

New Haven Unified School District

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Dr. Arlando Smith

August 2017

Dear Students, Parents and Community Members;

Welcome to another school year!

As the demands of the 21st century change, the focus of education is also changing. To meet these demands, we are launching our Vision 2025 initiative. Vision 2025 is our commitment to ensuring that ALL students are College, Career and Life Ready by 2025. Our responsibility is to guarantee that each student has all options available to her or him when they leave our system. We have made significant progress towards becoming a 21st century school district, educating and preparing students for what lies ahead of them. But what does it mean to receive a 21st century education, and what is it that we, as an educational institution, are accountable for preparing students for?

When we think of 21st century education, the first thing that comes to mind is technology, yet there is more to it than that. New Haven is committed to incorporating the 5 C's of 21st century education into all aspects of our work; Critical Thinking, Communication, Creativity, Collaboration and Cultural Competence are the five imperatives deemed necessary for success in the global environment. Students must learn how to collaborate and how to work in teams. They must be able to think critically. Knowing how to be a discriminating reader, discerning fact from fiction is one part of being a critical thinker and problem solver. (Just because it's on the internet does not make something a fact.) Having good oral and written communication skills are essential. Understanding how to use technology for multiple purposes; communication, research, and analysis. It is one thing to be able to communicate via text message, but the workplace requires a different type of communication. Students must know the difference.

In order to meet these expectations, we have three key areas of focus: 1) Equity and Access 2) College, Career and Life Readiness, and 3) Engagement and Personalization. We accept the challenge as a district. Each of the three areas will be addressed differently at various stages of a student's career. TK through second grade have established a set of expectations. Expectations in Grades 3-5 will build on the work of the earlier grades, while Grades 6 – 8 and grades 9-12 will continue the process. At each transition point students will be prepared for the next level.

When we watch a sporting event, we are usually witnessing the result of hours, days, and weeks of preparation. In that same vein so much work goes on behind the scenes to make education in the classroom happen successfully. Our community can be proud of the time and energy our staff puts in with the sole purpose of providing a high quality education to all of our students. With the continued support of parents, students, and all of our employees, I am beyond confident we can achieve the vision we have set forth.

Sincere best wishes,

Dr. Arlando Smith
Superintendent