



# CRANSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

845 PARK AVENUE

CRANSTON, RHODE ISLAND 02910-2790

JUDITH A. LUNDSTEN, Ed. D.  
SUPERINTENDENT

March 14, 2014

Dear Families:

Last night I joined school committee members at the Cranston City Council's Finance Committee subcommittee meeting to ask the Council to submit a \$15 million school construction bond to the voters on the November ballot, for repairs to our city's school buildings.

Saccoccio & Associates recently conducted a review of each of our school buildings in order to meet Rhode Island Department of Education standards for school construction aid reimbursement. If approved by RIDE and the Rhode Island General Assembly, 52% of the \$15 million bond proceeds will be reimbursed to the City of Cranston by the State of Rhode Island. During the Saccoccio & Associates review a number of health and safety needs were identified at city schools, including – but not limited to – significant fire code violations. The violations range in severity, but none put students or educators in immediate danger. While the Cranston Fire Department inspects and certifies each school, each year, the school committee and central administration were not made aware that significant violations existed until the architect's review was completed earlier this month, which included findings that variances had expired dating back to 2006.

Given that – and if approved - \$4 million of the \$15 million bond would go to make sure each school meets fire codes. The rest would focus on repairs and renovations of the schools, which if you ask any student or teacher, is long overdue. Our schools are safe **and our goal is to make them safer**. However, school buildings across the city are aging. Roofs are leaking. Windows won't open or close. Some teachers have had to develop creative ways to keep the climate in their classrooms comfortable.

As many of you know I am a grandmother of five. I can confidently say that I so strongly believe in the integrity and safety of our school buildings that I would send each of my grandchildren to a Cranston Public Schools. That said, the fire code violations are unacceptable and must be remediated as soon as possible. I will work in partnership with the Cranston School Committee, Cranston Fire Department and the mayor's office to ensure this matter is reviewed thoroughly – so that we have a full understanding of how these violations went unreported for so long, and so that we are certain to address them. The safety of your children and our educators is the highest priority for me.

If you wish to review your child's school for a list of repairs and violations go to [www.cpsed.net](http://www.cpsed.net) and you will find the link in the Superintendent's message entitled - Cranston Buildings Report 3-13-14.

If you have questions or concerns about this matter, please do not hesitate to call.

Sincerely,

*Judith A. Lundsten*

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