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Dear Readington School Community,

The final week of school in December is a great time to be an educator. Each school community is bustling with excitement and activity to celebrate the start of winter break. Students, regardless of age, beam with joy at the prospect of time to rest and recharge along with the joys of holiday tradition for many. Staff members look forward to a well-earned break or time spent with family and friends. Witnessing all these things reminds me to appreciate all of the wonder the holiday season provides for us, and it brings me back to one word that seems to be popping up at every turn this school year- the word *believe*.

We started this year with belief in inspiring curiosity. Staff watched a Ted Lasso video clip in our welcome back meeting, and we were inspired to believe in ourselves and our students, while simultaneously sparking curiosity in all. Parents were reminded to believe in children by igniting wonder in them as the school year began.

Believe is also surrounding me in my home. My children are obsessed with *The Polar Express* book and film. I may have watched the entire movie a dozen times already, and we still have a few weeks left of December. I realized the word believe appears throughout the film. It's a motivating word as Tom Hanks's animated character punches holes in the main character's ticket at the end of the movie only to reveal the word, "believe." This affirms the boy's true belief in Santa Claus, and perhaps more importantly, his belief in himself.

I'm inspired by this word during this most festive season. The signs I received from the Ted Lasso series and *The Polar Express* remind me how magical and powerful true belief can be. Belief in ourselves, in our work, in our mission - as people and as an organization. This December I reflect on my firm belief in our schools, our staff, our students, and our community. As the year comes to a close and we take the time to enjoy a season of festivities, I hope you will take the time to rediscover your belief in the magic of the world around us.

Wishing you happy Holidays and a joyous New Year!

With firm belief,

Jonathan Hart, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools