

# GATEWAY REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## *Superintendent's Corner*

**December 14, 2018**

As I reflect on this past year, despite its difficulties, hard times and political strife, I have opted to be more optimistic and concentrate on the more positive aspects of life. While this is difficult if you just watch the evening news or concentrate on current events as dictated by much of the media, the power of technology also lets one Google "Good News". By doing this you can find many inspirational stories. Just remembering some of these stories, from the Thai cave rescue to Tammie Jo Shults' safely landing a Southwest flight after an engine failure (reminding me of Captain Sullenberger's landing on the Hudson River in Manhattan) lets one know that there are still 'heroes' doing good in the world. But lesser known feats happen daily: the rescue of animals in multiple fires throughout the west, strangers paying off layaway charges for others each year around the holidays, volunteers in shelters and soup kitchens and many others that happen locally that we often overlook.

Just look around you and you can see good things happening on a regular basis that offer a positive perspective for the future. The fact that our local youth provide public service through food drives, collecting toys for the underprivileged, and volunteering in our schools and communities. On a grander scale, one only needs to look at the newly invigorated participation in the political process by the current generation that has recently aged into voting across the country. This renewed interest in governance and civic responsibility seems auspicious in a country that prides itself on being a beacon of democracy to the world.

I'm also hopeful for the continuing process of the growing partnerships between the school and our communities as seen through participation in the budget process, in the process of revising the regional agreement, and in supporting investments in both the schools and communities to make our area more attractive, more sustainable, and more open to investment and growth. Despite the many challenges facing our rural communities, the future is looking brighter thanks to the visionary efforts of our school and community leaders.

The winter solstice may be an appropriate comparison for our area. Just as the winter solstice marks the change (after enduring shrinking daylight hours for 3 months) to longer, brighter days, we may be approaching a turning point in our towns given the recent support from the state (economic plans and technology sharing from state grants and the recent approval of additional state money for small and rural school districts as some examples) and continued local efforts to capitalize on these opportunities.

In this season of celebrations by so many people across multiple religions and beliefs, I find myself remembering some of the basics that have sustained civilizations for centuries: the idea of right and wrong, the hope for peace, the love of family, the sense of community, and the belief in something much bigger than any individual. Let us move into the New Year with this thought from Helen Keller, "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement. Nothing can be done without hope and confidence." May each of you enjoy the season, get to enjoy the holidays with family and friends and find that the New Year brings you faith for future, hope for better times, health, happiness and success in meeting your New Year's resolutions.

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