

September 27, 2024

Dear Parents, Guardians and Simsbury School Staff:

As we embark on a new school year, I am pleased to welcome all families back to the Simsbury Public Schools. I hope your summer was filled with rest, relaxation, and adventure.

There is a certain excitement surrounding the start of each school year – none more so than the announcement of the Simsbury Teacher of the Year. During the Convocation ceremony that marks the opening of our school year, elementary world language teacher Diane Tobio was introduced as the 2025 Teacher of the Year. Diane has been teaching Spanish to students in each of our elementary schools for 9 years, a job that brings her in contact with hundreds of students each year in grades 4, 5, and 6. Diane gave an energized speech that showcased her appreciation for each and every Simsbury educator. She shared many examples of how our teaching community has come together to support her in her roles as student, mother, new staff member, and professional. Diane reminded us of how we show up for our students and each other, despite our inevitable personal struggles, and we are able to do so because our community is so strong.

During Convocation, I spoke about the unique window we have this year to shape the direction of our district over the course of the next five years through the revision of the District Strategic Plan. As the current plan reaches the end of its cycle, our community has a terrific opportunity to take stock in four main goal areas - 1) student growth and performance, 2) culture and climate, 3) premier workforce, and 4) strategic and sustainable investments. After combing through the school-based surveys that were completed in June and eliciting additional feedback from our administrators, department leaders, and Board of Education members, we have recently formed a District Strategic Planning Committee. This working group will meet monthly during the course of the upcoming school year and will utilize a host of information to chart the course for the next five years and work toward developing a new strategic plan.

If you have been inside our school buildings, you may have noticed the many maintenance projects that were completed over the summer. I would like to thank Kyle Loveland, Supervisor of Maintenance, for the more than 20 various school locations that received a painting and flooring spruce up, as well as our annual maintenance and custodial work. Additionally, HVAC improvements were made at SHS, Central, Tariffville and Squadron Line schools with reallocated equipment from Latimer Lane School. The Latimer Lane School project is nearing completion – two months ahead of schedule! We anticipate completion of the main office, nurses office and front entry to be completed by the end of October, with a town wide celebration to come in November.

I am also pleased to announce that the renovation of a space in the Riverdale Farms complex has allowed us to open a new location for the Farmington Valley Transition Academy (FVTA). FVTA is a collaborative program through the Simsbury and Farmington Public Schools that

serves students with developmental disabilities between the ages of 18-22. FVTA currently enrolls students from more than 10 districts, and provides students with skills in the areas of functional academics, vocational skills, and adult living skills.

As we settled into the new routines of the school year it was tragic to hear of yet another school shooting, this time in Georgia. Over the course of the last few weeks the local news has reported numerous school threats across our state, most deemed to be non-credible. However, such reports raise angst amongst community members and remind us of the need to be vigilant in our efforts regarding safety and security. I have attached links that highlight gun safety storage laws as well as a child friendly resource from Police Chief Boulter.

[Be Smart for Kids](#)

[CT House Bill 6667 - An Act Addressing Gun Violence: Firearm Storage](#)

I am truly honored to serve as your Superintendent and look forward to the collective achievements we will accomplish in the days and months to come.

Sincerely,

Matt Curtis
Superintendent of Schools