



Franklin Public Schools

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Superintendent's Report to School Committee November 26, 2019 School Committee Meeting

Student Opportunity Act Signed into Law by Governor Baker Today

Governor Baker signed the Student Opportunity Act into law earlier today. As noted previously, the bill provides for:

- Increased funding for areas recommended by the Foundation Budget Review Commission's 2015 report, including increased funding for employee and retiree healthcare costs, special education, English language learners, and students from low-income households.
- Providing additional state financial support, to be implemented over a number of years, for public schools through charter tuition reimbursements, an expansion of the special education circuit breaker, additional funding for school guidance and psychological services, and lifting the cap on Massachusetts School Building Authority spending.
- Establishing a 21st Century Education Trust Fund for districts and schools pursuing creative approaches to student learning and district improvement; a Data Advisory Committee to help districts with strategic planning and resource allocation; and a Rural Schools Commission to investigate low and declining enrollment in rural schools.
- Requiring schools and districts to develop and publish plans for closing opportunity gaps, and requiring the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to publish district-level data on student preparedness for post-graduate success in college and the workforce.

We are in the process of understanding, with greater detail, the impact locally on Franklin and identify the following areas:

- As a minimum aid community, we do not anticipate an increase in Chapter 70 funding as a result of the implementation of the FBRC recommendations. The bill, however, does set minimum aid to be \$30, which is the same amount as FY 20 and higher than amounts received in recent fiscal years.
- We anticipate additional financial support through the Circuit Breaker Reimbursement, with the inclusion of out-of-district specialized transportation (beyond a threshold level), which had previously not been included. This is proposed to be phased in over several years.
- We anticipate a small amount of additional financial support of Charter School Tuition reimbursement, which had not been fully funded in years past.

“Destiny is not a matter of chance, it is a matter of choice”
Equal Opportunity Employer

- Opportunities for competitive grants and additional flexibility through the 21st Century Education Trust Fund.

Link to the Governor's press release:

<https://www.mass.gov/news/governor-baker-signs-education-funding-bill-providing-investments-in-public-schools-across-the>

Sleep Research Education Event Summary and Resources

Our second parent/guardian information night took place on November 19. Dr. Judith Owens, Director of the Center for Pediatric Sleep Disorders and Professor of Neurology at Harvard Medical School, engaged the audience in a presentation on the biology of sleep and the dangers of sleep deprivation. She also spoke about considerations for schools related to start times, homework, and sleep education. She provided parents/guardian with some practical advice, as well, about the influence they can have at home in promoting a healthy sleep environment and in discussing the dangers of sleep deprivation, including drowsy driving. A copy of Dr. Owens' slides can be accessed here:

https://www.franklinps.net/sites/franklinmaps/files/uploads/franklin_2019f.pdf

As a reminder -- other events, which are related to this education series: Social Media Night (which occurred on October 21, 2019) and a Vaping presentation, which is scheduled for January 6. We will also look to hold a family presentation about homework.

Monthly Davis Thayer Facility Analysis Update

The district-wide demographic study, originally announced in the October update, is under way. We are still anticipating the results of that report to be ready in January.

We are still working to find a consultant and define the scope of the facilities adequacy study of Davis Thayer and functional space study of all schools across the district.

The next update will be issued in late December.

Another Spectacular Harlem Wizards Game hosted by FEF

Many thanks go to the incredible volunteers of the Franklin Education Foundation who hosted the Harlem Wizards game to raise funds to support local innovation grants to educators in our schools and classrooms. FEF spends so much time organizing and promoting this event and their dedication is most appreciated.

An energetic crowd attended the event on Friday night at Tri-County's gymnasium. Many thanks to the families who attended. The FPS team included 26 brave and spirited faculty/staff and high school student members. I wish to convey my deepest thanks to these individuals who gave their Friday night to support the fundraising that directly helps so many of our students.

FEF awards about \$30,000 in grants annually. Applications are submitted in early fall and grants are awarded in the winter for spring implementation.

Visit to Franklin Newcomers Meeting on November 20

I had the pleasure of attending the Franklin Newcomers Meeting last Wednesday as a guest with Town Administrator, Jamie Hellen. I gave a few remarks, which included our District's Strategy for Improvement and our Connect With Us opportunities. Additionally, I described how educating students today has changed with the:

- Increased needs students come to school with, including more complex needs
- Increased expectations that schools serve as hubs of social services in addition to the traditional mission of academic instruction
- Rapid advancement of technology driving big changes in major industries, resulting in a need for a dynamic education system that is preparing students with both academic and SEL skills for this rapidly changing, technologically advanced world
- Pressures students face today including social media as well as the availability and prevalence of substance abuse.

Questions and comments included:

- A discussion on enrollment projections in the district
- The budget forecast, including implications of the Student Opportunity Act and Town Fiscal Climate
- A question about our MCAS scores
- A question about what we are doing to educate parents/guardians about issues facing our students