



Pawtucket Teachers' Alliance

AFT LOCAL 930 • AFL-CIO

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January 12, 2021

PRESS RELEASE: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: RONALD A. BEAUPRE, PRESIDENT

RE: Reopening Pawtucket Public Schools

While we all agree that an in-person instructional model is most effective, the safety and well-being of students and staff must be the utmost priority. With that in mind, the Pawtucket School Department has committed to providing a remote learning model that is both responsible and effective.

There has been much conversation about educational “access” from many who are on the “outside” criticizing alleged inequities. These allegations are not only false, but they are also ignorant responses to the false narrative set forth from RI Education Commissioner Angelica Infante-Green. As part of Pawtucket’s Distance Learning plan, every family in Pawtucket Public Schools has been provided the opportunity to obtain a personal chromebook and a wireless “hot spot” for internet access. We have created a synchronous and asynchronous schedule that closely mirrors the in-person instructional day and allows students real time interaction with their teachers and peers as well as independent work time. Our students have been provided both “hard-copy” and digital access to curriculum program materials. Throughout the school day, educators provide live instruction through Google meetings where students are engaged in standards-based lessons as part of a rigorous curriculum. Social-emotional supports have been provided and related services, such as occupational and physical therapies, continue to be provided on a one-to-one basis to ensure that students’ physical needs continue to be met. Finally, meal sites have been established throughout the city to provide breakfast and lunch options—even when school is closed for breaks, professional days, and holidays. Clearly, the RI Department of Education’s agenda is driving their false narrative, attempting to discredit Pawtucket’s high quality Distance Learning program which is ensuring the educational needs of our students are met while keeping students and staff safe during this pandemic.

On behalf of the members of the Pawtucket Teachers’ Alliance, I applaud Pawtucket School Committee Chairman Charbonneau, the members of the School Committee, Superintendent McWilliams, Assistant Superintendents Ramzi and Rabbitt, Facilities Director Cote and the faculties, staffs, students and families in all Pawtucket public schools for their commitment to keeping student and staff safety at the forefront of all collaborative decision-making. The Pawtucket Teachers’ Alliance appreciates the School Committee’s decision to continue with remote learning at least for the foreseeable future, and we are hopeful that the Committee will revisit a potential return to in-person learning following the Rhode Island Department of Health’s full roll-out of COVID-19 vaccinations for *all* educators.

As the President of the Pawtucket Teachers' Alliance representing the nearly 750 educators in the city of Pawtucket and a 4th grade teacher at Agnes Little Elementary School, I am extremely proud of the education the Pawtucket teachers, related service providers, and administrators are providing. I am confident that because of our collective efforts, our students will continue to be successful, and I look forward to returning to brick and mortar instruction when it is safe to do so.

Respectfully Submitted:
January 12, 2021

Ronald A. Beaupre

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President