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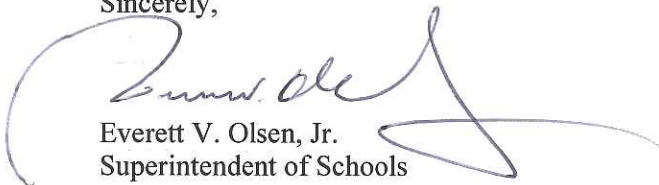
Dear Staff, Parents and Legal Guardians,

As you know, I have already had to cancel five days of school prior to the beginning of the winter season. If the weather during the upcoming winter is consistent with that over the last four years, we may very possibly lose an additional four to five days of school, moving our last day of school into the last week in June. In my opinion the days in mid to late June do not provide the same potential for student learning as do school days earlier in the year.

For this reason I recommended to our School Committee last night that we make-up four of the five lost school days by scheduling full days of school for two days during February vacation (February 21 and 22), and two days during April vacation (April 17 and 18). The School Committee approved this recommendation. Please understand that there is no plan for making-up lost school days that is acceptable to everyone. My decision is based on what I believe will allow the most effective instructional time for students and will maximize attendance. It has been a very atypical year with school cancellations, and I must represent the best interests of students.

To this end, I hope that you will be understanding of the decision, and I look forward to your cooperation in making these make-up days productive educational days for students. I will be meeting with our administrators and teachers' union to develop policy statements on issues such as previously booked vacation reservations, testing during these days, etc., and I will communicate this with you shortly. We can make this work by working together.

Sincerely,



Everett V. Olsen, Jr.
Superintendent of Schools