



IRVINGTON
UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT

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An Important Message from the Superintendent - Tri States Visit

January 13, 2025

Dear Irvington Families,

On February 5-7, 2025, we will be hosting a visit with approximately 20 educators who are part of the Tri- States Consortium. For those less familiar, The Tri States Consortium is an alliance of public schools which includes 60 districts from New York, New Jersey, and Connecticut committed to finding pathways toward continuous improvement. This visit will focus on the Portrait of a Graduate (POAG) in order to create a shared vision and an environment for change. Included in this visit will be presentations, classroom visits, interviewing faculty, students, and parents. The visiting team will provide feedback on the following questions:

- To what extent has the District crafted a vision of The Portrait of a Graduate that is understood and supported by the faculty, parents and students?
- To what extent has the Portrait of a Graduate influenced the work of administrators, teachers, and students?
- What are the systems and structures that support the Portrait of a Graduate?
- What are the recommendations for moving the work forward?

Irvington's Portrait of a Graduate was introduced at the beginning of the 2023-2024 school year to lay the foundation for future student development. Staff, administrators, and parents engaged in initial discussions and workshops to familiarize themselves with the Portrait's core values: Courageous Learner, Engaged Citizen, Effective Communicator, and Self-Aware Individual. These early efforts aimed to foster collaboration and set the stage for integrating these values into the educational experience, ultimately empowering students to reach their full potential.

Among the many efforts we hope to highlight for the visiting team is our focus on cultivating Courageous Learners, which includes the ability to think critically. Our instructional leaders are working together to define what critical thinking looks like in Irvington and identify effective strategies to foster it. Additionally, we're reviewing our curriculum with a focus on student understanding, skills, and dispositions. This process can serve as a model defining other tenets of Irvington's Portrait of a Graduate as well as curriculum revision.

As we continue to build out the skills related to each of the pillars of Irvington's Portrait of a Graduate, it is imperative that we also ask ourselves if the school culture and the structures we have in place best support opportunities for all of our students to grow as Courageous Learners, Effective Communicators, Self Aware individuals, and Engaged Citizens.

As part of this ongoing effort, the high school has formulated a School Culture Committee that is exploring the way time is structured in the high school, student engagement, auditing the current courses being offered, and considering if changes should be made. There are also efforts for teachers to develop further understanding of the student experience as part of the Portrait of a Graduate work through a new partnership with Challenge Success.

We have much to celebrate and share with the visiting team and we look forward to sharing the visiting team's feedback with the community.

Warmly,

Dr. Gail Duffy, Assistant Superintendent of Instruction & Human Resources

Dr. Mara Ratesic, Superintendent of schools



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