



Franklin Public Schools

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Superintendent's Report to School Committee January 26, 2021 School Committee Meeting

Welcome new School Committee Secretary

Tonight we welcome Ms. Christina Tocci who will be serving as the School Committee Secretary. Ms. Tocci has experience in this role having served as Board Member for the Franklin Children's School where she served as Board Secretary. In recent years, she had been serving Franklin in the Recreation Department and they speak very highly of her. Recently, Christina has met with Denise Miller in my office for an orientation related to the role and responsibilities. Welcome Christina!

Pool Testing Pilot Preliminary Survey Results/Next Steps

Thank you to the many families and faculty/staff who responded to the pool testing survey we collected last week. We had over 1100 family responses (families could respond for more than one child at a time). Interest among families hovers around 50% with around 20% indicating a maybe. Over 600 faculty/staff responded and about 73% are interested in pool testing.

We recognize that there is more work to do to communicate logistics and technical specifications, which ultimately will have an impact on actual participation and further clarification on the rationale. Pool testing is one tool that provides a promising path towards more in person learning.

Earmark Released

Recently, I sent a letter to DESE asking to release an earmark that Senator Rausch allocated to communities she represents. I want to inform the Committee that that earmark has been released. Totalling about \$20,000, these funds can be applied towards COVID related costs this year.

Civics Education -- An Update

Given all the attention being paid to civics education. Dr. Edwards and I would like to take a brief moment to share what this looks like in our classrooms. This may, perhaps, dispel some myths or concerns.

- The 2018 MA SS Frameworks include a Civics thread from PK-12
- All topics taught in a developmentally appropriate manner
- The standards present the foundation of Democracy from an historical perspective
 - Origins, growth, struggles of democratic societies-past and present

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

- Fundamental ideas related to the vision from the 18th century
 - Structure of government (3 branches)
 - How a bill becomes a law
- Democratic ideas have turned into institutions and practices over time, shaped by economic, social, cultural, religious, and international conditions
- Purposes, principles, and practices established by the Constitution
 - Rights and responsibilities
 - How to exercise rights and responsibilities
 - Develop and practice habits of civic engagement and participation
- Use of primary sources: Constitution, Bill of Rights, etc.
- Non-partisan approach grounded in academic study
- Classes involve conversation and honor all perspectives-as we do with all topics
- Grade 8
 - "...ensure that all students will have background knowledge of principles and structures of United States government and individuals' rights and responsibilities, and serves as an introduction to the study of history and social science in high school." *MA Frameworks 2018*

Thank you for letting us share. We will be focusing on the new Social Studies standards and the work of this curriculum committee during the District Improvement Goal #2 "Engaging and Rigorous Curriculum" update in a few months.

Professional Development Review -- January 19, 2021

1. ECDC -- Technology and Instruction in the in person and remote settings
2. Elementary educators --
 - a. Focusing on the instructing the "priority standards" as identified by literacy and math specialists with check ins and support from building administrators
 - b. Illustrative Math professional development for pilot teachers
3. Middle school educators --
 - a. Keys to Literacy professional development
 - b. SEL, community building and culture, sharing of best teaching practices in the hybrid setting
 - c. Discovery workshop for social studies educators on instructing the new standards
4. High school educators --
 - a. Staff will work on effective communication, best hybrid teaching practices, priority standards planning, student information systems and effective assessment strategies
5. Nurses -- COVID policies and practices

Preview of February 12, 2021

1. District wide AM session -- Cultural Proficiency and Anti-Bias Education
 - a. Third part of a series this year on promoting a more inclusive school culture
 - b. Focus areas -- interrupting microaggressions and understanding implicit bias
2. PM Session -- will vary across the district some of which will be:
 - a. K-3 NWEA-MAP planning
 - b. Grade 5 -- Primary Source will work on Social Studies instruction with the new standards
 - c. Consultants working with some of our specialized programs
 - d. Training for pool testing

Congratulations to FHS Music Students Accepted to MA Central District Honor Band, Chorus and Orchestra

Twenty six members of the Franklin High School music program virtually auditioned and were accepted into the 2021 Massachusetts Central District Honor Ensembles. Twelve of these Franklin High School students received All State audition recommendations. Due to the pandemic, the festivals will look a bit different this year. Rather than performing in a large ensemble, those students who received All State recommendations are invited to perform in a virtual masterclass. This means that they will perform a solo in front of a virtual audience and receive feedback from a highly respected music educator. All other Sr. District students will have the opportunity to observe these masterclasses.

YOU Inc.

We want to share with families that a mental health provider, who has been partnering with us at Parmenter to provide counseling to students and families as additional capability this year through teletherapies. Please contact your child's school or the Office of Student Services for more information.