar, as well as the District Events Calendar which provides a list of school events and activities, are available under the “Calendars” tab on the district website.

## SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

South Windsor Public Schools utilizes a variety of communication tools to connect with parents and families.

**School Messenger** is an email and phone communication system that provides parents/guardians with important and timely information, including school closings, delays and early dismissals. We urge parents to customize their SchoolMessenger account to ensure that information is directed to the appropriate phone number(s). A SchoolMessenger account is automatically created for every student in our system based on the information provided under the first Primary Contact for each child. However, to learn how to customize your profile to receive text alerts or to add additional phone numbers, contact your child's school.

**Naviance Family Connection** is a customizable web-based planning portal for students and families in middle and high school. Naviance offers a variety of self-discovery assessments, goal-setting worksheets, college research tools, course planning and career resources.

**PowerSchool** is a communication tool that provides secure access to student information through a web-based parent portal. Through **Parent Portal**, parents can view student grades and attendance, receive announcements and school bulletins, and send emails directly to teachers through embedded email links.

**InfoSnap**, accessible through Parent Portal, is an online student information management system. This year, I am pleased to report that in lieu of paper copies, we are utilizing InfoSnap to verify and update important student information. Look for an email from South Windsor Public Schools during the week of August 18 for information on how to update your child's information electronically. We are asking all families to complete this online update by September 5.

If you have not yet created your ParentPortal account, if you have misplaced your log-on credentials, or if you do not have access to a computer, please contact your school's main office for assistance.



## IMPORTANT BACK TO SCHOOL DATES

<u>First Day of School:</u>	Wednesday, August 27
<u>District Closed—Labor Day:</u>	Monday, September 1
<u>Parent Open House Events:</u>	
• SWHS	Tuesday, 9/2
• TEMS—6th Grade	Wednesday, 9/3
• TEMS—7th Grade	Thursday, 9/4
• TEMS—8th Grade	Monday, 9/8
• Pleasant Valley	Thursday, 9/11
• Wapping	Thursday, 9/11
• Eli Terry	Thursday, 9/18
• Orchard Hill	Thursday, 9/18
• Philip R. Smith	Thursday, 9/18



**South Windsor Public Schools**

1737 Main Street

South Windsor, CT 06074

Phone: (860) 291-1200

Fax: (860) 291-1291

[www.southwindsorschools.org](http://www.southwindsorschools.org)



## VISION STATEMENT

South Windsor Public Schools promotes an engaging and dynamic culture of learning that prepares students to achieve their own individual excellence.

Within an emotionally safe environment, educators will foster students' academic, social and personal growth.

Our students will demonstrate critical and creative thinking, self-direction, collaboration, adaptability, compassion and civic responsibility in an ever-changing global society.

### BOARD OF EDUCATION

David S. Joy, Chairman

Lisa Maneeley, Vice Chairman

Craig Zimmerman, Secretary

Diane Behler

Carol Driscoll

Michael Gonzalez

Phil Koboski

Matthew Riley

Rick Stahr

### CENTRAL OFFICE ADMINISTRATION

Kate Carter, Ed.D., Superintendent of Schools

Daniel Hansen, Assistant Superintendent, Curriculum & Instruction

Colin McNamara, Assistant Superintendent, Personnel & Administration

Chris Chemerka, Director of Finance and Operations

### SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

#### Elementary School Principals:

Marilyn Sevick, Eli Terry

Michael Tortora, Orchard Hill

Michelle Dixon, Philip R. Smith

Tiffany Caouette, Pleasant Valley

Laura Hickson, Wapping

#### Timothy Edwards Middle School:

Nancy Larson, Principal

Elise Butson, Associate Principal

Vincent Federici, Associate Principal

#### South Windsor High School:

Daniel Sullivan, Principal

Susan Czapla, Associate Principal

Mitch Orkin, Associate Principal

Frank Rizzuto, Associate Principal

### CURRICULUM LEADERS

Nicholas Canova, Curriculum Program Coordinator, Visual Arts

Travis Edwards, Curriculum Program Coordinator, K-8 Physical/Health Education

Gregory Frank, Curriculum Specialist, Social Studies

Sharon Keegan, Curriculum Specialist, Mathematics

Sheryl Mortensen, Director of STEM

Allan Mothersese, Director of Technology Systems & Programs

Donna Shea, Curriculum Specialist, 6-12 School Counseling

Karen Stoj, Curriculum Specialist, World Languages/ELL

David Sytulek, Director of Physical Education, Health & Athletics

Jo-Ann Thomas, Curriculum Program Coordinator, Music

Hayley Zinn Rowthorn, Director of Literacy/Assessment/Instr. Improvement

### SPECIAL EDUCATION

Denise Epps, Director of Special Services

Jessica Kuckel, PK-5 Special Education Supervisor

Maureen Pearson, 6-12 Special Education Supervisor