

# LYNN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Superintendent's Report  
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Knowledge of languages is the doorway to wisdom.  
By Roger Bacon

As we enter the fourth year of our five-year district strategic plan we continue to move forward with the mindset of “Go slow to go fast.” This means continuing to take the time to carefully evaluate where we are and where we want to go. It means continuing to take the time to listen to our stakeholder’s experience, thoughts, and wishes. What results from this process is a document in which we all believe drives our work over the life of this plan. We will continue with the same careful analysis, planning, and collection of input to ensure long-term success and will look forward to entering a new district strategic plan process under a new Superintendent in the future.

This week marks the third full week of the school year. There are areas of great success and there are also areas of concern that need noting. First, I need to acknowledge that this school year has not started the way we had hoped. The transition from eSchool to PowerSchool has been very difficult, which has had an impact on every aspect of our work. The student information system is at the heart of everything we do from scheduling, transportation, and to how well we can communicate with our families. I need to express my sincere apologies again to any family who has been impacted by this difficult transition. We need to do better and are working hard to get our systems running correctly.

The good news is that we are making great progress on these issues. Much of our student and family information has been rolled over and corrected, allowing for School Messenger to be up and running with many of our other systems being updated. Transportation issues seem to be running smoothly with about 90% of riders arriving on-time to school each day and although staffing continues to be a challenge for our school leaders who continue to reach out to find licensed and qualified people to fill our open positions.

Additional successes to report, our Spanish/English Dual Language programming, Compañeros, continues to thrive, serving more than 200 students. Compañeros Connery opened this month, with a lot of enthusiasm from parents and students. There are currently two kindergarten classrooms at Connery and will expand upward a grade level each year. The two dual language classrooms each have 25 students, and the SEI classrooms have 25 and 26 students. We have a current waitlist of 5 students, and we will continue to pull from this waitlist all year long to keep the SEI and Dual Language classrooms balanced and will add to the waitlist as students enter.

Compañeros Harrington is now available pre-K through grade 2 and will also continue to expand upward in grade level each year.

- In Pre-K, there are a total of 12 students enrolled with additional openings still available. Students must turn 4 by September 1<sup>st</sup> to enroll.
- In Kindergarten there are 25 students enrolled in each of the dual language classrooms, and 15/17 students enrolled in the two SEI classrooms. There is a waitlist of 4 students for Harrington kindergarten, and like Connery, we will continue to add to this waitlist all through the school year as new families arrive and pull from it as spaces become available.
- In 1<sup>st</sup> grade there are 25 students enrolled in all 4 classes (both dual language and SEI). There is a waitlist of 3 students that will continue to be added to and pulled from.
- In 2<sup>nd</sup> grade there are 25 students enrolled in each of the two dual language classrooms, and 27 students enrolled in the two SEI classrooms. We are still seeing a large interest in dual language as new second graders enter the district but are working to place all the students who are requesting dual language into dual language classrooms.

Both Compañeros programs are fully staffed, with 9 teachers and 4 paraprofessionals across the two buildings, and 1 dual language coach.

- All staff members are fully bilingual and biliterate.
- Many of our teachers are proud Lynn Public Schools alumni or longtime staff members in LPS, and all but 2 new teachers this year were hired internally.
- All are either licensed or actively working on finalizing their licenses.

We continue to receive a lot of interest from the community, with many families calling to ask about dual language even before coming in to register their children. We also receive a lot of inquiries from community members interested in working in the dual language program. This year, we will be able to offer opportunities for LVTI students enrolled in the early childhood program to observe and help in dual language classrooms, providing them with real world experience right here in LPS. It is our hope that these same students will then return to Lynn Public Schools to work as teachers, paras, and other positions.

Finally, to further elaborate on our successes is the news that we have been awarded two grants:

- McKinney-Vento Homeless Education grant for \$80,000
  - Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative Cohort 3 Grant for \$538,000. More information about this grant will be shared at a later date.
- Just informed of a new grant opportunity that we are investigating. This grant is for improving ventilation and air quality in public school buildings. Lynn is eligible to receive \$4.4 million dollars for this potential work. We will be working with Mike Donovan on this possibility.

I felt it appropriate to share an update on our Compañeros Spanish/English Dual Language program as we celebrate National Hispanic Heritage Month between September 15-October 15. Dual language programming is an opportunity to elevate the value of being bicultural, bilingual, and biliterate. As you know, 70% of our students identify as Hispanic and National Hispanic Heritage Month allows us to open the school year focused on the diverse traditions and cultures of our student community. Our diversity is our greatest strength, and we are committed to celebrating the historical and present contributions of Hispanic authors, doctors, scientists, and leaders during this month and throughout the school year for our students to have windows, mirrors, and doors as they engage in their learning.

¡Juntos Logramos!  
Respectfully submitted,  
Deb Ruggiero