



September 6, 2019

Dear Family,

It's official: a new school year is underway.

As the mom of two young kids – 12-year-old Asher and 9-year-old Aiyana – I know it can be a stressful time of year, getting them everything they need, figuring out new schedules, and trying to establish routines.

But as a lifelong educator, it's also my favorite time of year.

A new school year holds so much promise and excitement for our children. A good teacher can unlock their unharnessed potential; a positive school culture can help them become good citizens and empathetic people. Our kids spend nearly as much time at school as they do at home, so both in and out of the classroom, the strength of our school communities matters.

And when it comes to strengthening our schools, this isn't a job for teachers alone. Administrators, support staff, the students themselves – they all play a role – and so do you.

You are your child's first teacher and their fiercest advocate, and I hope you will share that expertise with me and with the educators supporting your child each day. Here are just a few ways you can support our schools and public education statewide this year:

- Stay informed. Sign up for your school's listserv, and for RIDE's weekly Field Memo, a newsletter on statewide education initiatives. Follow us on social media – Facebook, Twitter and Instagram – at @RIDeptEd.
- Participate in SurveyWorks, our statewide school culture and climate survey. Survey results help inform public policy and program decisions at the state and local levels.
- Let me know what you think. I am assembling a statewide Parent Advisory Committee, which will provide me with valuable insight as to how our schools can better respond to your needs and the needs of your children. I will also be forming a Providence-specific Parent Advisory Committee to help inform and support our turnaround efforts in Providence Public Schools. Email Chantry.Lopes@ride.ri.gov to sign up for either Advisory.

Beyond these specific activities, most importantly, I hope you will recognize the tremendous value you bring to the conversation when it comes to your child's education. We are all busy,

getting pulled in a million directions, but whenever you speak up or give back, however small it may seem, you are making a difference. You are making us stronger.

It's a new school year and a fresh start for all of us. Let's work together in the best interests of all kids and make this the year that we begin to transform education in Rhode Island.

Thank you for everything you do for your child and for our schools, and I look forward to working with you this year.

Keep in touch.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "a. Infante-Green".

Angélica Infante-Green
Commissioner of Education