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December 23, 2020

Dear Readington School Community,

Since childhood I have always loved the month of December. To me, there is nothing quite like the joy and magic of the holiday season, so much so my wife and I decided to get married in December so the month could truly be filled with special occasions. This festive season is also marked with our family listening to holiday music in our home, and I even listen to my special Christmas playlist in my car each day.

One song really struck me in particular this year, as we are still in the throes of the COVID-19 pandemic. Recently, I listened very carefully to different versions of "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and realized how poignant the lyrics in the song have become amid our struggles with COVID. The Judy Garland version from the 1944 film *Meet Me in St. Louis* left me rather reflective as I thought about this past year. Our school community has encountered its share of challenges, but certain lines from the song encourage me that a new year is on its way. As Judy Garland reminds us, "Let your heart be light. Next year all our troubles will be out of sight...next year all our troubles will be miles away." Think about what the year 2021 will bring to you and your family and embrace the hope that a new year brings.

Remember, although, we may not be able to gather with family and friends this year in the ways we are used to, "Someday soon we all will be together, if the fates allow. Until then, we'll have to muddle through somehow." We must continue to celebrate the holiday season and the new year in our hearts and minds and in the company of those we love - even if our celebrations are smaller or even virtual this year. We will muddle through because we are strong and soon we will truly be together the way we have always been. Until then, I'd like to wish you the happiest of holidays, a restful break, and a joyous new year.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Hart", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jonathan Hart, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools