



Ann Arbor Public Schools

Superintendent Update

Board of Education

Wednesday, December 20, 2023

With so much happening in the world right now, in our community, and in our district I want to take this opportunity to state that the care, safety, and well-being of all of our students and all within our district remain our top priority.

We stand against all forms of racism, hate, and bias. When harm is done in our school community, we always take these matters seriously. We do not ignore them. We do not deny them. And we do not neglect to hold people accountable.

When incidents occur, and they do because our schools are a microcosm of the world and community around us, there are some details that we cannot comment on. Yet, I can state that we do investigate and take the appropriate measures based on our district procedures and processes. We also do not condone threats being made against our school environments, district offices, and staff. Because even when things occur, we value maintaining civility. I

Even during turbulent times, *especially* during turbulent times, our focus is on supporting our students' individual and collective needs, with a deep commitment to their well-being. We will continue this unwavering focus, as it is our critical mission.

Thank you, Trustees, for this opportunity to provide the Superintendent Update. It's an exciting and busy time in the Ann Arbor Public Schools as we approach winter break at the end of the school day on Friday. I want to thank our students, teachers, school and district teams, parents and community for all the effort to finish this first 'half' of the school year so beautifully. It's a time of celebration as we move into this winter break 2023.

Highlights:

Teaching & Learning

Summer School planning is underway, and we will soon see the posting of key leadership positions as we plan for effective and accessible summer school learning for identified students. The programs are an important part of a 12-month system of intervention to continue to close learning gaps and prepare students for the next grade level.

Elementary teachers continue to receive ongoing and embedded support in the updating of **effective literacy practices** with monthly professional learning, peer supports and connection to experts daily. The implementation of phonics and phonemic awareness curriculum and tools has been widely successful and well-received by our talented team of teachers. Our next steps include the full review of core reading materials as well as screening tools to bring the redesign into full alignment with what we know to be best practice.

Kindergarten Round-Up Events

As we get ready for the new year, it's not too early to start thinking about some of our youngest students who will start their AAPS experience as kindergarten and young fives students in the fall of 2024. [Kindergarten Round-Up events](#) are scheduled throughout the month of February and March at our elementary schools and K-8 buildings. We are excited to share with families the fun that awaits your children, meet our school staff, learn about the programs, the enrollment process and get answers to your questions.

Superintendent Search Survey

AAPS staff, families, and high school students this week received an email with a link to the Superintendent Search Survey. The survey is also available to all in the community via a headline on the [A2Schools.org website](#) and Facebook. We encourage everyone to respond to this short survey regarding your thoughts on the current state of AAPS and the qualities that are most important to you in the district's next leader. The survey will be open through Friday, January 12th.

Winter Break: Love, Live & Learn

As we head to winter break, we know there may be some time when families and children are looking for things to do. We have created some links to activities and learning resources that kids may engage with at home. Our [Winter Break: Love, Live & Learn document](#) includes appropriate-level online learning options, a link to an area events calendar, food resources and more.

Fall 2023 Highlight Video

As we prepare for winter break, look back at some of the highlights from this fall in the Ann Arbor Public Schools with music from the Pioneer Symphony Band. The AAPS wishes everyone a happy, healthy, and safe winter break. [Please enjoy this video.](#)

Communication from the AAPS

To stay up-to-date with daily updates and information on school and district activities, you may want to follow us on social media.

- Twitter [@A2Schools](#)
- On Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/AnnArborPublicSchools>
- Subscribe to our A2Schools podcast at: <https://a2schools.buzzsprout.com>
- AAPS YouTube channel at: <https://www.youtube.com/AnnArborPublicSchools>.

We also regularly share updates on the work of the Board of Education in the [BOE Update Newsletters](#).

Thank you for the opportunity to serve in the Ann Arbor Public Schools, and for the opportunity to share this Superintendent Update this evening.

Sincerely,



Jazz Parks
Interim Superintendent of Schools
Ann Arbor Public Schools