

GREENWICH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NEWS

RIVERSIDE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL ANNOUNCES RETIREMENT

(Greenwich, CT: For Immediate Release Friday, January 13, 2012) Riverside School Principal John Grasso has announced his retirement effective June 30, 2012. Mr. Grasso was appointed Principal of Riverside School in 2000 and prior to that, he had been Assistant Principal of the school since 1994. After 18 years with the Greenwich Public Schools, he has become a respected and valued colleague, a mentor for many administrators and members of the faculty and staff, and an admired leader in the District.

Mr. Grasso notes, "As the longest serving Greenwich Public Schools Principal currently in the District, it has been a privilege to be associated with the Greenwich Public Schools. I am also proud to have been a part of the Riverside School community, with a long tradition and commitment to excellence."

Superintendent of Schools Roger J. Lulow said, "John has been a valuable member of the Greenwich Public Schools for the last eighteen years, and an outstanding Principal for the last twelve years. We will miss him and wish him the best of luck."

Deputy Superintendent Ellen Flanagan said, "John Grasso is an outstanding school leader who has contributed to the success of countless students in our district. He is highly regarded by his peers and has served as a mentor to many of our current principals. His experience, expertise and commitment to the students and staff of the Greenwich Public Schools will be sorely missed. However, it is his ability to connect with children and adults through his sense of humor and outgoing personality that will be remembered the most. John is an exemplary educator and a true gentleman."

Colleague and International School at Dundee Principal Teresa Ricci remarked, "As a leader among the leaders of the school district, we have all benefitted from John's wise advice and positive disposition. Through the lens of keeping us focused on our most important task, educating children,

all of the students in Greenwich have been positively impacted by his guidance and expertise, whether directly or indirectly. He will be sorely missed but he should know that, through his contributions, his legacy will be long lasting.

The search for a new Riverside School Principal will begin immediately.

Bio Brief: John Grasso

John Grasso began teaching in 1975 for the Stamford Public Schools as a fifth grade teacher at Rogers International School. In 1979 he moved to the Westover Magnet School as a Community Liaison and Team Leader. He left teaching in 1982 to work in the private sector, returning to field in 1988 as a sixth grade teacher at Roxbury Elementary School in Stamford where he remained for six years. In 1994, he came to the Greenwich Public Schools as Assistant Principal of Riverside School where he has maintained a leadership role for the last 18 years, becoming Principal in 2000. Mr. Grasso has worked hard with Riverside staff and parents to establish Riverside School as a focal point of the neighborhood – holding the annual Riverside Run, Veteran’s Day Celebration, and the opening day ceremonies are just a few examples of community engagement. Under Mr. Grasso’s leadership, the school implemented ROPES, their character development program and Riverside Rangers, a leadership development initiative – aimed at providing students with positive role models and benchmarks for social emotional learning. He has also established a number of programs and instructional strategies aimed at improving academic and co-curricular outcomes for students including, Universal Design for Learning, Special Specials – a choice program for students, Arts Field Day, and he was involved with the ALP Interdisciplinary Program design. Mr. Grasso attended Harvard University’s Summer Principal Institute for Project Zero, applying this training in various capacities throughout the school. According to Harvard’s Project Zero web site, they are *“a research group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, [that] has investigated the development of learning processes in children, adults, and organizations since 1967. Today, Project Zero is building on this research to help create communities of reflective, independent learners; to enhance deep understanding within disciplines; and to promote critical and creative thinking. Project Zero’s mission is to understand and enhance learning, thinking, and creativity in the arts, as well as humanistic and scientific disciplines, at the individual and institutional levels.”* In 2010-11, Mr. Grasso took on the role of the Advanced Learning Program Coordinator, while maintaining the leadership of Riverside School, in order to assist in the transition of leadership for that position and oversee a program review.

Mr. Grasso received his Bachelors degree from St. John’s University, Queens, NY, and his Masters degree from City College of New York (CCNY) in Curriculum Development. He received his 6th Year Administrator Certificate from Fairfield University in Fairfield, CT.

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