

January 7, 2016

Dearest Columbus Family:

HAPPY NEW YEAR! I cannot believe how quickly the time has flown by. It seems like only yesterday when the principal of Cranbury School, Kristen Goldstein, who is also my old teaching colleague, encouraged me to apply for a principalship in Norwalk. "You have to do it. You will do it." That message was pretty succinct and compelling enough for me to go ahead. At the time, Wolfpit and Tracey were the open positions. Weeks later, I found out about Columbus Magnet. After a grueling and painfully slow process, I received a congratulatory phone call from my friend. The conversation went like this:

Me: "Why are you congratulating me? Did I win something?"

Friend: "You were appointed by the board for Columbus! That is so awesome! Wait, didn't you already know?"

Me: "Um, no. This is news to me. How exactly did you find out?"

Friend: "Everyone knows. It was tweeted."

Me: "Oh. That's lovely. Listen, I need to get off the phone. I am holding up the line at the supermarket, and the lady behind me does not look like she cares about what's going on with me. And her looks are scaring me..."

Moral of the story?

Find the humor in everything life has to offer, and communicating important information is at best, valuable.

2016 promises to be an exciting year for Columbus. We are celebrating the 35th anniversary of what started out as a pretty far-fetched idea: Opening a magnet school in South Norwalk. Since its inception, countless children and families have entered our school and benefitted from an instructional philosophy that celebrates and honors all children. Columbus Magnet is still a place where children are nurtured emotionally and academically. We strive to find those creative ways to engage children. This is not the same exact place Art Perschino and his merry band of dreamers started in 1981. Back then, the educational system looked entirely different than its' present state. Our goal is not to look like Columbus Magnet of the Reagan Era. Our goal is to continuously evolve for the 21st century, yet we must never forget the foundation in which this school was built upon.

Currently, we are in talks to expand our school to a K-8 model. This is not a definite guarantee, but rest assured, I have stressed the importance of building our program, and I have yet to meet a person who thinks otherwise. In the meantime, we need to demonstrate to the community what makes us special and relevant. Words are not enough. Action and irrefutable data speaks volumes. We must continue embracing our neighborhood because we are an inclusive community and we are raising our children to be responsible and compassionate citizens who will go out and make a difference in the world.

Pretty soon, we will begin our lottery process. I am counting on each and every one of you to be the enthusiastic and positive ambassador of Columbus Magnet. Spread the word to your neighbors about this special place. Represent our school in a way that befits the title, "The Crown Jewel of Norwalk."

Once again, welcome back. I may have been the last person to know about my appointment, but you have no idea how often I count my blessings and good fortune.

Have a HAPPY NEW YEAR. THE BEST IS YET TO COME!

With love,
Mr. T