



SIMSBBURY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Simsbury School Staff:

It gives me great pleasure to announce that on Wednesday, June 23, 2021, the Board of Education voted to appoint Dr. Tayarisha Batchelor to the position of Director of Equity and Access. Dr. Batchelor will be the first person to serve in this new role which was introduced and supported by the Board through the budget process this spring. The school district's commitment to addressing issues of equity and access continues to move forward with the addition of this administrative position, and Dr. Batchelor will report to Sue Lemke, Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning.

Dr. Batchelor has risen through the ranks of the Hartford Public School System and is currently the Principal at the Rawson STEAM School. In previous years, she served in a wide variety of roles across Hartford's schools and district: associate principal, curriculum specialist, turnaround specialist, literary facilitator, and elementary school teacher. In recent years, Dr. Batchelor has been a mentor to other new principals in the district, and her keen understanding of building-level leadership was evident throughout the interview process.

A personal and professional passion for equity work was also apparent during the conversations with Dr. Batchelor. Her dissertation topic during her doctoral work at UConn explored the most effective professional development methods to increase cultural competence among teachers. She has also had a chance to co-teach a seminar on those topics in the university's NEAG School of Education. In Hartford, her commitment to equity and access, staff development, community partnerships, and state accountability have made her a leader in the city, where she was honored with a 100 Women of Color Award in 2020.

Dr. Batchelor will begin her new duties in Simsbury on August 9th. I have great confidence that she will bring exceptional leadership to her administrative colleagues as well as to teachers, staff, students, and parents for many years to come. Please join me in congratulating Dr. Tayarisha Batchelor on her appointment to this important role that directly supports the strategic goals of our district.

Regards,

Matt Curtis
Superintendent