

LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Superintendent's Report
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Each year we do a graduation report to the school committee. In addition to the discussion around the quantitative data, we also talk about the effort to increase graduation rates and decrease drop outs. The prevailing wisdom in the preventative effort is that interventions begin far sooner than high school. We are fortunate that in our schools we embrace that wisdom through the Project YES (Thurgood Marshall) and All Stars (Breed) programs. Both are longstanding programs, eleven years and five years respectively, and they have shown notably impressive results from an empirical standpoint.

I am pleased to share that both programs have had a successful start this school year. Both programs engage more than 50 students each, employ a research-based curriculum, and feature support by and participation from clinicians and the Lynn Police Department. I can speak at length about the program features and activities, but I have long believed that the success of both programs is the result of the people who staff it. There is undeniable intentionality around relationship building and mentoring. The staff involved in the programs demonstrate exceptional expertise in developing and maintaining relationships. As a result, students feel more connected to school, are less likely to break school rules, are far more likely to attend regularly, and because of the connection to the school are more classroom ready.

Related to graduation, I would like to provide some information on our five year graduation data. Attached to this narrative is a set of graphics breaking down various aspects of the data. In this space, I will provide a high level analysis. To be clear, the LPS five year graduation rate dipped from 80.2 to 78.2. There are many factors that can push graduation rates in a particular direction. Peeling back the layers of the data, we have cause for celebration and cause for concern at the same time. Clear in the first graphic on the attachment is a steady increase in five year graduation rates among students with disabilities. This is really positive news! At the same time, there has been a pretty precipitous drop in the five year graduation rates among English learners. The drop in graduation rates among English learners is commensurate with that for all students. Logically, as the number of English learners increases in a particular cohort, the impact on the "all students" data will be more significant. Case in point, in 2014, English

learners represented 18% of the students in the fifth year cohort. In 2017, English learners represented 24% of the students in the fifth year cohort.

The point here is not to place blame on any particular state-identified subgroup. The value in peeling back the layers of data is to identify areas for celebration and areas in need of change and/or improvement. Opportunities for both exist in this data.

This is not the space to present proposals or strategy for improvement. There will be a presentation on graduation and dropout and an update on the conversation on high school design on January 30th. Both are germane to the topic.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Superintendent of Schools