



To: The Berlin-Boylston Regional School Committee

From: Carol L. Costello, Superintendent of Schools

Date: September 26, 2023

Re: Superintendent's Report to the School Committee

1. Introduction of New Staff - Tahanto, Berlin Memorial, Boylston Elementary

2. Approval of Goals - Please see document included in folder

3. MA Board of Education Approves Updated Comprehensive Health and Physical Education Framework - On Tuesday, September 19th, the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) unanimously approved an updated comprehensive health and physical education framework, the first time the guidelines have been updated since 1999. That document can be found here: [updated framework](#). The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, educators, and health experts began the process of revising the framework in 2018, ultimately leading to the draft shared in June. As part of the process leading up to the draft, DESE worked with educators, administrators, families, students, subject matter experts, and representatives of different types of schools and districts, professional roles and professional and community-based organizations. According to the press release, the DESE received nearly 5,400 responses through a survey, email and regular mail that was conducted through the summer to give input into the Frameworks.

On a district level, I am aware of the mixed emotions, opinions, and potential actions that parents have expressed about the new Frameworks when reviewed as part of the survey. As educators, we did not anticipate the adoption coming this quickly. The Berlin-Boylston Regional School District will not be rolling out the new Frameworks in whole or part this year. (Consideration may be given to a gradual implementation next year of specific topics/units).

- We (health teachers and administrators) will need time to unpack the new and revised standards so that we may compare what is currently in place, needs modifications, or will need a complete revamping.
- Resources needed for our instruction will be examined and factored into budget planning.

- New curriculum will need time to be developed, approved by the School Committee and implemented.
- Consideration will be given to families who choose to opt out their children from lessons related to sex education. We will need time to develop a process for doing so and alternate plans for students during that time.

I also want to make you aware of the following state laws that are in place and that we take very seriously in moving forward:

State law (G.L. c. 71, § 1 and G.L. c. 71, § 3) requires all public schools to teach health education and physical education, but school districts have discretion to determine how standards are implemented at the local level, including what curriculum and materials they will use.

State law (G.L. c. 71, § 32A) also gives parents the right to opt out their children from lessons related to sex education, which is a small portion of the knowledge covered in this framework.

4. The Portrait of a Graduate - An Invitation to School Committee Members to Envision the Future of our District

I am extending an invitation to join me and members of the school and larger community in this meaningful work. I would like to have *up to two representatives* from each of the stakeholder groups from each school and town: , teaching staff, support staff, administrators, parents, community members, school committee members, middle school students, and high school students. If you are willing to serve, or would like to learn more before joining, please feel free to reach out to me at: ccostello@bbrsd.org. I will be looking for a commitment by **Friday, October 13th via email.**

When are the meetings? During the 2023-2024 school year, my goal is to complete Stage I of a three-year process toward the development of our district's Portrait of a Graduate. This is the creation of the *Vision*. I am proposing five meetings this year to be held on Tuesday evenings in the Tahanto multipurpose room as follows:

Tuesday, November 7th, 5:00pm - 7:00pm

Tuesday, December 5th, 5:00pm - 7:00pm

Tuesday, January 16th, 5:00pm - 7:00pm

Tuesday, February 6th, 5:00pm - 7:00pm

Tuesday, March 5th, 5:00pm - 7:00pm