

August 24, 2021

TO: Danvers School Community

FR: District Office

Last night, the Danvers School Committee held their August meeting. Here are some of the highlights:

- **Mask Discussion:** The School Committee had a long conversation regarding the possibility of instituting a mask mandate, which included comments from many community members. The committee voted to table the matter since the Commissioner of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts was expected to request approval to mandate masks for all public schools in the state today. *The commissioner's request was granted, and he is expected to formally issue the mandate this week in an effort to both create a uniform policy for all school systems to begin the year and to encourage more students and staff to get vaccinated.* As of Thursday, August 26th, masks will be required in all school buildings for preK-12 students, staff and visitors. Information about close contacts and the Test and Stay Protocols will be implemented during SY21-22 can be found at the following [link](#).
- **New Administrators:** Kerry LeBlanc, a new Assistant Principal at Danvers High School and Danielle LaRocque, a new Assistant Principal at the Holten-Richmond Middle School were introduced by their building principals. We wish them both well in their new roles.
- **Summer Programs:** Mary Wermers presented highlights of our Summer Program, which included the Falcons & Journeys programs, elementary and middle school tutoring, and a math acceleration academy.
- **Opening of Schools:** Lisa Dana presented the district's 3 priorities for the 2021/22 school year based on our Strategic Plan, which are: 1) Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion; 2) Coherent Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment; 3) Safe and Supportive Learning Environments. We also introduced the Portrait of the Graduate concept and announced we will be forming a District Council to guide the visioning and implementation. We will be looking for volunteers from across the community to get involved with this initiative. We will share more on this effort at the September School Committee meeting.
- **Smith School Update:** Keith Taverna confirmed that Smith School is ready to open for the first day of school on September 9th. Students who will be attending Smith School have been invited to tour the school on August 30th. He also reminded the community

that we will be hosting a ribbon cutting and open house for the new Smith School on Saturday, September 25, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.

- **Summer Projects:** Keith Taverna shared that DPW has replaced floors at Riverside, emptied containers that were used to store equipment last year, and cleaning to make sure school is ready to open on September 9, 2021. We thank the DPW for their efforts.
- **MASC Anti-Racism Resolution:** The School Committee discussed the previously presented Anti-Racism Resolution and voted to adopt it.
- **Pre-K-12 School Improvement Plans:** The School Committee voted on the proposed 2021-2022 K-12 School Improvement Plans for a 1st reading. Principals will share them once they have been approved.
- **Pre-K-12 Student Parent Handbooks:** The School Committee voted to approve the Student/Parent Handbooks for the upcoming school year. Principals will be sharing these with their back-to-school updates.

The first day of school for the Danvers Public Schools is Thursday, September 9th. Please see the [2021/22 School](#) Calendar for early release days, holidays, vacation periods, and other important dates.

The next Danvers School Committee meeting is scheduled for 7:00 p.m. on Monday, September 13, 2021. It will be held at the Holten-Richmond Middle School. The meeting is open to the public. The meeting may also be watched live on DCAT - Comcast channel 8 and Verizon channel 37. Last nights and previous school committee meetings can be viewed at <https://www.danverstv.org>.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the principal of the school your child(ren) attends or contact central office.

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