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Dear Families,

We are looking forward to the new school year. Custodians, secretaries, support staff, and administration have diligently prepared the schools for the return of students and teachers. All of the summer work has been focused on supporting the classroom. The dedicated faculty and staff have been preparing their classrooms, refining lessons and materials, and are anticipating a whole new group of students to guide and support.

Last year, we completed year two of the *NORWELL 2025* Strategic Plan. A link to the *NORWELL 2025* Strategic Plan can be found on Norwell Public Schools' website at <https://www.norwellschools.org/NORWELL2025StrategicPlan>.

This year we will focus on a major component of our Strategic Plan, the district-wide implementation of a learning management system (LMS) known as Schoology. Carefully researched and selected by a committee of teachers and administrators from all levels, Schoology was identified as the LMS that best fit the needs of our students, teachers and families. A learning management system (LMS) is a software program that allows teachers and students to more easily communicate, access, and maximize digital instructional materials and electronic resources. The district's overarching goal of adopting a learning management system is to make accessing the exponential growth in digital instructional material and communication easy and efficient between students and teachers.

Transitioning to Schoology will gradually take place over the entire school year as we learn to integrate all the functionalities the system has to offer. Teachers will begin using the system at the beginning of the year. Students will be able to log-in and see their courses within the first week. Parents will be provided log-in usernames and passwords by October 1. We will also offer walk-in training for all parents at the High School through our new Technical Solutions Center - Student Help Desk program. Students will be available to answer technology questions from 8:15 a.m. - 2:15 p.m. More information will be provided later in September.

As the transition to Schoology takes place, the teacher pages on the website will become contact information only. Elementary teachers will continue to send updates to parents through email. At the secondary level, teachers will email parents a welcome letter with class expectations and syllabi. During the transition, if you have any classroom related questions, please contact your child's teacher by email.

This year we will be partnering with two presenters Dr. Englander and Dr. Maxwell on the effects of the digital world and social media. These presentations will be for all parents in the community. Dr. Englander will present *Cyberbullying and Effects of Social Media* at the High School Auditorium on October 24, 2019 from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Dr. Sharon Maxwell will present *Nurturing Human Values in the Digital World* at the High School Auditorium on March 19, 2020 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. We hope you will join us for these presentations.

There are many opportunities for engagement throughout the year as students participate in performances, academic presentations, volunteer activities, and award ceremonies. We also have many parent and community groups that support our schools. Please visit <https://www.norwellschools.org/domain/535> to see the list of organizations to volunteer for or receive information from. We will consistently communicate all the events that are happening in our schools. This information will be available on website calendars and in newsletters sent home regularly from each school.

Principals have sent welcome letters to families with additional information specific to their school. In addition, the following information and important reminders will help families with the transition back to school:

- Thursday, September 5, 2019 will be the first day of school for all students in grades 1-12. This is a full day of school.
- The Kindergarten Open House will be on Thursday, September 5, 2019 from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Kindergarten students will begin both half-day and full-day sessions on Friday, September 6, 2019. The Preschool program will begin on Tuesday, September 10, 2019.
- Buses for all children in grades K-6 will be provided. Fee-based buses for all students grades 7-12 will be provided.
 - Bus numbers, stop locations, and approximate arrival and departure times can be viewed by logging into your Aspen Parent Portal account or via the district website at <https://www.norwellschools.org/Page/3857>.
- The Norwell Police Department will continue to partner with us during the year in providing safety drills. Officer Rick Phelps, our School Resource Officer, will be a presence in all of our schools.

Important dates including Fall Open Houses and Curriculum Nights and school hours can be found on page two of the attached school calendar.

We are looking forward to welcoming all of our students back next week!

Sincerely,



Matthew A. Keegan
Superintendent of Schools