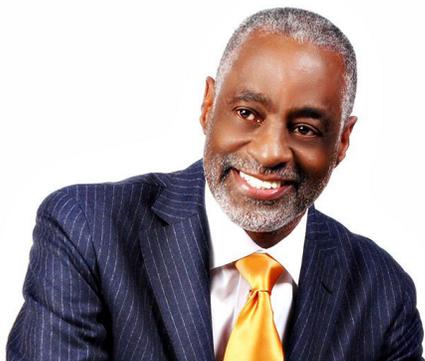


Bloomfield Public Schools Superintendent's Memo

Raising the Bar is Taking us Far



Dear Parents, Students, Staff and Community Members,

It is with great excitement that I welcome you back for the 2018-2019 school year with the first of our seasonal Superintendent's Memo. This will be an opportunity for me to share with you some of the promising developments – and challenges – occurring in our school district.

Our goal as a district is to prepare our students for college and meaningful careers, improve student performance and help close the academic achievement gap in Connecticut.

As recently seen with the district's double-digit increases on the SATs for high school juniors, we are continuing to make progress towards closing the achievement gap. Bloomfield was one of 19 school districts in Connecticut that achieved double-digit increases in both Reading/Writing and Math on the SATs from 2016-17 to 2017-18. Bloomfield's Reading/Writing scores exceeded the state's benchmark.

A team of educators from a Fairfield County school district visited BHS to learn more about our best practices and strategies.

In the Smarter Balance assessments, which measure academic progress in English and Math for those in grades 3-8, the district's third and seventh grade students also delivered double-digit increases over 2017 scores. Third-grade scores were slightly above the state average. Fifth grade students achieved double-digit increases in Math, from 14% to 25% and increased in English – from 36% to 40%.

We recognize there are other grades that did not perform well on these standardized tests. However, we strongly believe the double-digit increases validate movement in the right direction in delivering consistent academic growth throughout the entire district.

Our work to close the achievement gap is far from complete. It has been guided by the Bloomfield Public School District Accountability Plan, which provides the vision, theory of action and priorities that are based on this community's shared beliefs.

This is a year of fresh starts and new challenges.

Some highlights:

- Bloomfield High is looking to build on its SAT success, 2017 recognition by U.S. News & World Report as one of CT's Top High Schools and graduation rate of 90%.
- Nicola Poplin is the new principal at Global Experience Magnet School. She served as interim last year and had been the Dean at GEMS since 2013. She is an energetic and engaging leader, who is focused on student success.



- At Carmen Arace Middle School, five teachers have been hired, two of whom are additional teachers. Classroom instructional time has been increased from 52 minutes to 90 minutes at least three times a week.
- New procedures are being put in place at Carmen Arace Intermediate School to better identify and provide enhanced instruction for those students who need additional instruction – and high-achievers who require new challenges.
- Jocelyn Poglitsch began her first full year as principal at Metacomet Elementary School. She also will be implementing new initiatives to improve student performance and enhance the school’s culture and climate.
- A new phonics program is being implemented at Laurel Elementary School, which has expanded its kindergarten program to educate all the town’s kindergarten students. Successful parent-engagement initiatives there will continue.
- The district’s novel Extended Day program will continue at Laurel, Metacomet and CAIS. We will also be infusing more STEAM education (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) into the curriculum
- Wintonbury Early Childhood Magnet School for the first time will educate only pre-school students. Wintonbury recently earned a prestigious accreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children, the highest mark of quality in early childhood education. The school will continue its novel agriculture-education partnership with Auer Farm, and provide parents with unique engagement opportunities.

In closing, I am energized about this school year. Along with my staff, we encourage you to be involved with your child’s school and their development.

Regards,



Dr. James Thompson, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools

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