

LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Superintendent of Schools*

Superintendent's Report May 3, 2021

Noting the date atop this memo, it is clear that we are very quickly approaching the end of the 2020-21 school year. Typically, the final months of the school year feature finishing putting the final touches on state mandated tests and, perhaps more favorably, a whole host of year's end events, concerts and celebrations. Much like every other point in this unique school year, the final seven weeks of the school year will look and feel different. Much of our attention as of late has been focused on expanding in-person learning, a process that will continue through mid-May. Further, the timelines for state-mandated tests have shifted later this year with testing windows remaining open until mid-June. Year's end celebrations and events will indeed happen. We will embrace the same level of safety and precaution as we have throughout the year for these events and we very much look forward to celebrating the hard work and accomplishments of students and our deep partnerships with families as we near the end of the school year.

Although we are approaching the end of the school year, several initiatives are ramping up. In the most recent School Committee meetings we have presented on significant improvements we intend to make in the realms of facilities and technology. This is work that is already underway or will begin shortly and will continue throughout the summer months. We have also been working in earnest to fine tune the summer learning experience for students. We are finalizing the program and will present it in this space formally on May 13th. What is more, we have begun to look ahead to the 2021-22 school year and are thoughtfully piecing together a framework designed to respond not only to the uniqueness of the current context, but also to student need around growth and development far beyond.

Among the notable initiatives that are ramping up as we wind down the school year is the Pickering Middle School building project. There is collective excitement (and relief) that the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) invited the city into the process for a new school. I have and continue to believe that, in education, it is the people who make the experience and programs fulfilling. It is for this reason that school scores of Pickering Middle School alumni reflect fondly on their experience. That said, they have excelled and succeeded despite the physical plant, not necessarily because of it. The care and expertise of the people will be the reason for continued success, but we very much look forward to the enhancement that an updated physical plant will have on students' experience.

The Eligibility Period, the descriptor the MSBA calls the first phase of the project, begins May 3rd and there are eight deliverables that must happen before the end of this phase in late January. Here, I would like only to underscore one prominent foundational feature for this and subsequent phases. There is unanimity around the idea that a new school is a wonderful

development not just for the Pickering school community, but the city as a whole. As such, I intend to make it my responsibility in my role to make the process fully transparent, accessible, and collaborative where necessary and appropriate. Schools belong to the community and this should be a community endeavor.

Finally, the English Learner Parent Advisory Council (ELPAC), has continued to meet throughout the school year on the virtual platform. Much to my delight, the membership has been steady over the course of the school year. As you know, the focus of this council is to engage in two-way communication with families around meeting the needs of English learners. One specific request that has come out of this convening is to make the space of the School Committee meeting more accessible for families whose first language is not English. For years, we have had an interpreter at in-person meetings. In the current context, there are features we can leverage on the Zoom platform to make the meeting accessible and we are working with LynnCam on means to make meetings accessible to the television audience. There are important markers featured in this step, chief among which is channeling the district core value of inclusiveness.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patrick Tutwiler, PhD