



Olga Hugelmeyer
Superintendent of Schools

November 24, 2020

Dear Elizabeth Public Schools Team Members:

Thanksgiving is a time to celebrate the ideas of coming together as family and friends, being thankful, appreciating those who surround us, and giving praise to all that life has bestowed upon us.

For the past several months, much has happened around us to interrupt and vastly change our daily way of life. The difficulties we have experienced in navigating a course forward has in ways brought us to the level of simply valuing life on its most basic terms. Today, in the midst of uncertainty, as life has been slowed down around us in so many ways, I feel a heartfelt appreciation for more people than I possibly could ever thank.

I have enormous gratitude for the greatest team that anyone could possibly ask for, my Elizabeth Public Schools family. You have been leading the way to provide our students with high quality instruction, school breakfast and lunch, and social and emotional support during times that have forced us to do so remotely. You all have continued to show incredible courage, character, and dedication.

In addition to taking on the task of adapting to an entirely new way of providing teaching and learning, through training, you also empowered our families with skills and knowledge they can use to be active in their children's education. You kept students growing and developing by providing them nutritious meals to eat and encouragement that inspired success. I hope you are all very proud of the work you have done to keep education thriving in Elizabeth, because I know I am proud of each and every one of you. Thank you for your excellent and tireless service to our district and our families.

Sadly, while we have celebrated successes as a team and learning community these past several months, we have also had to endure great tragedy. As we continue on our deliberate and determined path toward the eventual reopening of our schools, it is important we do so in honor and remembrance of the lives we have lost within our learning community during this pandemic, the impact they had on our district, and the young men and women whose lives they inspired. May their families and friends be blessed through this holiday season and may their fondest memories of those they have lost help bring them comfort.

Office of the Superintendent of Schools

It is also very important that I share my gratitude for my family at home. I am more grateful to them than I possibly could ever express, especially during this past year. It is through their support and sacrifice that I am able to be in the position I am today, working with our wonderful team and following in my mother's footsteps as an educator at Elizabeth Public Schools. It is a dream come true to have the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children here in this great city where I was raised. Thank you for your endless encouragement and I love you dearly.

Warmest wishes to you all for a most peaceful Thanksgiving. I sincerely hope that you are able to connect with your loved ones on this day in a safe, healthy, and joyous manner to reflect upon cherished moments and create new ones. You all deserve it in a year that has been so trying and difficult for us all, both individually and collectively.

Please stay safe, be well, and God bless you all.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Olga Hugelmeyer', with a long, sweeping flourish extending to the right.

Olga Hugelmeyer