

June 2020

Dear Elizabeth Shelton School Families-

It was so wonderful to see so many families at our end of year car parade! We have all missed seeing you.

As I write my last letter to you, I realize that there is so much that has happened during my fifteen-year tenure as principal. Most recently, Ms. Butler, TESOL teacher, has been recognized as Shelton's Teacher of the Year. Also, Mrs. Pleckaitis, speech and language pathologist has made the decision to retire at the end of this school year. Please join the staff and me in congratulating these two outstanding educators!

When I began in 2005, Elizabeth Shelton School was a much different place than it is today. Overcrowding forced the need for our kindergarteners to attend Sunnyside School and there were no dedicated art or music rooms. In the fall of 2010, Perry Hill School opened for fifth and sixth grade students, which in turn allowed enough space for our kindergarteners to return to us. However, we still did not have dedicated space for art and music. There have been numerous improvements to the school during my tenure: new boilers, roof, doors and windows, remodeled media center, increased security systems and technology, and a beautiful new playground! When redistricting went into place this past September, we finally were able to have dedicated rooms for art and music!

While the number of changes to the facility are important, it is the educational activity within our school that matters the most. We have faced many challenges and difficult situations during these past fifteen years, such as Hurricane Sandy, record setting Blizzard Nemo and the unthinkable tragedy at Sandy Hook School. The Elizabeth Shelton School Community has always had a strong tradition of civic responsibility, which was certainly evident during these times as our school community was supporting those in need.

The accomplishments and milestones for and by our students has given us all great pleasure. We celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the opening of Elizabeth Shelton School in 2009. In 2014, kindergarten moved from half-day sessions to a full day program. The State of Connecticut recognized our school as a "School of Distinction". This was due to the efforts of our students, staff and parents. Former students have gone onto many universities and others have chosen careers - we recognize them as well. I know that our current students will also do great things in the future.

When I made the decision to retire, never in my wildest dreams did I think that my time in the Shelton School District would end in the way that is currently transpiring. Governor Lamont made the decision to close schools due to the pandemic, and students had to engage in distance learning. Knowing this community as I do, I have every confidence that the obstacles we have faced will make us that much stronger in the end. Your efforts to support and guide your children is greatly appreciated by all of us.

I want to say thank you to the students, parents and staff for all that you have done and the support that you have given me and to our school. A very special thank you to Mrs. Kingersky (also known as "DJ Mrs. K.") who has been by my side the entire time and is also retiring at the end of this school year. She has been an integral member of our community and can often be heard saying that ESS is the best school in the district! Between Mrs. Pleckaitis, Mrs. Kingersky and myself, we have over one hundred years of service in the Shelton School District.

As a child, I attended Elizabeth Shelton School and have many special memories from that time. When I was appointed principal, (the first female principal of this school), it was as if my life had come full circle. It has been my honor and privilege to have been a part of the ESS community for the past fifteen years, and I have loved every minute of my time here. I wish you and yours all the best that life holds in store for you!

Be Well!

Fondly,

Mrs. Belden

### Important Notes and Dates

Report Cards will be sent electronically through Infinite Campus

Summer Reading and Math information can be found on the website

Student placements for the 2020 - 2021 will be conveyed in August

Grade Level Supply Lists will be posted on the website

Check the district website periodically for updates on the reopening of schools

Monday, August 31st ~ Scheduled 1st day of school

Monday, August 31st - Friday, September 4th ~ Early Dismissal @ 1:50 P.M.

