

LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Superintendent's Report January 9, 2020

As January 1, 2020 marks a new decade in this century, it behooves me to start this report with a brief comment on an ever present and ever changing facet of our lives - technology. No doubt, that technology proliferates and evolves almost everywhere and is related to almost everything, education is no exception. Computer-based test administration is not new in the state or in this district. It is new on the high school level this year. Yesterday we thrust into "testing season" with a computer-based version of the ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in State-to-State). I am pleased to inform you that this was done with minimal issues. This comes as the result of a focused planning and preparation effort beginning in October. The focus of the effort was to remove any and all obstacles to a successful test administration so as to allow students every opportunity to strut their academic stuff. In short, the effort involved a broad inventory assessment, the development of testing schedules months in advance, several infrastructure trials, and the weekly memorandum to building leaders on updates and other pertinent information. This was a collaborative effort that, thus far is paying dividends. Yesterday 90.6% (1,149 students) of high school students completed 2/4 domains of ACCESS testing. This is only the beginning, but so far so good.

At the November meeting, the committee voted unanimously to approve the availability of reproductive health products through the school based health centers at our high schools. In December, we met with representatives from Lynn Community Health to begin framing a plan to roll out. The plan is to engage an iterative process – one wherein we frame elements of the roll out and then solicit School Committee input before making the plan complete. As it stands right now, the plan is as follows:

- Update and present Lynn Community Health school-based health center brochure (attached)
- Update and present Lynn Community Health consent form, which will include language informing parents/guardians that, by law, students may seek care without consent.
- Schedule an all call to high school families informing them of the impending change to availability and where and to whom questions can be directed. Similar messages will be posted on Facebook and the LPS website.
- Lynn Community Health will have a table at the spring open houses Classical (3/9/20), English (2/16/20), and LVTI (3/5/2020) where parents and/or students can get information and/or ask questions.
- In advance of availability, students will be provided information in homeroom/extended mentoring.

A specific date for availability has not yet been determined. I will follow the committee's direction on the topic. That said, we expect that it will be after all of the information has been updated and parents/guardians and students have the multiple opportunities to ask questions.

There is a request for information on how we transition students in the Lynn Public Schools. The topic is a good one and a very important one as well. The short answer: whether it be transitioning to kindergarten, elementary to middle school, middle to high school, or high school to the next step in a student's life, transition is carefully-managed and a thoughtfully-driven effort. Extraordinary care is taken at each of the transitions because, as the research will agree, those are the most turbulent times in a student's education and often the times at which students experience seriously-detrimental setbacks. At a high level, anxiety and fear are assuaged and comfort in familiarity are solidified through activities such as orientation, visiting classrooms before the start of the school year, and outreach to families about expectations and norms. Further, there are lots of interactions between educators, guidance counselors, and related service providers who share information in preparation for a student's transition. Doing so not only solidifies a smooth process for the student, it ensures that he/she is known by educators in the new placement in advance of arrival.

The aforementioned reflects the traditional trajectory every student progressing through the Lynn Public Schools experiences. As is typical in districts like ours, we welcome students at various points of their academic career and/or during a given school year. Transitioning to the Lynn Public Schools under these circumstances carries with it particular challenges, chief among which is getting acquainted with a new student and acquainting the student with the new learning environment while the school year is already underway. Incomplete transcripts, missing data, and/or a missing individualized education plans further stifles a smooth transition in this scenario. That said, there is the same commitment and the same attention dedicated in these scenarios as in any other. In total, attention to a student's start or transition, be it at the beginning of the school year or at any other point, it is critical. If there are issues at the launch that are not quickly mitigated, they become bigger overtime. Accordingly, we spend time and dedicate thought to ensuring that it is done well.

Finally, I am excited to announce that the Lynn Public Schools was awarded a \$150,000 DESE Gateway City Education Grant for Bilingual Education Programs as part of DESE's GLOBE project (Grants for Leading Organizations for Bilingual Education). The grant is focused on efforts to create and cultivate a "grow your own" bilingual education hub by supporting potential bilingual educators in our district, as well as with neighboring communities, to improve and diversify the bilingual educator pipeline in Massachusetts. The funds for this grant will continue our Dual Language program professional development at Harrington, offer bilingual endorsement coursework through Boston College to currently identified bilingual staff, recruit interested bilingual staff for the bilingual endorsement, and develop a successful model of bilingual education that can be replicated in other schools and districts.

Also in your packets is the January 1, 2020 enrollment.

Respectfully Submitted,

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