

# Franklin School Committee Newsletter

March 7, 2024

Greetings, Franklin Families and Residents!

The Franklin School Committee is delighted to bring you the first edition of our monthly newsletter, a comprehensive source aiming to keep you engaged with the ongoing activities of the Franklin School Committee. In acknowledgment of the dynamic nature of our lives, this newsletter has been crafted to provide you with detailed insights into key developments impacting Franklin Public School families and the broader community.

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## February Meeting Highlights

In our February meeting, Superintendent Giguere provided an in-depth pre-budget season overview of the **FY25 Budget**. This presentation, accessible [here](#), not only dove into the financial landscape, but also discussed its implications for students. Superintendent Giguere presented four distinct budget models, emphasizing the District's priorities and obligations.

Jennifer Knight-Levine, CEO/Co-Founder of **SAFE Coalition**, was a guest speaker. SAFE is a non-profit organization that focuses on mental health and substance recovery. Jennifer took the time to shed light on SAFE's impactful Substance Use Diversion program, emphasizing its crucial role in addressing youth substance abuse and risky behavior. More information about SAFE and their programs can be found at <https://www.safecoalitionma.org>.

Approval was granted to the FHS Science and History departments for two exciting **2025 international trips**: Costa Rica and Southern Italy. These journeys offer students a unique opportunity to explore different cultures and create lasting memories, fostering a global perspective.



Between 2021 and 2025, how many countries will FPS High School students either visit or have planned to visit as part of an approved international trip? Enter your guess in our [feedback form](#). The answer will be announced in the April newsletter.

The **2024 - 2025 school calendar** underwent a review, with minor adjustments proposed. The calendar is a great planning tool for families. You can find it linked [here](#).

Due to the change to a virtual-only meeting, the **Annie Sullivan Middle School presentation** was rescheduled for a future meeting, ensuring ASMS has the same opportunity as other schools to share their highlights.

The full February 13th meeting is available on [Youtube](#).

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## Around the Corner

March marks our return to the regular two monthly **School Committee meetings**, scheduled for **March 5th & March 19th at 7 PM** in the Town Hall Council Chambers. These meetings are open to the public for both in-person and virtual attendance to foster community engagement. Meetings are also broadcasted on Comcast/Xfinity channel 11 or Verizon Fios channel 29.

Budget Season is officially underway! Superintendent Giguere shared his recommended FY25 budget to the School Committee on March 5th. The **Superintendent's Recommended FY25 Budget** presentation can be found [here](#). The **Joint Budget Subcommittee** meeting followed on March 6th. This collaborative effort between the Town Finance Committee, Town Council, and the School Committee Budget Subcommittee spans multiple meetings in the coming weeks to discuss and prioritize the needs of the town, determining how they will be funded. Yesterday's meeting provided insight into the financial state for FY25. The full meeting can be viewed on [Youtube](#).

The School Committee meeting on **March 19th** will dive deeper into budget-related discussions. The public is encouraged to attend and contribute their input regarding needs to consider as part of the budget process.

The **Comprehensive Facilities Assessment** is entering its final phase with the compiled data set to be presented to the School Committee. This information will be instrumental in making informed decisions about the future of FPS, emphasizing transparency and data-driven choices.

Experience our talented students first hand at different events throughout March. Don't miss out on these amazing opportunities.

- 3/8 Franklin High School Theatre Company presents... *Flowers for Algernon*
  - 7 PM at Franklin High School
  - Tickets can be purchased [here](#)
- 3/12 All Town Showcase Concert: Chorus/Orchestra grades 7-12
  - 6 PM at Franklin High School
- 3/13 All Town Showcase Concert: Band grades 7-12
  - 6 PM at Franklin High School

- 3/21 6th Grade Music Concert
  - 6 PM at Horace Mann Middle School

Make sure to mark your calendars for our next newsletter on **April 4th**.

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## Franklin Student Program Highlight

The annual **FPS Jazz Cafe** was on February 29th at Franklin High School. **120 musicians** across seven Jazz bands representing the three middle schools and the High School dazzled a jam-packed cafeteria with over two hours of sensational Jazz. Students, ranging from rookies to seasoned performers in their sixth year of Jazz, showcased their passion and dedication.

The Remington, Horace Mann, and Annie Sullivan Jazz Bands performed two songs each, setting the stage for performances from two FHS Jazz Combos, the FHS 3 Day Jazz Band, and FHS Monday Night Jazz Band. The night crescendoed with a collaborative performance of **"Beantown Blues Parade"** uniting all bands in a lively performance. Students paraded around the cafeteria on sousaphone and auxiliary percussion with two sections of improvisation to represent a New Orleans party in the streets.

The night's performance showcased the students' proficiency in the skill of embodying a **Confident and Self-Aware Individual** as outlined in the [Portrait of the Graduate](#).

Kudos to the talented musicians and educators that helped make the night possible!



Your support fuels the musical vibrancy within Franklin Public Schools. Learn more how you can support the Franklin Music Program at [Franklin Music Boosters](#).

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## Meet Your School Committee

The Franklin School Committee is a 7 member body elected into office every two years. Meet the individuals elected to serve until November 3rd, 2025.

### Dave Callaghan, Chair



I'm a proud dad of two wonderful kids who attend schools here in Franklin. I hold a Master's degree in Public Administration and have spent the last 15 years working in the public sector. In 2021, I began serving on the School Committee, where I've had the privilege of chairing the Policy Subcommittee and serving on the Budget Subcommittee. Following this most recent election, I have the honor of serving as the Chair of the Franklin School Committee.

My wife and I moved to Franklin to start a family, and we chose this community because of the amazing school system. I am committed to continuing the tradition of excellence in education for all students in Franklin.

### Al Charles



Al Charles has been a Franklin resident since 2009. He has two children in Franklin Public Schools; Annie Sullivan Middle School & Helen Keller Elementary School. Al has spent the majority of his career in various roles in the Telecommunications industry since 2003. He has

served as a member of the Franklin School Committee since 2021. Al is currently the chair of the Community Relations/Public Schools Advocacy Subcommittee, a member of the Comprehensive School Facilities Planning Subcommittee, and the Joint Parent Communication Council (PCC) Liaison.

### **Erin Gallagher**



I am the Executive Director & Co-Founder of the Children's Museum of Franklin, a new 501(c)(3) non-profit organization serving Franklin, MA and the surrounding region. Through the Museum, I'm working to build an interactive and imaginative space where children and families can come together to discover, imagine, and grow. My background is in marketing and communications and, in the course of my career, I've touched a variety of industries and a spectrum of marketing-related functions.

I am a member of the Franklin Master Plan Committee, the president of Franklin Area Moms, a local parent support organization, and a volunteer foster care case reviewer for the Department of Children and Families.

Most importantly, I am mom to three wild and wonderful kiddos: seven, five and three.

### **Dr. Paul Griffith**



Paul Griffith was born and raised in Trenton, NJ. He received two bachelor degrees (B.S. in Genetics and B.S. in Microbiology) from Clemson University and a PhD from the University of

Georgia in Molecular Genetics. He completed his post-doc at the National Cancer Institute studying CRISPR therapies for immunodeficiencies before moving to Franklin where he works in the biotech sector (cell and gene therapy). He has three children, two currently in the Franklin Public Schools and one who will be joining the class of 2040.

### **David McNeill, Vice Chair**



Dave McNeill grew up in Franklin and graduated from Franklin High in 2009. He attended Framingham State University for undergrad and the University of Mannheim in Germany for graduate school. Since returning to Franklin in 2017, he has also served as a board member of the Franklin Education Foundation and the Vice Chair of the Community Preservation Committee. He has worked at the Massachusetts House of Representatives since 2019 in various positions with his current role being Chief of Staff for a state representative. Since 2021, he has served on the Franklin School Committee since 2021 and has been Vice Chair since the beginning of this current term.

### **Ruthann O'Sullivan**



I'm a mom of two great kids that currently attend Horace Mann Middle School here in Franklin. I have been active with the PCC, assisting with fundraising and running events. I was also a volunteer at FPS during the post-covid 'cohorts', helping out while Franklin kids transitioned back to school full time.

My degree is in business management. I attended UMass Amherst's Isenberg School of Business, as well as becoming a certified paralegal at Northeastern University. My career has focused on business development, and I have developed operational strategies for finance, legal and engineering firms. The most unique experience of my career, however, was hosting a 'cohort' of students in my home as we navigated covid. During that time I assisted 5 children ranging from K-5 with their virtual schooling. That experience really increased my appreciation for educators. Those who take in hundreds of our children each day, and then work tirelessly to connect with each individual in order to bring out their best. I want to empower our educators to use their passion and creativity to impact our children's future by providing the resources and direction for them to do their best work.

I have most recently become a fierce advocate for the adequate funding of our school budget. I am committed to bringing people together by working with other elected leaders in town in order to ensure our school district is stable and resilient during this systemically challenging time in public education.

### **KP Sompally**



KP Sompally (Krishna Prasad Sompally), the father of two boys—the younger one currently a student at FHS and the elder one a 2021 FHS graduate—along with his wife, has been a resident of Franklin since 2008. I am an engineer with a deep appreciation for robust technology.

I am a new member of the Franklin School Committee and have previously served on the Franklin Design Review Commission. My experiences all share a common thread - a passion for service.

During my 20+ year career in IT, I have obtained extensive experience in project management, execution and budgeting. I hope to bring that experience to the SC and help in any way that I can.

I am a two-time recipient of the Presidential Award, the Boston Mayor's Award, and the Boston Cares Award for voluntary service. I am bilingual in English and Telugu, proficient in Hindi, and have some knowledge of Tamil.

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## Connect with Us

Your feedback is invaluable! Share your thoughts and suggestions through our [feedback form](#) on how the School Committee can better serve you.

Thank you for your continued support, and we look forward to keeping you informed about Franklin School Committee matters.

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## Missed a Meeting?

- Catch up on previous School Committee meetings at the [Franklin School Committee YouTube](#) page.
  - Content shared during School Committee meetings are available online in the [2023 - 2024 Meeting Packets](#) section.
  - Previous District wide communications from the Superintendent are available at [District Communications Archive 2023-2024](#)
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## Resources

- There is a wealth of School Committee content available at the [School Committee website](#).
- Don't get lost in the educational jargon. The ["Eduspeak" Glossary of Educational Terms & Acronyms](#) helps you stay in the conversation.
- Stay informed on the happenings in Franklin by visiting [Franklin Matters](#).