



New Canaan Public Schools
39 Locust Avenue
New Canaan, CT 06840

For Immediate Release:

Matthew Kascak Named Principal of South Elementary School

New Canaan, CT (June 1, 2020). After an extensive and thorough search process, Dr. Bryan Luizzi, New Canaan Public Schools Superintendent, is pleased to announce the appointment of Matt Kascak as the new Principal of South Elementary School. Mr. Kascak replaces Joanne Rocco, who retired in 2019 after 16 years at South, and most recently John Grasso, who served a one-year term as interim principal.



Mr. Kascak has served as Assistant Principal at South Elementary School for the past sixteen (16) years. During that time, Matt's commitment to the New Canaan Public Schools, and South School in particular, has defined his tenure. On any given day, he can be seen visiting classrooms, in the cafeteria, talking with groups of students, walking the playgrounds at recess, and meeting with parents and teachers. This high level of visibility and involvement has been recognized and appreciated through the years, and has strengthened and enhanced the wonderful school climate that is a hallmark of South School.

"The search process was longer than usual due to the COVID-19 closure and our need to focus on Distance Learning and continuity of district operations," said Dr. Luizzi. "Nonetheless, we were committed to identifying and hiring the right candidate to lead South School, and by hiring Matt, we found that right candidate. Matt is a highly competent, resourceful, enthusiastic, and dedicated school leader. As he transitions to the principalship, I'm confident Matt's knowledge of the South School community, his understanding of teaching and learning, and his relationships with students, parents, and teachers will enable him to become a highly effective leader right from the start. I'm excited to consider the wonderful things ahead for South School under Matt's leadership."

Mr. Kascak earned his Educational Leadership degree from Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven. He also holds a Master of Education degree from Lesley University in Cambridge, Mass., and a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration from Sacred Heart University in Fairfield.

Dr. Luizzi would like to extend his appreciation to John Grasso, who served with distinction as interim principal. "John was an excellent addition to South School this past year, and I am deeply grateful for all that he did for our students, staff, and community. In an unprecedentedly challenging year, John led South School with poise, grace, and professionalism. We were quite fortunate to have John at the helm during this time, and wish him the very best in whatever lies ahead."

Dr. Luizzi also thanks the teachers, building administrators, district administrators, members of the Board of Education, and parents for their excellent work as the interview committee, which was comprised of 18 people overall. Additionally, he thanks Darlene Pianka, Director of Human Resources, and Darlene's entire staff for all of their efforts coordinating and organizing the search process, especially this year given so much of it was managed virtually and remotely. Mr. Kascak will begin as Principal of South Elementary School on July 1, 2020.

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