



Franklin Public Schools

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September 12, 2023


Opening of School

The academic year of 2023-24 at Franklin Public Schools kicked off with a lot of activity. We welcomed back our 4,600 students and over 800 faculty and staff members with great excitement. Our FPS leadership and staff worked tirelessly to ensure that our facilities were ready, classrooms were set up, opening day activities were planned, families were informed, colleagues were met, and professional learning was participated in. Their dedication and hard work ensured that the school opening was a success.

We began by welcoming our staff to FHS on Monday, August 28th, with a breakfast and gathering, followed by opening remarks and staff recognitions. All staff then transitioned to their respective schools for building-based kick-offs led by school leadership. On Tuesday, August 29th, we began our district-wide professional learning together with a message from the Office of Teaching and Learning about this year's District Improvement Goals, followed by a keynote, Mirko Chardin, from Novak Education, who returned to Franklin for the second year. His message focused on Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles. Our staff then participated in a variety of professional learning activities tailored to their level and role.

I would like to express my gratitude to all our leaders, staff members, students, and families for coming together to make the start of school successful. As I have shared before, schools are the heartbeat of a community, and I am immensely proud to lead this district.

Hiring Update

 September 12, 2023 HR Staffing Report.docx

Migrant Housing Update

As we previously shared with our community, Governor Maura Healy of Massachusetts has declared a state of emergency due to the ongoing migrant crisis. In reference to the [press release](#) from the Town of Franklin, Franklin is one of the communities that has been asked to aid those who have been displaced from their homes. We were informed by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) and the town that migrant families will be placed in a Franklin hotel as long-term, temporary housing. This is being done on a staggered basis. At this time 35 of the 100 units are occupied with families consisting of approximately 25 school-aged children.

As a public school district, we are responsible for providing education and educational services for all the children in our community, regardless of their backgrounds or circumstances. We are currently collaborating with our other Town Departments and in contact with state agencies, such as the DESE, to ensure that we are prepared for any new students who may join us this school year.

The DESE has notified us that the state will be providing funding assistance to school districts based on the number of students enrolled. As we do with any student who enrolls in our schools we must protect the privacy of our students, We anticipate that our school community will welcome new families, as with any new school year. We will continue to provide updates as more information becomes available.

Lifelong Learning

As was shared in the spring of 2023, middle school club offerings and the middle school late bus were eliminated from the FY24 school budget. As a result, any extracurricular or after-school offerings will run differently this year.

Some club offerings will run through Lifelong Learning this year.

Jazz Band Club- will take place right after school at each of the three middle schools. The club will run on Mondays from 2:00-3:10 p.m. To enroll in Jazz Band Club, please visit the Lifelong Learning website and register. Families are responsible for transportation.

Ski/Snowboard Club - will continue to run through LifeLong Learning, as we have in the past. Each middle school will have a bus going to Wachusett Mountain. Lifelong Learning will be sending out more information about the timeline for registration and payment.

A World of Difference™ Peer Leaders - This leadership opportunity in partnership with the Anti-Defamation League will continue to be offered for 7th and 8th grade students. Heidi Harris, Franklin's DEI Coordinator, will serve as the Peer Leader Advisor across the three middle schools. Training days with ADL trainers will take place during school this fall, and a FLEX schedule will be established to hold monthly meetings with peer leaders at each middle school during the school year. Students and families should be on the lookout for more information about Peer Leaders in an upcoming email or school newsletter.

Unified Basketball - Unified Basketball, in partnership with Special Olympics and FHS Unified Sports, will continue to be offered at the middle level this year. Our Unified Basketball season takes place March-April. More information will be shared regarding student participation and sign-ups later this school year.

More information regarding clubs will be shared with middle school families in the coming days.