

From the Desk of Stefan Czaporowski, Superintendent of Schools

Tis the season to be grateful. To me, gratefulness is not a season, but a state of being. I am forever grateful that I chose a profession that I am passionate about. It keeps me excited, challenged, and always learning. I am grateful to be surrounded by people who care about kids. I am grateful to the city of Westfield for having the confidence in me to help shape the future of our youth. I choose to look at the positives in life and come to the table with possible solutions for those items that can be improved upon. In the past six months we have begun to create some positive momentum within our educational community, and we are strengthening current programs and fostering new ideas to ensure our students receive the quality education they need and deserve.

Our team is vigilantly working on building curriculum to ensure that students are receiving a similar and solid education across each school in our district. We are strengthening the instruction in the core subjects of English and Math and working to develop enhanced curriculum with standards in science, health, and social studies. We realize that making the learning relevant to the changing needs of our students and society is imperative to Westfield Public School students' success.

We know that teachers are the backbone of education. Their care and dedication make this system what it is. We are reviewing our new teacher mentoring program to ensure that all teachers who come to our district have a mentor who will support their learning in classroom management, instructional practices, and district systems. But most importantly, we want these educators to understand that in Westfield, kids come first, both inside and outside of our classroom.

It is understood that each child comes to us with his or her own set of personal circumstances, and at one time or another is struggling academically, emotionally, or socially. That is why we are continuously improving upon our Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program that considers the whole child when looking at discipline, rewards, and structural changes to provide the best environment for learning. We are also fortifying our Student and Teacher Assistance Teams (STAT) at each school to ensure we have a system where we can identify and assist students who may need extra support to find success.

One of my goals pledged to this community when I took over in July is to build a better communication system amongst administrators, teachers, students, parents, government, business, and the public. We will do this by providing opportunities for collaboration and creating venues for sharing information. In a partnership with the Greater Westfield Chamber of Commerce, we have established the Westfield Education to Business Alliance (WE2BA). This is a think tank of community business professionals and educational leaders who meet to create relevant college and career opportunities for our students to prepare them for life beyond Westfield Public Schools. In the spring, we will be starting a parent advisory board to include representatives from each school. Other methods that we will use to share our progress and to celebrate the accomplishments of our schools include our soon to be updated district web site, our Westfield MA Public Schools Facebook page, our Thursday radio show on WSKB 89.5 FM, and the Westfield Public Schools Magazine that will be distributed twice a year.

Finally, our administrative team has decided to expand on our district motto, "Excellence by Design" to also include the phrase "Achieving Excellence Together." As a district, we fully realize that in order for our schools to be truly excellent, we need to work together as a community. Anytime we set worthy goals, it is a long and hard road to bring them to fruition. Happy Holidays from all of us at the Westfield Public Schools. May you attain your goals for this New Year, and I hope I can count on you as we work to make our goals a reality on behalf of our children's future.