

Dear Trucker Families:

As the first day of school quickly approaches, I wanted to take a moment to welcome you back and share some exciting developments for this school year.

Academically, we are very excited about the opening of our new Lego STEM Lab at Pleasant Elementary. This Lego lab will allow our children to use their natural curiosity to creatively solve problems, fine tune their critical thinking skills, and explore the curriculum in exciting ways. The opening of this lab allows for the exploration of STEM opportunities for all students from second grade through high school.

We have also collaborated with our staff to add an additional 15 minutes of instructional time to our school day for students in kindergarten through sixth grade. Over the course of the school year, this additional 15 minutes adds up to 2,685 additional minutes of instruction or a little over 7 additional instructional days. Due to this change Maplehurst, Pleasant, and League Elementary Schools will all start at 8:45am. Main St. School will start at 8:30am.

In the area of school safety and security, the Norwalk Board of Education committed over \$60,000 of our permanent improvement funds to make major upgrades at all of our facilities. As you return to school you will notice additional fencing at Pleasant Elementary, vastly updated video surveillance at district buildings, and some additional "*behind the scenes*" facility improvements that strengthen our response to a variety of situations.

After conducting a security audit of district operations last year, we have determined that NCS D will no longer allow Norwalk High School students to leave the building unsupervised for their lunch period (known as open lunch). Due to the unsupervised nature of this practice, it can no longer be endorsed by the district. In addition, bookbags will no longer be permitted to be carried throughout the school day. Bookbags will only be permitted to be carried to and from school at arrival and dismissal. Please see your child's student parent handbook for more information on this new bookbag policy.

NCS D will also partner with Norwalk Catholic School, the Norwalk Police Department, the Norwalk Fire Department, and the Huron County Sheriff's Department to provide emergency response training on August 21 to all staff members. This training will further improve our capacity to keep our children safe as well as our response to medical emergencies. Looking forward, NCS D will be exploring grant and community partnerships to improve our access to mental health services for our students.

Maintaining a strong partnership with our community is a core belief of the Norwalk City School District. I encourage you to continue to be an active part of your child's education and contact me personally if I can ever be of assistance.

Go Truckers!
George E. Fisk
Superintendent