



## Huntington Union Free School District

*"A Tradition of Excellence Since 1657"*

James W. Polansky

Superintendent of Schools

August 14, 2017

Dear Colleague:

I hope that this letter finds you relaxed, refreshed, and eagerly anticipating the onset of the 2017-2018 school year. The speed of summer remains one of nature's most incomprehensible phenomena!

As we prepare to welcome our students back to school in a few weeks, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your ongoing efforts in support of our children and their families. Your steadfast commitment to ensuring that Huntington students have every opportunity to learn and grow, and your willingness to continually reflect upon and improve your practice make you a very special group of people. I'd also like to issue a warm welcome to those who will be joining us for the first time in September. We are excited to have you aboard!

During the course of my reading this summer, a number items jumped off the pages. As I thought further about these items, it was clear that several themes were beginning to emerge. This is an opportune moment for me to share them, as they are notions of which we can all be reminded as we prepare to make our way through a new school year.

### **1. Take one day at a time.**

Every day is a new day. Past successes, failures, and frustrations are behind us. What matters now is that we make the best of each moment. Recognize the daily opportunities we have to build relationships and connect with our students and colleagues.

### **2. Avoid the "tyranny of the urgent."**

With each day, each lesson, each action – recognize what is truly important and invest your time and energy accordingly. Do your best to avoid letting the "urgent" blur what matters most. People are always the priority.

### **3. Assume the best.**

Give every student, parent, and colleague the benefit of the doubt. Assume they have the best of intentions and be willing to generously dole out grace – even (or especially) when it is not easy or when you feel it is undeserved.

### **4. Be a family.**

Involvement in education (regardless of your role) can be taxing and stressful. We need to take care of ourselves and each other. Help, encourage and lift each other up. Be willing to ask for (and accept) help when you need it. We are in this together!

### **5. Be kind.**

Don't ever underestimate the power of a smile, an encouraging word, or a random act of kindness. We are responsible for maintaining a safe and positive culture throughout the district. You will never regret spreading kindness.

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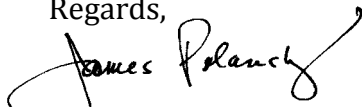
The past school year was defined by the considerable accomplishments of Huntington students and staff – countless achievements in which we can all take great pride. With the approaching submission of the State’s *Every Student Succeeds Act* plan, this year will continue to be shaped by change at all levels. Regardless, we are well prepared to continue providing an optimal environment for teaching and learning, enhancing the curricular and extracurricular opportunities provided for our students, and further developing as educational professionals.

As the end of summer draws closer, please join me in expressing sincere thanks to our buildings and grounds, clerical, technology and transportation staffs for their tireless work across the district and for readying our schools for a seamless opening. Their efforts will, once again, be readily apparent upon your return.

Please be reminded that Superintendent’s Conference Day is scheduled for **Tuesday, September 5**. I ask that all faculty/staff members report to **Huntington High School** by **8:00 a.m.** The day’s program is outlined at the bottom of this letter. Your building principal and/or department supervisor will communicate with you directly regarding specific information on the day’s building and departmental components.

In closing, please continue to recognize the important role that each of you will play in the coming year, and how much your efforts are valued and appreciated. Education is not a just a profession, it is a calling. You have my utmost respect and admiration for the work that you do. You will have innumerable opportunities to have a positive and sustained impact on the children who will walk through our doors next month. Treat them with love, give them hope, model empathy and compassion, and challenge and support them in their growth as students and human beings. Working together, we are going to make this our best year yet in Huntington!

Regards,



James W. Polansky  
Superintendent of Schools

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*Superintendent’s Conference Day  
Huntington High School Auditorium  
Tuesday, September 5, 2017*

*Agenda*

<i>8:00 – 8:30 a.m.</i>	<i>Coffee and Networking</i>
<i>8:30 – 8:45 a.m.</i>	<i>Welcome – Board of Education President</i>
<i>8:45 – 10:00 a.m.</i>	<i>Superintendent of Schools – Opening Day Convocation</i>
<i>10:15 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.</i>	<i>Building Level/Faculty Meetings (Principals) Departmental Meetings (Directors/Chairs/Coordinators)</i>

*\* Please note that the specific meeting times between 10:15 am and 2:30 pm will be shared by your principal, director and/or chairperson under separate cover. A 45-minute lunch break will be included.*