



# TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

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TIMOTHY A. OLDENBURG, Ed.D.  
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

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September 15, 2023

Dear Tonawanda School Community:

Thank you for your continued support as we begin another school year in Tonawanda. As the first full week of student instruction comes to a close, there is much to celebrate and recognize. Our classrooms are buzzing with energy and excitement as the curriculum begins to take form. Our athletic and performing arts programs are underway, with our first home varsity football game being played this evening.

Our students and staff have developed routines and are picking up the pace in all aspects of our programming and procedures. Thanks to all of our students, staff, and families for their understanding and consideration as we began our academic year and opened a new school.

The new Tonawanda Elementary School is an incredible building and addition to the Tonawanda community. The excitement and love for learning from students and staff is only enhanced by this dynamic new environment.

Our students and staff are taking great pride and care of our new learning spaces inside the building. Students are exploring new ideas and content in bright and comfortable classrooms. Special area teachers are delivering creative lesson in areas of Art, Music, and Physical Education in new larger workspaces.

However, we are struggling with some of our outside spaces that are used by the community. Our new playground was carefully designed and included in this capital project to provide an inclusive and appropriate play space for our elementary students and the community.

Recently we have noticed garbage/food left behind on the ground or smashed into the new playing surface. Children have climbed the fence, after hours, to access the playground at night when the gates are locked. Inappropriate drawings/graffiti have been drawn onto this new equipment. Parents have shared their disappointment with the language used and behaviors exhibited by some older students at the new playground.

Our intention has always been to allow the new playground to be open and available to our community. **However, this playground is designed and engineered to be used by elementary students in the grades of UPK-5.** The devices and equipment on this new playground are not rated and appropriate for students that are older and bigger than elementary school aged children.

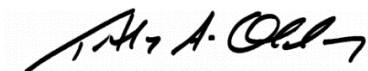
This playground has already been damaged and needing repair. Please help us maintain this beautiful and entertaining playground space for the children it was designed to host. **Please assist us by supervising your age appropriate children when attending the school playground and deliberately explaining the expectations for appropriate use by children in elementary school to your older children.**

The repair costs and upkeep of this new playground are prohibitive. Please assist us in making sure this space continues to be a community resource. We hope to continue to share this remarkable play space with our elementary aged children after school hours and on weekends.

Parents that have significant concerns regarding behaviors and actions of those on the new playground should call the police for support. The new playground is considered closed at dusk and is often locked at this time. Anyone on the playground after hours or when the gates are locked will be considered to be trespassing.

Thank you for your continued support and willingness to help us continue to offer great experiences for our community at the new playground at the Tonawanda Elementary School.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy A. Oldenburg".

Timothy A. Oldenburg, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools