



Waterbury Public Schools

236 Grand Street ♦ Waterbury, Connecticut 06702 ♦ (203) 574-8000 ♦ Fax (203) 574-8010

Dr. Verna D. Ruffin
Superintendent of Schools

Welcome to the 2019-20 school year in Waterbury Public Schools.

After being Superintendent of Waterbury Public Schools for one year, I have had the opportunity to reflect on an amazing school year and look forward to the year ahead. The 2018-19 school year was full of engaging, thoughtful, productive and inclusive conversations that helped inform my leadership of the Waterbury Public Schools. Being involved in the school and community, designing opportunities to “listen and learn” with multiple internal and external stakeholders as well as review of data, processes and policies has given me a deeper understanding and appreciation of the school district. As I learned about the strengths and challenges of our district, the core business of teaching and learning, our business systems, our climate and culture and our various partnerships my vision for our district has come into focus. An appreciation for our supportive community quickly developed as we collectively contributed to the Waterbury Portrait of the Graduate. This portrait describes our highest aspirations for our students not only in knowledge and content they learn, but importantly in the characteristics and habits of mind we expect from our graduates in Waterbury.

Our stakeholders came together to develop the overarching characteristics for our graduates. We heard that it was important that our graduates possess the characteristics of being a communicator, a collaborator, a life-long learner, be knowledgeable, a problem-solver, have a growth mindset, possess grit and have social and emotional intelligence. We determined that these were the most crucial characteristics to exemplify the success of the graduate in Waterbury. We believe that these characteristics and values should be developed and nurtured from the very first time students begin their journey as a Waterbury student. What an amazing responsibility to touch the lives of the future by knowing the Portrait of a Graduate is a priority for us as we join others in this important work of preparing our students.

Over the past year, we have redesigned the central office structure, initiated collective and ongoing work on designing a district strategic plan with actionable steps and measurable goals. Critical to our redesign was the hiring of a Deputy Superintendent, Chief Operations Officer, Director of Personnel and Talent Management and Assistant Superintendents specifically assigned to feeder pattern schools and grade levels. At the core of these decisions is an expectation that we create a supportive team eliminating silos and providing customer service which clearly demonstrates value for our employees, students, families and each other.

I have had the pleasure of meeting with many people who sincerely care about our schools and community. It has been inspiring to meet with parents, teachers, staff, students, community members and others who are so passionate about our students, their learning and their future.

It is our collective responsibility in Waterbury Public Schools to nurture the relationships with our parents, students, teachers, staff and community supporters in pursuit of that vision. Our district is fortunate to have such strong leadership from our Board of Education Commissioners and Mayor Neil M. O'Leary. The energy in Waterbury is ripe for innovation, creativity and making bold decisions toward achieving robust goals. It is through the dedication, support and contributions from all of us that we equip our students with the tools they need for life-long success.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Verna D. Ruffin". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Verna D. Ruffin, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools