

# *Martha's Vineyard Public Schools*

*Excellence and Equity For All Children  
Equal Opportunity Employer*

**RICHARD M. SMITH, ED.D.**  
SUPERINTENDENT

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DIRECTOR OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

September 1, 2022

Dear Parent/s and Guardian/s,

I would like to introduce myself to you as our school system's new superintendent. As a steward of the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools (MVYPS) for over 20 years, I understand the privilege and honor that has been bestowed on me and I embrace and appreciate being entrusted with our schools.

Good schools embrace a culture in which everyone who is invested in some manner with the school, becomes a steward of that school, establishing a guiding principle in which genuinely positive and caring regard for all children pervades the building. As a school administrator on the Island of Martha's Vineyard, I have been fortunate to be a part of a school community that embraces that philosophy. I look forward to seeing the children arrive at our schools and the wonderful energy they bring to our school buildings and being a part of a team of educators who passionately support our children's needs.

My calling as the new superintendent is like so many others' in education, to support children and their teachers where I can. Over my twenty years as an MVYPS administrator, I have supported our schools by initiating enduring and effective change through a nurturing culture of care for not only our school children and their families, but our staff as well.

My education philosophy is grounded in the belief that children learn best and succeed when their emotional needs are supported. Our efforts as educators must serve that end for all children. An important responsibility for school administrators is to support the children through their teachers. In my former administrative roles as principal at the Tisbury Elementary School and Oak Bluffs Elementary School, and as Assistant Superintendent of the Martha's Vineyard Public Schools, I helped to improve the quality of relationships through mutual respect and active listening and communication. Our children flourished as our staff's investment, enthusiasm, and pride grew in a collaborative environment that emphasized continuous improvement. As the superintendent, I will continue to value and highlight the principles that support a trusting climate throughout the entire system.

With this in mind, I plan to enact an entry plan over the coming months that balances the necessary momentum in moving forward with initiatives and challenges regarding many areas of change and growth, with identifying areas in need of further development, through the input of our multiple stakeholders, including our students, our families, our staff, and our community leaders and agencies. This will allow MVYPS to:

- Build strong relationships in our schools
- Connect our entire school community to the purpose of supporting our children while being sensitive to our schools' impact on our community
- Enhance our transparency and communication
- Grant the autonomy necessary to have our staff inform the core work of teaching and caring for all children

Thank you for your support as we move our schools forward together in partnership.

Sincerely,

Richard Smith, Ed.D.  
Superintendent, 508-693-2007, ext. 15