



Franklin Public Schools

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Superintendent's Report to School Committee *June 23, 2020 School Committee Meeting*

Active Anti-Bias Education in Franklin Public Schools

At the last school committee meeting, Ms. Stokes asked for an update related to the work of FPS in being inclusive and combating bias, hate, and discrimination. I humbly submit some of the actions within FPS over the past several years to be a more equitable and inclusive school community:

1. Establishment of our core values including a Safe and Inclusive School Culture
2. In 2019-2020, placed cultural proficiency as a theme across all four district goals, instead of a stand-alone initiative: social-emotional learning; rigorous and engaging curriculum; high-quality instruction to meet the needs of each learner; effective two-way communication.
3. Developed a district-wide response protocol for incidents of hate, bias, and discrimination based on Teaching Tolerance's "Responding to Hate and Bias at School"
4. Professional development on cultural proficiency
 - a. Administrative professional development -- 10-hour course with Dr. Kalise Wornum of KWD Diversity 2019-2020.
 - i. Outcomes: studying your students and their families; examining one's bias; "marking the moment" to address incidents of bias, and having difficult conversations
 - ii. Theme of 2019-2020 -- get to know your students
 - iii. Sent administrators to see Dr. Adolph Brown (via membership in Middlesex Partnership for Youth) to build the capacity of our leadership team
 - iv. Administrative Team is reading *White Fragility* this summer as an anchor text
 - b. Curriculum leaders and professional development -- 30-hour session on curriculum development using Understanding by Design; thread through the sessions on culturally proficient/responsive curriculum design
 - c. School-based professional development led by building principals
 - i. Outcomes: marking the moment; understanding one's bias; examining materials and resources for bias
 - d. Courses at FHS
 - i. Offered "Race in America" during 2018-2019 but didn't run in 2019-2020 due to low enrollment
 - ii. Being offered for 2020-2021
 - iii. Seal of Biliteracy in 2020-2021, a credential that promotes second language acquisition, and recognizes this skill among our English Learners

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

- iv. Economics for Citizenship-"...understanding and navigating national and global economic questions and concerns."
5. Expanding literature and reading materials in elementary classrooms
6. A World of Difference Peer Program at all three middle schools and Franklin High School where student peer leaders (under the guidance of faculty advisors) provide instruction to their fellow students on understanding and eliminating bias within the school community
7. Clubs at Franklin High School: Diversity Awareness; SAGA; International Club, World of Difference, American Sign Language Club
8. Examining current practices to address systemic racism more explicitly, which is an expectation of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education during their regular program review, including around Civil Rights

We are certainly not perfect and there are more actions to pursue. FPS is committed to anti-racist and inclusive practices. We plan to return to the School Committee in the fall with a more in-depth presentation as well as additional steps within our improvement goals/initiatives.

We also especially look forward to ways to engage with the broader community to promote this work across the town of Franklin.

ESY Information

Remote Extended School Year (ESY) services will begin on July 8th. Updated individualized Remote Learning Service Plans outlining what remote ESY services will be provided and how they will be provided will be sent to parents/guardians by the end of this week.

On June 7th the district received Summer 2020 Guidance from the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). The Student Services administration is carefully reviewing the guidance to determine if we can meet the health and safety requirements and provide, on a limited basis, some in-person instruction later this summer to students with the highest level of need. Further guidance from DESE is expected later this week. We want more than anything to be able to provide in-person ESY services this summer but the health and safety of our students, families, and staff is the top priority. We will continue to provide ongoing communication with families throughout the process.

Art Highlight from RMS

In the spirit of sharing highlights from the school year, I am very proud to be sharing a project by Ms. Jane Pichette, an art teacher at Remington Middle School. She drew sketches of each of the graduating grade 8 students and as a parting gift, sent them this postcard to their homes.

A slideshow of her work can be found here:

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1ksNRA_aNGfhxF0yJcNAeUjeGjnJhwBid/view