



May 3, 2026

# *From the Desk of Dr. Xi*

## **Amherst Public Schools (Grades K-6)**

Greetings Amherst Community,

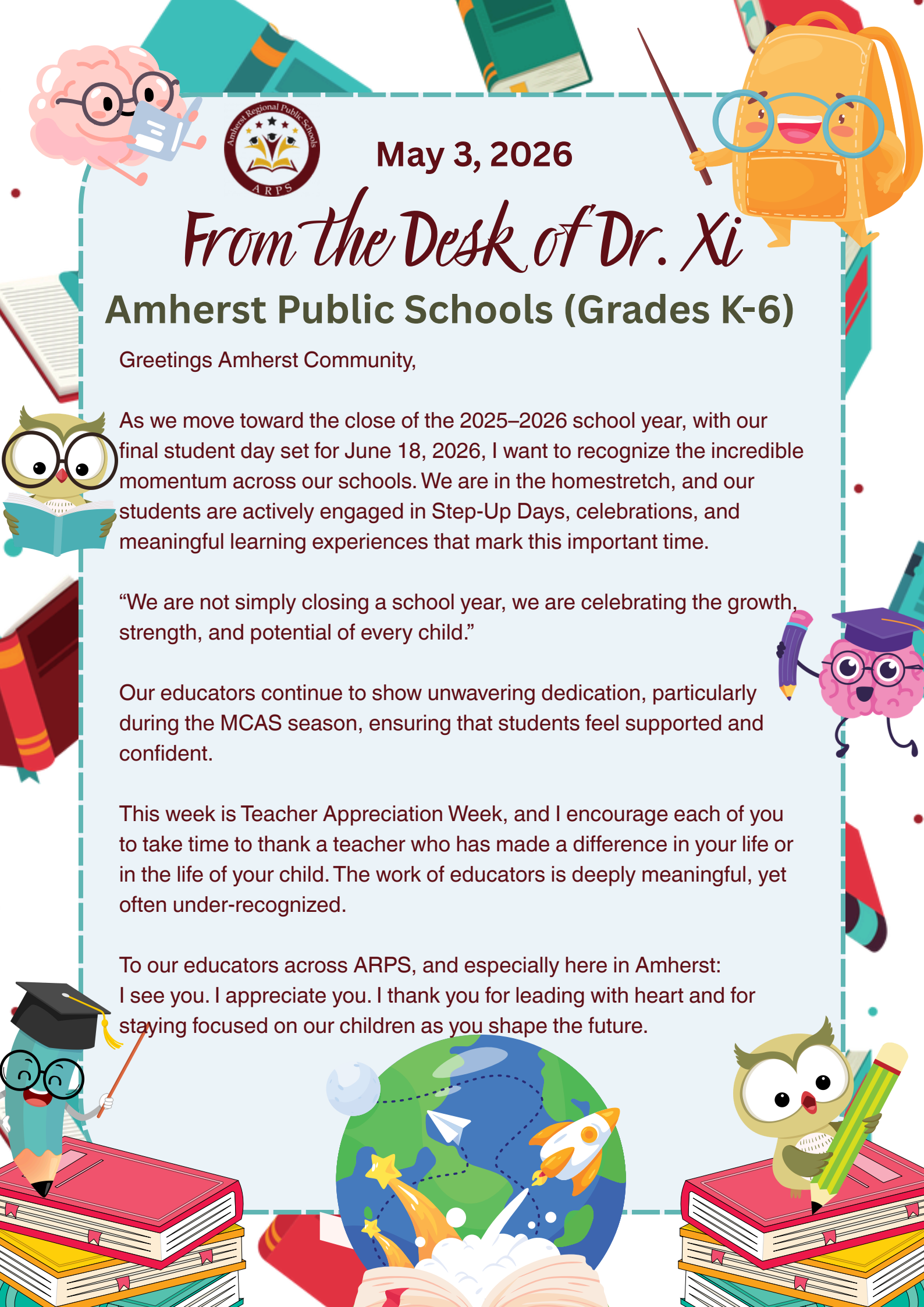
As we move toward the close of the 2025–2026 school year, with our final student day set for June 18, 2026, I want to recognize the incredible momentum across our schools. We are in the homestretch, and our students are actively engaged in Step-Up Days, celebrations, and meaningful learning experiences that mark this important time.

“We are not simply closing a school year, we are celebrating the growth, strength, and potential of every child.”

Our educators continue to show unwavering dedication, particularly during the MCAS season, ensuring that students feel supported and confident.

This week is Teacher Appreciation Week, and I encourage each of you to take time to thank a teacher who has made a difference in your life or in the life of your child. The work of educators is deeply meaningful, yet often under-recognized.

To our educators across ARPS, and especially here in Amherst: I see you. I appreciate you. I thank you for leading with heart and for staying focused on our children as you shape the future.



## What to Keep a Close Eye On:

- **Chestnut Street Academy**

On May 11, Principal Rodriguez and Assistant Principal Ferro will host an informational session for families at ARMS about the upcoming school year. This is a wonderful opportunity to engage, ask questions, and learn more about this exciting work.

- **Tea with Dr. Xi**

Join me this week on ARPSTube at 6:00 p.m. for a live informational session. I will be joined by our Multilingual Learner Administrator, Celia Senckowski, to discuss our MLE programs and the Dual Language Caminantes program. There will also be a live Q&A.

- **Budget Updates**

The Amherst School Committee voted on March 30 to approve a 5.87% budget increase.

On April 29, the district presented restoration scenarios, and on April 30, the Town Manager recommended a 5.1% increase.

We will present to the Finance Committee on May 7 at 3:00 p.m.

Your engagement in this process remains critical as we work toward a final budget that supports our students.

- **School Start and End Time Discussion – What You Should Know**

At this time, no decision has been made regarding changes to school start or end times.

This is not a simple adjustment. It is a complex, system-wide operational analysis that directly impacts all three districts.



Over the past several months, the district has:

- Collected staff and caregiver survey data
- Engaged in transportation efficiency studies
- Reviewed route timing and capacity constraints
- Assessed facility access challenges, particularly with the opening of Amethyst Brook Elementary

One of the most important realities to understand is this:

Our transportation system is fully interconnected across Amherst, Pelham, and the Regional schools. A change in one district directly impacts another.

The upcoming work focuses on evaluating the proposed transportation structure for the 2026–2027 school year, with attention to:

- Access and egress at Amethyst Brook, including traffic flow and timing constraints
- Arrival and dismissal alignment between elementary and regional schools
- Bus tiering and routing efficiency, ensuring students arrive on time and safely
- Instructional time requirements and maintaining compliance with state expectations
- Minimizing delays and maximizing consistency for families

This is why the discussion must occur collectively across all districts.

The district will present a full analysis and next steps at the Joint School Committee Meeting on May 20 at 6:30 p.m.

I encourage our community to stay engaged in this process, as any future decisions will be grounded in data, safety, and the overall student experience.

Thank you for your continued partnership, your engagement, and your trust. Please continue to look out for updates in the coming weeks. It is truly an honor to lead and serve such a committed and caring community.

With gratitude,  
Dr. Xi  
Superintendent

**Thursday, June 18, 2026, is the last day of School for students.**

