



# Spencer East Brookfield Regional School District

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Paul S. Haughey, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

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Dear Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District Staff,

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to each of you and to share how excited I am at having the opportunity to lead this great school system! My name is Paul Haughey and I am the new Superintendent of Schools for the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District. I am entering my 29<sup>th</sup> year of education, having spent the past seven years with the Blackstone-Millville Regional School District (four years) as Director of Students Services; and then serving (three years) as Principal for Millville Elementary School while also simultaneously serving (last year) as Director of Curriculum and Instruction. Regardless of my role or responsibility over the course of my career within education, I always have and always will consider myself “a teacher” - first and foremost!

Many of you might ask what drew me to become the Superintendent of Schools in the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District? There are several things that impressed me about the district that made it feel it was the correct match for me, and for my leadership skills. The primary thing that drew me to your system was your mission statement:

The mission of the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District states that “... We believe in the importance of a regional school district where the district is an integral part of the community and that community support is necessary for the district's operation and achievement of excellence. We are confident that through our collaboration, we will build a common purpose for the future of our schools. The Spencer East Brookfield Regional School District Goals are as follows:

- To engage all students in challenging programs that will meet their individual needs;
- To create and sustain an atmosphere of mutual respect and cooperation within the entire school community;
- To develop and nurture dynamic partnerships with the greater community;
- To build organizational structures which support effective teaching and learning at all developmental levels while maintaining fiscal responsibility.”

There are several parts of this mission statement that match my core beliefs as an educational leader. Since I don't want this to become a dissertation, I'll share just two. The first is that it talks about educating "ALL students." Not just the ones who excel, or the ones who need significant interventions, or the ones from "the right" parents, etc. Your mission statement talks about educating ALL students to become highly competent and successful as our graduates. One of my core beliefs is that our educational systems should be built around ensuring each child is successful as a learner and graduates from our high school with every possible door open to them. This would then allow them to choose their own futures rather than having those futures chosen for them by things often beyond their control.

The second part of this mission statement that drew me to the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District was the part about creating a "challenging and nurturing" environment for students. This touches upon another of my core beliefs as an educational leader — that we need to create schools where respect, responsibility and a readiness to learn is more than just words on a door but modeled for our students each and every day of our work with them. We need our schools to be places where every child feels safe, is met at their own level of learning, and is challenged to meet their full individual potential as a learner. We need to create school systems where students want to come to school because they know they are cared for by every single adult they encounter. They know they will be engaged as learners; and will be held to high expectations and pushed to learn and grow while having fun in the process. We need to create schools where children are respected, and they are respectful, where their dreams and ambitions can come alive, and they can learn to reach their full potential as adults.

I'll be honest, when I first saw this mission statement I thought to myself, it's too good to be true! It must be one of those mission statements that is all fluffy and surreal but not connected to reality as all too many public-school mission statements in Massachusetts are. So, I dug a little deeper. I looked at your website, I looked at your achievement data, at your public reports filed with the DESE including the DSAC "District Review Report" for 2013 and the 2014 Coordinated Program Review Report for SEBRSD as well as your recent work with NEASC. Then I dug even more deeply and looked at your individual school mission statements and comprehensive improvement plans and at your School Committee meeting minutes and visited your schools. Everywhere I looked, there was demonstration that your mission is coming alive in the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District!

As I continue to learn more and more about this school system, it is clear to me that you all believe in your mission. It may not be fully alive and well in every corner of this district, and there may be ways to make it even better, but it is clear to me that every person I meet knows what it is (at least in its essence) and is working hard to make it a reality for the children of the regional school district. That says A LOT about all of you and your commitment to our schools and the children that fill their hallways! Please know that I will do my best to support and carry on this great work!

I will be spending the next several weeks meeting and talking with administrators, School Committee members, staff, parents, and other community members in an effort to learn more about these great communities and our schools. I will be scheduling meetings throughout the summer. If you are interested in coming by, just reach out and let me know and we can set up an appointment to chat. The questions I am asking are simple: What do you see as the strengths of our system? What do you see as our challenges? And if given a "magic wand" for a day . . . what would you do to make our regional school district even better than it is?

I hope you discover in my future leadership, the same passion and love of children that I see so clearly demonstrated in your mission and the work you do daily with our children. I am a leader who understands that the best leaders are those that lead by their ACTIONS, not solely their words, and that leadership is a gift, given by others. I hope that over the course of the next several months you will allow me to earn that gift of leadership from you! I look forward to continuing to learn about the Spencer-East Brookfield Regional School District and in working with each of you to make our mission a true reality for our children!

See you all in August if not before!



Paul S. Haughey, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools