

REPORT OF THE KING PHILIP REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

School Year 2019-2020

The King Philip Regional School District vision “to inspire students to develop their passions and prepare them to succeed in a world of rapid and constant change” took on new meaning this past year as our world encountered the challenges brought on by the Coronavirus pandemic, the first pandemic in a hundred years. While we opened on September 4, 2019, with great excitement and welcomed almost two thousand students in grades 7-12 for daily traditional classroom instruction, the King Philip Regional School District was in the unprecedented position where it became necessary to move school online from mid-March through the end of the 2020 school year to respond to the world health crisis. Whether we operated in person or virtually, our mission continued to be one where we strove to foster a climate of respect, individual and collective responsibility, creativity, and enthusiasm for learning within our students. As a school district, our 2019-2024 strategic plan focused on teaching, learning, budgeting, and developing community. Technology became a necessary part of all elements of this plan. We continue to appreciate all of those who supported the King Philip Regional District efforts to educate all of our students. Providing a world class education for all the students who attend the King Philip Regional Schools is our highest priority.

The King Philip Regional School Committee, which is essential to the functioning of the school district, is comprised of nine members, with three members from each of the towns of Norfolk, Plainville, and Wrentham. Six members are elected, with 2 from each of the respective towns with staggered three-year terms. The other three members are appointed by their respective town school committees. The committee, when in person, generally meets twice a month at the King Philip Regional High School in the Library to conduct business. These meetings are open to the public. The emergence of the pandemic, where size of gatherings and social distancing was mandated by state, necessitated virtual committee meetings that were live streamed to allow public attendance. Dates, times, and links to these meetings are posted on the school district’s website at www.kingphilip.org and also posted in the Superintendent’s Office.

In addition to the bi-monthly meetings, members of the school committee also serve on subcommittees that meet on an as needed basis throughout the year. Those subcommittees include a Budget & Finance Subcommittee, Policy Subcommittee, Collective Bargaining Negotiations Subcommittees for Unit A (Teachers); Unit B (Custodians); Unit C (Secretaries); Unit D (Teacher Assistants); and, KP Cafeteria Association. School Committee members also serve as representatives to Sick Bank and the Health & Welfare Trust Subcommittee. The work of each of these subcommittees varies depending on the needs of the district.

The Budget & Finance Subcommittee worked with the Superintendent of Schools and Director of Finance & Operations in the preparation of a budget request which would be presented to the residents at each communities’ annual town meeting. The subcommittee and the full school committee spent much of their meeting time during the winter and spring months working with the superintendent and administration to develop an operational budget request for the school department. At the annual spring town meetings, the requested budget was approved.

The district was very pleased to have been the recipient of a multi-year grant from Governor Baker’s Office which supported the four schools with a wellness director, a full-time social worker beginning with the 2019-2020 school year, and cultural competency training for the administrators of the four districts. Through a Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child lens, the regional

wellness director has focused on identifying resources and partnerships to support the behavioral and mental health of students, and addressing wellness needs for students and staff across the four districts. To support families, five spring 2020 parent wellness education events, meal distribution during school closure, and wellness and food access information were provided. Just after the close of the year, we were awarded a second year of the grant for FY 21 to continue wellness efforts, and continue funding a family support social worker and the wellness director.

Thanks to the continued support of our town's budgets, our administrative, custodial and grounds staff, worked diligently to maintain the status of the facilities with regular maintenance, and periodic improvement projects. A thirty-year capital replacement plan was established along with significant upgrades to both buildings to aid in the safety during the pandemic as well as improved cleaning and disinfecting practices.

With the uncertainty about holding a large graduation due to the pandemic restrictions, on June 6th high school seniors were honored with the first ever parade for the graduating seniors. Cars of all shapes, sizes, decorations, began at each town elementary school and paraded through the streets of Norfolk, Plainville, and Wrentham. Applause and cheers for the seniors in family cars culminating with a group of cheering KP staff at the high school were appreciated by our seniors. While senior year spring sports, senior prom, senior events, and a traditional graduation were not able to happen, this parade was an event this year's KP seniors will never forget.

More than one month from the day of the Senior car parade, on Friday July 24th, KP High Seniors had a non-traditional graduation ceremony to honor our class of 2020. Socially distanced, entering the football field with face masks, parents/guardians and seniors took their seats to begin the graduation ceremony. As the sun set, Dr. Lisa Mobley, High School Principal, had seniors walk up to the podium, one by one with their family, to receive their degrees alongside their family. Pictures were taken commemorating a very different but memorable senior year for this talented group. The class of 2020 will forever hold the noted distinction of being the first pandemic graduating class within this century.

Mr. Michael Gee served as the Chairperson for the King Philip Regional School Committee from April 2018 through the 2020 school year with Mr. Samad Khan serving as Vice-chair. The King Philip Regional School Committee would like to express its gratitude to senior, Marion Linde, the student representative to the school committee, for her input at meetings. The committee would also like to recognize the work of Mrs. Elisa B. Witkus who serves as Secretary to the School Committee.

During the month of September, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts released the results of the 2019 Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS). The analysis of these scores by department-based data teams in each building drives curriculum decisions and instructional and assessment practices. Overall, past data regarding King Philip growth and achievement has been extremely positive. Throughout the district we are demonstrating that our students are achieving at high levels in ELA, mathematics, and science, well above the state levels. During the spring of 2020, the Next Generation online MCAS testing, which is usually administered for students in grades 7, 8, and 10 was suspended due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

High numbers of our students in junior and senior years of high school are taking advanced courses. Eighty percent of our students taking Advanced Placement exams do so in mathematics with thirty-five students taking ELA and thirty two percent taking History. The King Philip Regional School District has been recognized on the AP Honor Roll for the large numbers of our students taking AP exams with 81% of our students earning strong scores of 3 or better. As a district, we

continue to refine our instructional approaches and outcomes guided by data analysis and reflection on best practice.

The accomplishments of the King Philip Regional School District do not end in the classroom. This year's athletes brought great pride to the district as teams and as individuals. Warrior pride is more than just a score at a game. The students who attend King Philip Regional Schools exemplify good sportsmanship and team spirit at every event. The district is very proud of every player and coach and commends them for a job well done.

In March of 2020, a public forum on the FY2020 school department budget was held. The purpose of the public forum on the budget was to provide the community with detailed information about the school committee's budget request that ultimately came before the voters at the respective town meetings in June.

Due to the hard work of a strong administrative team, numerous accomplishments were realized during the 2019-2020 school year. Our professional development has been aligned with state directions and initiatives. The Middle School completed preparation to launch the Grade 8 Civics curriculum for the fall of 2020. A competitive \$26,328 STEM grant was directed towards teacher training/ resources that will lead toward more comprehensive alignment with MA Digital Literacies Frameworks. The STEMScopes program was implemented at the middle school level to increase student engagement, rigor, and raise student achievement. Longitudinal alignment between HS Physical science curriculum, MS Science, and the 2016 MA Science Frameworks was the result of several years of collaboration. Updates are reflected in the district's [curriculum online](#) view designed to support parent access to curriculum maps, unit designs, and essential understandings.

The district continued the work begun in the tri- town to cultivate a school environment that fosters equity, access, and opportunity for all students. As part of this approach, the district integrated approaches such as teaming and co-teaching to increase instructional engagement. All tri-town administrators were also trained by Dr. Darnisa Amante (racial equity strategist) and Gene Grove Thompson (School Reform Initiative) on the topics of educational equity and social justice. Extended training continued in these areas through book study by administrators and teachers. King Philip also supported a partnership with Lesley University to support the Arts Team in their integration of culturally responsive teaching through the newly released 2019 MA Arts Frameworks. The district continued to support diversity and LGBTQ student clubs. Aligned with our district's strategic plan, we are working on the development and implementation of systems, protocols, and services designed to meet the diverse needs of all learners.

Middle School academics are strong, and we have students excelling in the region and in the state. In the New England Mathematics competition, we were pleased that King Philip Middle School students were recognized as top scorers. In Norfolk County, our 7th grade students finished in 2nd place while our 8th grade finished first overall. When compared with 58 New England schools, our 7th grade finished in 11th place while our 8th grade finished in 6th place. Four students qualified to advance to the statewide MATHCOUNTS competition after participating in a local MATHCOUNTS competition.

King Philip Middle School Student Ambassadors continued their involvement in Project 351, a statewide program that empowers teens to make change and progress within their community. Annually, we have ambassadors that are selected to represent the communities of Norfolk, Plainville, and Wrentham.

Deepening student learning experiences by connecting with experts in various disciplines has also been important. In addition, 8th grade students deepened their understanding of the literary works of Edgar Allan Poe through a visit from Poe expert, Campbell Harmon. Middle School Athletics continued to offer opportunities for intramurals such as cross country, basketball, volleyball, and track and field.

We continue to celebrate the success of our teachers. Congratulations to MS Teacher, Mrs. Susan Hall, STEM Teacher, for being awarded National Certification in STEM Education for learning, building scientific understanding, and engaging students in best practice.

KP Middle School continues to teach our students to care. Through our Amazing Race, our students learned about kindness and supported local families that were in need as well as bringing several tons of food to our local food pantries. A group of 7th graders visited the State House in January after writing letters to local representatives on how climate change affects the King Philip community as part of a science unit.

With the support of World Language teachers, middle school students sponsored a Peace Corps Partnership Project. The World Language Department has incorporated lessons on global poverty into our curriculum in French and Spanish. This year we chose a middle school partnership to address projects that would help to clean water in Africa and provide for eco stoves in Panama. Through the project our students learned about worldwide leadership and humanitarian efforts.

Our Arts program continues to be a source of more KP Pride. shining through our performance ensembles and theater programming. The 7th and 8th Grade Bands and Combined Chorus were preparing for their Spring Concerts and MICCA performances before school was shut down due to the Covid-19 virus. Our music faculty created an online curriculum for the students involved in the performing ensembles. In the spring of 2020, a talented KPMS Cast and Crew were just about to start tech week in preparation for their performance of *The Wizard of Oz*. Unfortunately, the performances were cancelled due to the school shut down.

King Philip Regional High School students demonstrated success in all aspects of high school life. There were 95 students in the Class of 2020 that were the recipients of John and Abigail Adams scholarships where students receive tuition credit for up to eight semesters at a MA state college or university.

Seven of our high school students received a high school diploma with distinction for four students in STEM and three students in Humanities. Two of our students received distinction for successful completion of the Advanced Placement Capstone program of the College Board with twenty of our students being recognized as AP Scholars. Eighty one percent of the 657 students taking Advanced Placement exams in May received grades of 3-5 that can be used to help students receive college credit.

Our Arts program continues to be a source of more KP Pride. At the high school, the KP's Pride and Passion Marching Band earned their 34th consecutive Gold Medal at the MICCA State Finals, First place in Division V open at NESBA Finals and placed 2nd in Division IV open at the US Bands National Championships held at Metlife Stadium in East Rutherford, NJ. The high school jazz ensemble earned a Gold Medal at MAJE State finals just before schools transitioned to virtual learning.

The high school Bands and Chorus had a wonderful fall performance and were gearing up for their Spring Concerts and MICCA festival before the events were cancelled due to the pandemic.

Our music faculty created an online curriculum for the students involved in the performing ensembles. A number of clinicians came to work with the Concert and Symphony Bands. The Symphony Band was preparing for a World Premiere of the piece *Allamand*, by composer and KP alum Benjamin Webster. This was again cancelled due to the pandemic, but we hope to perform the World Premiere in the future. KP High School students were well represented at both the Southeast Senior District Festival and All-State Music Festival.

The KP High School Drama Program produced the 2019 Fall Musical *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. All performances were a success. The Drama Program was in the process of preparing their Spring Performance of the play *Almost Maine* before being shut down due to the pandemic.

In past years, students have had the opportunity to participate in International Exchanges such as the one with Lycee St. Exupery in Montigny-le Bretonneux, France where students lived with students, attended classes, and took field trips to Versailles and Paris. Although 2019-2020 was a year where no spring international travel occurred, students continued their language studies. This year, in the first year of the Seal of Biliteracy program, three King Philip seniors received this distinctive seal in Spanish/English on their diplomas which reflects proficiency in two or more languages by high school graduation. This recognition may be presented to colleges and future employers.

DECA, Distributive Education Clubs of America, is a career and technical student organization with more than 225,000 members in all 50 U.S. states in which our King Philip students participate. This past year, the district celebrated the success of DECA students where 98 students competed in the MA state competition with 52 students being recommended for the International Career Development DECA competition.

King Philip Regional High School students have access to comprehensive athletic programs where students compete at the freshman, JV and Varsity levels. The Lady Warrior Soccer Team qualified for the MIAA South Sectional Championship Game. Field Hockey, Girls Volleyball, Boys Soccer, Boys Basketball, Girls Basketball, Boys Ice Hockey and Football all made it into the early rounds of the state tournament. In addition, KP has many successful individual student athletes compete in MIAA State Tournaments. KP Warrior Football won the Thanksgiving game. Several students were acknowledged in the Boston Herald All-Decade Selections for basketball, cross-country, football, softball, soccer, and swimming.

As we work with our tri- town community to provide our students with a first-rate education, we are excited by student successes. We look forward to inspiring future classes of King Philip students and preparing our students for life-long involvement in our global society!

Respectfully submitted,

Paul A. Zinni, C.A.G.S.
Superintendent of Schools