



**Garth Harries**  
*Superintendent*

**New Haven School Change**  
NEW HAVEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Tel: 203-936-5200  
Fax: 203-946-7300

---

April 7, 2016

To the Hillhouse High School Staff and Community,

As you know, my vision for Hillhouse is to return the school to its place as an academically excellent, highly-sought after school, with a strong overarching culture of excellence powered by three strong academies. We have worked toward a school where the leadership, culture, organization, and systems give our students the best possible opportunity to engage in learning that prepares them for success in college, career, and most importantly life. While there have been significant gains in the academies launched by the individual principals two years ago, it is apparent to me that the three principal leadership structure of Hillhouse has become a distraction and impediment to achieving my vision.

On Monday, I will post for a principal to become the single top authority at Hillhouse, to assume the responsibility starting July 1st. Whoever is selected will be charged with strengthening both the academies and the cross building communication and coordination. As is typical for our principal selections, my team will work with a committee of teachers, parents, administrators, and students to make a recommendation from the available candidates. I will expect the process to happen quickly, so the selected leader can engage in planning for next school year – my goal will be for the BOE to confirm my selection of Principal at the second Board meeting in May.

In two short years, the academies of Hillhouse have seen close to a 20 point gain in the promotion rate of 9th graders, which is the key academic hurdle for high school success. Rates of course failure have dropped precipitously. More than a hundred students have earned a variety of industry certifications. With this momentum as backdrop, I want to be clear and public in my support for the principals who have led the transition to the academies – this decision does not and should not reflect on the abilities of Ms. Bakker, Ms. Daniels, and Mr. Diah. My team will work to ensure continuity in the good work of the academies, along with continued leadership opportunities for these pioneering leaders that reflect their abilities and potential.

Thank you,

Garth Harries