

To: School Committee
From: Michael Sullivan, Superintendent
Date: December 11, 2016
Re: Report for School Committee meeting of December 13, 2016

1. On December 2, I had the honor of presenting TFHS Senior, Jordyn Fiske, with this year's Superintendent's Award at a ceremony hosted by the Franklin County Technical High School. Jordyn is ranked first in her class and has a distinguished record of scholarship, service, and athletic achievement and it was a pleasure to meet her family and join in this Franklin County tradition.

2. On December 6, I had the honor of joining our school committee chair in taking part in the annual induction of Turners Falls High School juniors and seniors into the George F. Wrightson Chapter of the National Honor Society. This year a dozen new students were inducted, having demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, character, leadership and service. Thanks goes out to math teacher John Carter who does a terrific job as our honor society advisor.

3. On December 9, I attended a MASC conference in Boston on legal issues in Massachusetts schools. Attendees received summaries of recent court rulings related to teacher evaluation, public records requests, union officials' privileged communications status, and the recent Municipal Modernization Act.

4. The bulk of my own personal professional development over the last three years was through the New Superintendent's Induction Program (NSIP), which ended last spring. To keep up with best practices for administrators and continue my professional development I have accepted a request to teach a graduate course on Thursday evenings this spring semester at UMass; ***Education 646: Leadership for Curriculum and Instruction***. The time I invest in this class will sharpen the work I do with the district's administrative team and teacher leaders and will not detract from the time and energy I invest at GMRSD.

5. **Safe & Supportive School grant:** Of 49 applicants, GMRSD was one of 17 districts to receive this competitive DESE grant. We have been awarded \$18,600 to take our safe and supportive schools work to the next level. We are expected to convene 3 school-based teams (Sheffield, GFMS, TFHS) that will complete assessments and develop plans Jan - June 2017. Here's more info from the award page: <http://www.doe.mass.edu/grants/2017/awards/335.html>

The purpose of this competitive grant program is to provide funding to districts (and their selected schools) to develop action plans that organize, integrate, and sustain school and district-wide efforts to create safe and supportive school environments and coordinate and align student support initiatives. Selected schools and districts will create action plans based on all six areas of the safe and supportive schools framework and the self-assessment tool, currently referred to as the [Behavioral Health and Public School \(BHPS\) Framework and Self-Assessment Tool](#). The six areas include Leadership; Professional Development; Access to Resources and Services; Academic and Non-Academic Activities; School Policies, Procedures, and Protocols; and Collaboration with Families.

This work is intended to help schools create safe, positive, healthy and inclusive whole-school learning environments and make effective use of a system for integrating services and aligning initiatives that promote students' behavioral health (e.g., social and emotional learning, bullying prevention, trauma sensitivity, dropout prevention, truancy reduction, children's mental health, foster care and homeless youth education, inclusion of students with disabilities, substance use prevention, positive behavioral approaches that reduce suspensions and expulsions, and other similar initiatives).

Schools that receive funding (through their district) under this grant program will convene a school team, respond to the questions in all six areas of the Self-Assessment Tool for schools, determine areas to prioritize for improvements, finalize an action plan, implement the action plan, and assess progress regarding the action plan. The Framework shall provide guidance and support to schools to assist with the creation of safe and supportive schools that improve education outcomes for all students.

6. CFWM (Community Foundation of Western, Mass.) Innovation grant for work on trauma-informed schools: Our Community School Partnership and the Regional School Health Task Force (which GMRSD belongs to) are supporting Clinical and Support Options, Inc. in their application for a planning grant focused on developing effective and sustainable professional development on trauma-sensitive practices for schools and school districts. That application has made it to the final round and we'll know if the project is funded at the end of January.

Additional information for items in this meeting's agenda:

7. Business Director's Report: Enclosed are the architectural drawing for the Hillcrest stage project.

8. Four Winds School: Enclosed is a three part document regarding the approval of private schools. The first part is our related policy. The third part is the relevant Mass. General Law. The second part is a memo from DESE providing guidance on the approval of private schools. We will need to postpone having the folks from Four Winds attend a meeting until we have reviewed these documents and adopted procedures to be followed.

9. Student Enrollment: Enclosed are three more documents related to student enrollment data.

10. Multicultural/Social Justice Learning: The document in your packet about Affective Learning categorizes the field into the broad categories of social and emotional learning, multicultural education, citizenship education, and social justice education. I hope you will find these categories useful in getting a handle on a broad and overlapping field. What would be useful for me and the rest of the administrative team is to know which of the areas, if not all of them, you are interested in either learning more about, or seeing the district do more. On the last page under needs assessment, the questions should have stated In which affective learning areas do we wish to grown (rather than in which SEL areas).

12. Indian Logo/Nickname/Mascot Events: Please see the enclosed updated list of inquiry events.

