



## Waterfront Elementary School #95

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David Hills, Principal  
Terence Jenkins, Assistant Principal  
Nicole Dias, Assistant Principal  
Kate Paolini, Assistant Principal



Friday, July 21, 2017

Friends and Colleagues,

It is with great regret that I inform the learning community at Waterfront Elementary #95 that I will be leaving after six years as your Principal. This spring, I applied for the Principalship at the new Riverside Academy. My assignment went through the Buffalo Board of Education this past Wednesday. The opportunity to establish an innovative start up Highschool and to be a part of Superintendent Cash's vision for expanded and relevant Highschool options captured my imagination. This is a tremendous opportunity to contribute to the success of students in their culminating years in the Buffalo Public Schools.

I will always be very proud of my time at Waterfront and of the amazing students, staff and parents that make up this community of learners. You will all always be a part of me. When I came to Waterfront in 2011, the state had just labeled Waterfront "Persistently Low Achieving" and then "Priority". Through a closure deadline, multiple rejected School Improvement Grants, days without electricity, and numerous struggles of various kinds, we kept our focus and made continual improvements. Three times we were noted for these improvements in the Buffalo News and were finally moved to "Good Standing" in February of 2016. Not only was there improvement in academics, but I also came to know students, parents and staff members who are amazing people and who have given me an incredible gift.

Your next Principal, Dawn Dinatale, is a creative thinker with deep insight into curriculum and instruction and a lot of energy. The best days for Waterfront are still ahead and I am very excited for the future of this learning community. In the words of Mohatma Gandhi, "A small body of determined spirits fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission can alter the course of history." You have been and will be that body of determined spirits. As we say every day over announcements, "Always make the best choices and you will have the best day." Waterfront must continue to produce students who leave ready for high school success and who are prepared to change the world. That is only possible if students, teachers and parents all put the serious work into making the best steps.

If we all do our part, each student will leave Waterfront with the best chance for Highschool, college and career success. It will continue to be true that Waterfront students will carry a legacy that makes this world a better place. There is a quote from Barak Obama that we often refer to at Waterfront. "One voice can change a room. And if it changes a room it can change a city. And if it can change a city it can change a state. And if it can change a state it can change a nation. If it changes the nation it can change the world. Fired Up? Ready to Go!"

Thank you for the past six years.

Sincerely,