

A View from the Principal's Office

August 23, 2021

To quote the Grateful Dead, "What a long, strange trip it's been." And here we are. I cannot begin to imagine the learning experiences that our students, you - their families, and our teachers have had over these past many months. It has certainly been a long, strange trip. I want to welcome you to the 2021 - 2022 school year and let you know that we are thrilled to be able to welcome all of our students back to in-person, full-time learning. Our teachers and staff have worked over these past few days and weeks to be ready for Tuesday's opening of school. I think that it is safe to assume that the educational response to COVID is going to be a watershed moment in world history. I hope that we can continue to learn and grow from all that has confronted and challenged us.

Our school will look and feel different for our returning students - our schedule has been modified to provide a slightly later start time (8:30) than we had prior to COVID. This has been a goal of our school and leadership teams for the past few years and aligns well with what we know about student sleep patterns (circadian rhythms). The schedule itself has been changed to reflect some of what we have learned - we have looked closely at the role that the schedule can and should play in supporting partnership with all learners and student success. Our classrooms have the feel of spaces designed to accommodate 14 - 20 students rather than the 4 - 8 that we housed last year. Our campus reflects a renewed appreciation for moving, breathing fresh air, and learning outdoors. All-in-all our school is prepared to welcome our learners back and we are excited to do so.

We also have some new faces in our building and district. Our students and you will get to know the in-school staff in the coming days and weeks. I would like to introduce a new member of our district team who will play a key role in furthering our understanding of the challenges that are inherent in our world. Maggi Ibrahim is our new Equity Coordinator of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion. Maggi's position as an equity coach and support will include guiding teachers in culturally and historically responsive teaching, assisting in curriculum audits, collaborating on

restorative justice practices, and helping to create diverse learning opportunities that showcase the unique identities of all of our students. We are pleased that Maggi is joining us and providing guidance in this most important work.

I am sure that you have many questions and I am hopeful that over the next few days our school will be able to answer them. As I have indicated in the past, our school serves many roles in our community. In addition to educating, we also find ourselves on the front lines of supporting students' social and emotional needs and we partner in helping to provide food for them and their families. Our staff stands ready to engage in this partnership in the many ways that our students' need us. I look forward to continuing to serve our learning community in my role as principal.

I began this post with a '70's music reference and will end with a nod to a '70's television show - "Welcome Back, Welcome Back, Welcome Back!"

Thanks for reading,

Nelson Fogg

Nelson Fogg, Principal
Hartford High School
(802) 295-8610 x *2190
foggn@hartfordschools.net