



## *SUPERINTENDENT UPDATE for February 2018*

Dear Families,

The year is moving swiftly and before we know it, spring will be here! My February update includes information on safety and security, large facilities projects, and exciting new programming.

### **Safety and Security**

Given recent events, the February 28 BoE Town Hall will address school safety in addition to facilities, finances and programs. The meeting will begin with a security panel joining with the BoE including me, Police Chief Gary MacNamara and Fire Chief Denis McCarthy. We will be addressing past and present steps that Fairfield has taken to address school safety and security. First Selectman Michael Tetreau will act as moderator for the evening. An agenda will be posted prior to the meeting.

#### BoE Town Hall

*Date:* February 28, 2018

*Location:* RLMS Auditorium

*Time:* 7:30 pm

On March 14, 2018 there is a National School Walkout planned across the country to honor the 17 Florida victims who lost their lives and to speak out on school safety. FPS is taking a thoughtful and planned approach to the day.

Our high school leadership is working directly with our young people and law enforcement to allow participation while maintaining a safe environment. As many of you may be aware, there were walkouts yesterday in high schools across the country. Middle school leadership from all three schools are working together, and will assess the situation over the coming weeks. We are extremely mindful of the vastly different levels of maturity in grades 6-8. PK-5 should not be impacted by the day. We are cognizant that our youngest children may not have been exposed to the tragedy.

### **Facilities**

Holland Hill is on track and families should begin seeing some evidence of construction very soon!

On February 13, 2018, the BOE approved the Educational Specifications for two of our building projects:

- The Mill Hill Renovation and Expansion Project. The \$1.5M dollars in this project request is for “seed” money to begin investigating the property, and was recently approved at the February 21 BOS meeting. It now moves on to the BOF and RTM for respective approvals.
- The Sherman Phase III Project. The primary focus of this project is the installation of air conditioning and a mechanical means of fresh air. The BOS plans to review this project at the March 7 BOS meeting.

### **Budget**

On March 6<sup>th</sup>, the 2018-2019 Board of Education Proposed Budget will be presented to the joint Boards of Selectmen and Finance. The budget process spans several months and the final RTM vote does not occur until

May 7, 2018. The budget increase request is 3.1%, and that includes the increases in health care, transportation, salaries and fixed costs (such as utilities). For more information, visit the FPS [Budget](#) page.

### **Programs and What's New?**

Fairfield should be extremely proud of our young people who are leading the way in discussing tolerance, acceptance, and understanding in our schools. A group of our FWHS students presented in San Diego last week at the Redesigning Student Success Secondary School Showcase sponsored by the Center for School Redesign, EdExcellence and NEASC. We are extremely proud that our staff and students were able to model their great program for the rest of the country. Also, both FLHS and FWHS are participating in a diversity conference being held at Southern Connecticut State University. The SCSU's Minority Initiative sponsors the conference, and both staff and students will be presenting.

Staff are preparing for the September 2018 implementation of Next Generation Science Standards. Next year, new and exciting science curriculum will be infused into our high schools. At the same time, a new STEAM program will begin at each elementary school. Middle school will finalize their new curriculum and prepare for implementation in 2019-2020. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the fastest growing occupations are in the "STEM related fields." It is essential that our schools continue to keep pace with the rapidly changing world of technology integration and prepare students for jobs of the future. To meet that challenge, we will equip our students with the necessary skills to be adaptive thinkers, competent collaborators, and innovative problem solvers.

Connecticut has released new high school graduation requirements that become effective with our current seventh graders (Class of 2023). This spring, the district is working to align our course offerings, requirements and opportunities to be presented to the Board of Education for approval. The community will be invited to provide input on Saturday, March 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 am. Please stay tuned for the location of the meeting, as the new requirements will impact every student currently in PK-7.

### **Student Achievement**

Connecticut recently released the 2016-2017 Next Generation Accountability Results. We are extremely proud of our staff and students across the district who continue to perform at high levels. The reporting methodology is new for Connecticut, so the staff are working to understand the formula for calculating items such as Chronic Absenteeism and Arts Access. We always take the time to look at performance relative to our peers, and in comparison, Fairfield is standing strong. We remain a premier school district in Connecticut and across the country. However, we are most proud of the joyful learning environments, inquisitive classrooms, high quality work products, collaboration, and expansive opportunities our school system makes available to every student. We also have the best teachers, administrators, and support staff! If you would like more detailed information on performance, information is available on [EdSight](#).

As the winter season winds down, we are hopeful that the rest of February will be snow free. Thank you for sending us such wonderful young people who make our jobs delightful!



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