

A View from the Principal's Office

March 8, 2021

I hope that you are all well. I have found myself using this greeting a lot. Wellness has become something that can be elusive, and it certainly is my hope for everyone in our school community. I know that many are not well. School has been hard, COVID guidelines have been difficult to follow, teenage social beings forced to withdraw has taken its toll. Schools are a reflection of the societies and times in which they exist – Hartford High School is no different. This View... is not meant to be sorrowful or depressing – what our young people have done and are doing is nothing short of amazing.

I have previously used this forum to share the incredible efforts that our students have put forth. We have students who have chosen to be fully remote at their own sacrifice to protect loved one(s) – what an admirable decision. Some of our students have pushed themselves to learn despite significant personal hardship – they persevere and continue while the world around them requires them to be the antithesis of teenagers. I see the smiles expressed through a raised cheek and twinkling eyes above a mask. The bottom line is that kids are kids – they laugh, they struggle, they want to learn even when the learning is hard, they love and hate school, they miss their friends, and some have found a comfortable refuge in smaller classes and less busy hallways. I hope that we have learned from them.

I have spent the past 33 years being inspired by our youth, I believe wholeheartedly in their spirit and their potential – they are our future; my future, and I feel comforted by this. The past few generations of adults have done a number on our planet and our relationships – we keep waiting for a generation to show up and, through their efforts, make things right. Perhaps this is the generation, challenged as they have been by this pandemic and unrest, to lift us up. They have had a year's worth of practice and have seen that they can accomplish anything that they set their minds and hearts to – after all, they are going to find themselves on the other side of this and hopefully soon.

So...these posts are designed to be my view of what is going on in our school. This is what is happening – learners are showing up in-person and virtually to learn, to live, to engage, and sometimes to, simply, endure. We are preparing to sign up for next year’s courses – a forward-looking process. We are excited to talk about next year. Our seniors are preparing for the end of their high school careers like all seniors do this time of year. I promise them and their families that their last days as part of our school will be special, we will see to it that they are appropriately celebrated and honored for their unique efforts.

Our learners and their teachers continue to explore new territory – we are all learning. I would like to think that we have gotten better as the year has gone on; yet I know that there are some who cannot engage. I want them to know that we are here and will be here in their future, perhaps next week, month, after April vacation, or next year – we will seek to come together again as learning partners.

Undoubtedly many of you are hearing that there is a push to go back to school full-time. As this conversation plays out on the state and national stage please know that we will communicate any plan which changes our current model of hybrid and remote learning. We will make sure that everyone in our school community knows what we are planning to do, if there is a change, as soon as we can.

In general, I felt like it was time to reach out and let all of you know that we are here, working with admiration for our students. In the coming weeks we will begin to build the foundation for next year and I do not want you to think that we are doing so in an effort to erase this year – we want to finish strong and look forward to sharing this work with you. This is how we will honor our learners’ incredible efforts.

Thanks for reading,

Nelson Fogg

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