

# LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Superintendent of Schools*

## Superintendent's Report December 10, 2020

In almost every direction one looks during the evening hours, there are festive lights and other representations of the holiday season. In this context, it feels like the community is attempting to endure every available minute of a period during the year that tends to be celebratory and family-centered. I share those feelings. At the same time, from the professional standpoint, we are deeply mindful of the fact that the season can also bring stress and sadness. Accordingly, the social and emotional learning team has devised and will be sharing widely resources to support staff and families over the course of the holiday season. This includes but is not limited to helpful tips, resources, and a day-by-day calendar of activities in which families can engage to promote mental health. We acknowledge families feel loss and challenge in different ways and thus want to offer a helping hand through the holiday season.

The holiday season is near which is accompanied by a well-deserved, much-needed winter vacation. Shortly thereafter marks the midpoint of the school year. As such, it feels timely to report out on the work we have been doing to elevate student voice with the inclusivity panels. The inclusivity panels were born out of a resolution adopted by the School Committee late summer. In short, the panels are designed to engage students in the effort to address issues related to race and equity in our secondary schools. The district has partnered with the [Equity Imperative](#) to leverage the Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) Model to select an issue to research, present on the research process on a quarterly basis, and provide recommendations to the stakeholders of each school/district for change. Thus far, each secondary school has identified mentors, engaged them in a professional learning experience to prepare them for the work, and commenced the student recruitment effort. In short, this process is on track and going well thus far.

Related, we are excited to begin our district-wide race and equity work on the staff development day, January 4<sup>th</sup>. Also part of a school committee resolution and designed by our partners at the Equity Imperative, this professional learning experience will help our team understand where and how racism manifests in the processes of teaching and learning and in our schools. It is also designed to support staff in developing strategies to directly confront these issues. The experience is thoughtfully balanced with asynchronous modules and live discussion sequences divided into four quarters:

- Quarter 1 – January- February: Foundation Setting - Recognize how race matters and that racism can be undone
- Quarter 2 –March – June - Teaching & Learning - Unpack curriculum, instructional, and assessment practices that perpetuate racism

- Quarter 3 - TBD SY21-22 - School Discipline - Uncover routine procedures that reproduce racial inequity
- Quarter 4 - TBD SY21-22 - Actively Advocate for Racial Equity - Reveal strategies to avoid common roadblocks, obstacles, and detours to racial equity

I invite you to watch this [introductory video](#) our partner, Matthew Rodriguez, developed for the launch.

Finally, we remain deeply committed to simplifying parent/guardian access to information and improving mediums of communication. We are close to launching two new features, which will help in both arenas. First, a Lynn Public Schools application is nearing readiness for launch. This will be a simple one-stop-shopping feature available for all smart phone users. Further, we have begun training on our new communication platform, School Messenger. Both will support our efforts to ensure that families have easy access to information and receive communication in the simplest most successful way.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Tutwiler, PhD