

October 27, 2023

Dear Parents/Guardians:

As we move forward into the month of November, let us be thankful for who and what we have in our lives. I am personally grateful to serve in a community that cares so deeply for our students, staff and schools. Your support is a cornerstone of our success. With that in mind, I would like to provide an update on some legislative matters that affect our district.

The CT legislature has raised the age for starting kindergarten. Effective July 1, 2024, in order to enroll in kindergarten, children must turn five years old on or before September 1st of the school year. In previous years, students who turned five by January 1st were eligible for kindergarten enrollment. While the September 1st birthday cutoff is new for Connecticut, it is the norm in most other states, and our district will work closely with principals, teachers, and families with students in this age range during the period of transition.

During a special legislative session in September, the date of the presidential primary was moved from April 30 to April 2. The district had set April 30 as a full day of Professional Development based on the previous date of the primary. Several schools are polling locations and we typically do not hold school due to concerns about parking and security. Therefore, we are changing the full day of Professional Development to April 2, 2024. The school calendar has been updated on our [website](#).

At the October 10th Board of Education meeting, administrators presented the annual October 1st [Enrollment/Class Size Report](#). Our 2023-24 enrollment increased by 40 students, to 4,104 students districtwide this year. This was 105 students less than projected, mostly impacting kindergarten as the projection for that grade level was 79 students over actual enrollment. I am pleased to report that none of our elementary classes exceed class size guidelines. During the board meeting, Assistant Superintendent Neil Sullivan updated the board on the effect of newer housing and apartment developments built in Simsbury. We have seen an increase of 40 students this year from these developments resulting in a total of 196 students since building began. There is potential on the horizon for the development of Ridge at Talcott Mountain South. This proposal would add 580 units to the current housing inventory. More specific information is provided within the presentation.

I would like to congratulate School Resource Officer Todd Kushman who was recently promoted to Sergeant in the Simsbury Police Department. Please click on the [link](#) to see the story on WFSB Channel 3. Officer Mike Lantiere was selected to replace Sgt. Kushman, and has already begun his position as SRO, supporting HJMS and the elementary schools.

As the colder months approach, superintendents are once again tasked with predicting the weather. Therefore, I would like to take the opportunity to remind you about how we handle delays and closings. When bad weather necessitates an early closing or delayed opening, the delay will always be two hours. We believe this provides consistency for families' busy schedules. For more information about weather delays or school closings, visit the [Emergency](#) page on our website. If you choose to receive a text message regarding school closings, visit the [District and School Communications](#) page on our website. We all know those snowflakes will be falling soon enough!

Sincerely,

Matt Curtis
Superintendent of Schools