

(Translations: [Arabic](#) [French](#) [Portuguese](#) [Somali](#) [Spanish](#))

April 14, 2022

Dear South Portland families,

As we plan intensively for next year through the lens of the district's PreK-12 enrollment and our budget and operational needs, we are faced with many challenges and difficult decisions that also present unique opportunities for collective problem solving.

Earlier this year, as we reviewed enrollment projections in preparation for building our next district budget, I asked a group of school and Central Office administrators to look at our emerging needs in terms of space, staffing, and programming. It became clear that our elementary enrollment across the district will surpass the existing space we have in several of our schools as we confront the reality of the largest district enrollment since 2015.

After looking at multiple options and scenarios, the district is moving forward with the following plan to best meet the needs of all our students:

- For the 2022-23 school year, the 5th grade students from three of our district schools – Brown, Kaler, and Skillin – will move to Mahoney Middle School. While maintaining a 5th grade model of programming and instruction, students and staff will follow the middle school times of 8:30 - 2:45. Mrs. Stilphen, principal, and Mr. Ouellet, assistant principal, will be the administrators for all students at Mahoney, grades 5-8.
- The three district PreK classrooms will be located at Kaler Elementary School.

This plan allows us, as a district, to add the necessary additional classrooms at the K-4 level in multiple elementary schools as well as at Memorial Middle School while maintaining our target class sizes and streamlining our programming and resources. We will be able to allocate our operational and instructional resources more efficiently including transportation, special education, and multilingual resources. This plan also follows the successful placement of Brown and Skillin 5th grade classes at our middle schools during the current school year.

We recognize that this plan will be met with mixed emotions by students, families, and staff alike. We know that making this transition in the year prior to moving to our new middle school may present challenges for some families and raise questions. There are still details to be

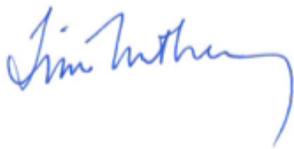
figured out; however, given the space we have and our projected enrollment for the 2022-23 school year, this is our district plan moving forward.

We are committed to supporting a smooth transition for all of our students and staff and providing opportunities for families to ask questions and learn more about the plan for next year. Families are invited to share their questions via a Google form by clicking on [this link](#). Central Office staff and building administrators will work together to answer questions and address concerns. We will publish a “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)” document after you have the opportunity to pose questions.

Upcoming events will include an informational webinar for families to attend, meetings with current 4th grade students and principals, and a family information night at Mahoney. Please look for information from your school principal regarding dates and times for these opportunities.

We look forward to receiving your input and answering your questions in the coming weeks.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tim Matheney". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Tim Matheney
Superintendent of Schools