



## Franklin Public Schools

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### Superintendent's Report to School Committee

#### ***August 23, 2022 - School Committee Meeting***

We hope that students, staff, and family enjoy the remaining days of summer, and we are excited to welcome you back next week!

#### **New Teacher Orientation**

We hosted nearly 55 newly hired educators today for day 1 of our FPS New Teacher Orientation which takes place from August 23-25, 2022

Agenda topics include:

- Welcoming remarks
- Portrait of a Graduate exercise to internalize the skills
- Diversity, Equity, Inclusion - Belongingness
- Orientation to Student Services
- Orientation to ELD
- Technology Training and Google workshops by our DLIs
- Conversation with the FEA
- Educator evaluation and safe employee environments
- Orientation to Mentor Program
- School-based activities: school-based tours, curriculum and instruction, more technology

#### **Transportation**

We have adequate staffing levels for our 26 bus routes (including BFC Charter School) and will be reinstating four late bus runs this year at the middle and the high school level. This is a positive change from last year when we were only able to provide two late buses at FHS. We eliminated two elementary routes this year due to low ridership. Some of our high school and middle school buses are currently filled with students on a waiting list. We will assign them as soon as we are able, but safety remains our first priority. There are 2,320 students registered district-wide at this time, and more coming daily.

**Meals                      at                      No                      Charge                      to                      Students**

With the signing of the FY23 state budget, Massachusetts has become the fifth state to provide state support

to extend universal free meals beyond Congress' expiration date of June 30, 2022. The new state funds will be used to supplement federal USDA reimbursements, allowing for National School Lunch Program meals to be provided to all students at no charge and reimbursed at the federal "free" rate during the 2022-23 school year.

A letter was sent to all families with this information and instructions to apply. While meals will be free, it is still important for families who believe they may qualify to complete the eligibility forms linked in the letter. The eligibility numbers will be important in meal reimbursements to districts and for other benefits to families. (For instance, households that establish that their income qualifies them for free or reduced-price meals by August 31, 2022, will qualify for summer 2022 Pandemic EBT or waiver of transportation fees.)

This news was also shared on social media, and a letter was sent to all families, notifying them that meals are free this year.

### **COVID Update**

DESE and DPH issued a [joint memo](#) with COVID information for the upcoming school year aligned with the new CDC guidance released last week. This upcoming school year, districts and schools are asked to focus their COVID mitigation strategies on vulnerable and symptomatic individuals while minimizing the need for more restrictive districtwide COVID policies.

The Commonwealth is not recommending universal mask requirements, surveillance testing of asymptomatic individuals, contact tracing, or test-to-stay testing in schools.

Districts and schools are reminded that there is no longer any statewide masking mandate in schools (other than school health offices), no contact tracing requirements, and no testing requirement for schools. As always, any individual who wishes to continue to mask, including those who face a higher risk from COVID19, will be supported in that choice.

We ordered more child masks and will distribute them to ECDC and the elementary schools next week. We also have adult masks to distribute to schools as needed. We will not be doing symptomatic testing in school. We also have iHealth at-home test kits to send home with symptomatic students and staff upon request.

### **Back to School**

School begins next week.

- Monday, August 29th for faculty/staff
- Tuesday, August 30th for students in grades 1-12.
- Wednesday, August 31st for Kindergarten students
- Tuesday, Sept. 6th for ECDC
- Friday, Sept. 2nd, is a full day of PD, and we will share a summary of our PD day with you at the next school committee meeting.

### **Hiring**

We continue to fill postings across the district, and our Director of Human Resources, Lisa Trainor, will share a staffing update later this evening.

A promotional plug for the District. Franklin Public Schools is hiring for a variety of positions. The work hours and qualifications vary by role.

For the latest information visit [www.franklinps.net](http://www.franklinps.net) and look for Human Resources under the Departments tab on the main page.

- [Jobs at Franklin Public Schools](#)

If you are someone you know is interested in applying and have questions, please reach out to the point of contact listed in the job posting.

### **Thank you**

Our administrators, secretaries, custodians, facilities department, Technology Department, and the Franklin Department of Public Works have been busy readying the schools for our upcoming opening. They were instrumental in completing a myriad of tasks and projects in our buildings and on our fields to get the school year off to a great start. I would like to express my gratitude for their efforts.