

# DUDLEY-CHARLTON REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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*STEAM Director*

September 16, 2017

Dear Dudley-Charlton Regional School District Families:

By now, many of you are already aware of the tragic news that we have lost one of the truly great people our school district has ever known. John Paire, longtime administrator at Dudley Middle School, current teacher at Charlton Middle School and a dear friend to many of us, was killed in a tragic accident while riding his bicycle yesterday. John was one of the true champions of the “students first” philosophy that permeates our district. Every decision he made was with the best interest of the kids in mind.

It is no secret that John was among my closest colleagues and best friends. I had a “front row seat,” so to speak, from which to witness his career. I can tell you with 100% certainty that he loved our students, and that he would do anything to help them succeed. Additionally, any staff member who took good care of the students had John’s unconditional support. He was the rare leader who cared about people for more than their role within the school. He cared about them as people, he cared about their families, and he made decisions with compassion, sincerity and commitment to his core beliefs.

Hiring John into the district will always be near the top of the list of things I am most proud of in my career. Like so many, I loved working with him for everything he brought – the love of kids, the empathy for struggling families, the common sense mindset and the hours and hours of laughter. Our district is undoubtedly a lesser place for his passing, but I knew John well enough to know that he would not want us to just sit around and be sad. He and I navigated many difficult situations together, and I know he would want us, first and foremost, to take care of our students and one another. Toward that, our district has a support plan in place that includes the following:

- Dudley Middle School, Charlton Middle School and Shepherd Hill will all be open Sunday September 17 from 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. for students, staff and community members to gather and grieve together. We will, however, remain open as long as our students need us.
- Monday and Tuesday, our school libraries will be reserved for support services for students and staff. Our counselors, psychologists and other staff will be on hand to help in any way we can.
- Wednesday-Friday, we will try to gradually transition back to a normal routine, but our counselors and psychologists will remain proactive and available to support our students in any way necessary.

Please use your best parental judgment in assessing your child’s level of need related to this tragedy. While we will remain proactive and visible, you will still be the best judge of your child’s emotional state. I strongly encourage you to reach out to the guidance, administrative or teaching staff at your child’s school if you know that he/she will need extra support.

As I close, I have a sincere request. I know we all understand that John’s family is hurting beyond what earthly words can express. In the future, there will be opportunities for us to rally in support of them. For now, however, what they need most from us is respect for their privacy so they can try to help one another through this. Let’s be supportive by allowing them the time and space they need. When the time comes for us to help, I know there is no community in the world that will be able to do so better than ours.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gregg J. Desto".

Gregg J. Desto

*“...to advance the knowledge and well being of our children and our community.”*