

FALL RIVER PUBLIC SCHOOLS

"The Scholarship City"

417 Rock Street, Fall River, MA 02720

Matthew H. Malone, Ph.D., Superintendent

August 21, 2019

Dear Fall River Faculty and Staff,

Welcome (back) to the 2019-2020 school year. May this letter find you healthy, happy, rested, and enjoying the last few days of summer break with family, friends, and loved ones. Each year as I write you the annual "summer letter," I think about the true heart of our school system - the students we serve and the amazing professionals - the people - who work in the Fall River Public Schools. I love this job because of the people with whom I have the honor to WORK alongside every day. This is my 4th year serving as your superintendent, and I can tell you that we are blessed to be governed by a strong School Committee and to be supported by engaged parents and a community of local partners who collectively want only one thing – to prepare our students for the 21st Century with the best possible tools at our fingertips.

We have been busy this summer. In addition to investing in our two sensational Leadership and Learning & Teaching Institutes, we have been able to bring onboard new faculty and staff, thereby enlarging our capacity to allocate services in high-need areas. Of course, we are able to do so as a direct result of increased state budget funding thanks in no small part to our local elected officials and state delegation, as well as the indomitable advocacy of the FREA/MTA. And have you seen the new Durfee construction project come up out of the ground this summer? Cool, right? But we didn't stop there! We have also made facility upgrades at Tansey, Talbot, and Greene while simultaneously planning for ongoing facility improvements at several other school sites in the near future. We have purchased new instructional technologies, standards-based content tools, student assessment and intervention programs, and classroom supplies - all in the direct support of meeting our instructional goals. I am also excited to announce that we are embedding the "Choose Love" curriculum into our Responsive Classroom framework, as we look to support and strengthen our innovative SEL initiative. This is our year to shine - to thrive - and to have fun while we show the Commonwealth of Massachusetts what high-quality urban education is all about.

Personally, I was able to get away for a few trips to Southern Vermont - a place that I enjoy because I can unplug, unwind, decompress, and enjoy nature as close to Thoreau's New England woodlands as one can get. There, I can lose myself in the cool, deep, lush, Green Mountain forest - its sounds, smells, epic trees, historic stone walls, glacial boulders; and, if lucky enough, a deer, a moose, or a black bear to observe. The timber canopy serves as a natural trellis shutting out the sun from the moss-covered rock and fern adorned forest floor. Within the darkness of the tranquil forest, randomly, yet with graceful precision, a ray of sun shows like a laser beam of natural light from the sky, illuminating the majestic rugged landscape. That ray of light feeds the life spring of the ever evolving wilderness, providing warmth, spark, and energy - hope. Each of you is that ray of light in the lives of the children we cherish and serve in our schools. Equally important, each of us serves as that beam of energy and light for our colleagues, our neighbors, our friends - a compass and a guide, for the decency, poise, finesse, empathy, and discernment we expect from ourselves and, in turn, others. With our core values tattooed with dignity in our hearts, together with skill and commitment, our schools will serve as the ray of light for the great City of Fall River.

Please join me on Tuesday, August 27, 2019, for our annual opening day convocation in Durfee High School's Nagle Auditorium. Networking/light refreshments will begin at 8:00am with our program to begin promptly at 8:30am in order to get you back to your schools by 10:00am. As has become our yearly tradition, we will be collecting canned foods, toiletries, and other sundries for our community partner, United Neighbors of Fall River, to help those in need.

Cordially,



Matthew H. Malone, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools

