

# LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

James Leo McGuinness Administration Building – 100 Bennett Street, Lynn, MA 01905  
Tel. (781) 593-1680 ~ Fax. (781) 477-7487



*Patrick A. Tutwiler, PhD*  
*Superintendent of Schools*

## Superintendent's Report September 30, 2021

Three years ago when we launched the effort to develop the district strategic plan, we did so under a theme of go slow to go fast. This meant taking the time to carefully evaluate where we stood and where we wanted to go. It meant taking the time to listen to stakeholder experience, thoughts, and wishes. What resulted from this process that took place over the course of the 2017-18 school year is a document in which we all believe and that drives our work over the course of the next five years. The current context calls for the same careful analysis, planning, and collection of input to ensure long-term success.

This week marks the third full week of the school year. There are areas of supreme success and there are areas of notable concern. We have launched nearly all of our beginning of the year programs, both during the day and after school. From a student experience standpoint, the ability to attend school in person full time each day is critically important. Additionally, there are many resources and activities available for students to engage academically and recreationally. What began as a difficult transportation scenario, with few solutions available, has almost righted itself – with more than 90% of riders arriving on-time to school each day.

While there are areas of success that can and should be celebrated, they should not and will not overshadow the concerns. As we believed would be the case, there are positive COVID-19 cases happening in the district mostly among students and even some staff. Although the transmission on site is not to blame for the vast majority of them, any positive case is worthy of our attention and response. Much of the response has come in the form of activating our contact tracing system and quarantining students according to Department of Elementary and Secondary Education guidance and based on Nurse analysis. As of Tuesday, September 28, 2021, nearly 180 students have been quarantined. The vast majority of the students are at the elementary level. While that quarantine number represents 1% of the total enrollment, a quarantine scenario represents significant hardship on these students and their families.

Thankfully, the test and stay, protocol is set to launch next week. The rollout will take place over two to three weeks. This will allow students who are identified as a close contact who have no

symptoms and test negative using the rapid test available in schools to remain attending school so long as they continue to test negative each day over a period of seven days. Much of the planning for this began immediately upon notification by the state in August, and now that the state vendor supporting the testing effort has brought on the appropriate personnel this effort can begin. The weekly testing model will begin shortly thereafter. Here, it should also be mentioned that it is believed that a vaccine for children under the age of 12 will be available by the end of October.

*Go slow to go fast.* Slow would be an inappropriate and inaccurate descriptor for the actions related to work to ensure a safe and successful start to the school year. Nonetheless, some of the pieces of the plan take time to implement. We are carefully and thoughtfully implementing these pieces. At the same time, we continue to embrace feedback and act upon our philosophical foundation, which includes clear and frequent communication. All of this together will provide stability and allow continue all facets tied to our theme: Stabilize, Heal, and Transform.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick Tutwiler, PhD