



# Superintendent's Report

READING SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

FEBRUARY 26, 2018



## School Safety

Reading School Committee Meeting

February 26, 2018

## School Safety Highlights

- Strong collaboration with police, fire, town, RCASA
  - Belong to STARS/NEMLEC Regional Emergency System
  - MOU in place with police, District Attorney's Office
  - Monthly Community Based Justice meetings with Police, Schools, DA
  - School Administration and School Committee on RCASA Board
- Safety plans in place
  - Will be reviewed again this summer
- Schools participate in 6 drills per year (2 ALICE, 4 Evacuation, 1 Shelter in Place)
  - High School also may have canine search

## School Security

- All schools have visitor entrance procedures in place when school is in session
  - Elementary schools have procedures in place from 7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. due to Extended Day programs
- All Exterior Doors are locked during the school day in all schools
- Each school has security alarm and cameras in place
- Modular classrooms have extra security measures

## Social Emotional Learning

- Has been a district goal for the past three years
- Each level has social and emotional practices they have been using
  - Elementary: Open Circle, Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports
  - Middle: *Facing History and Ourselves*, Advisory lessons, Challenge Day, A World of Difference
  - High School: Guidance Curriculum specific to grade

## Data Collection

- Youth Risk Behavior Survey
- Attendance
- Office Discipline Referrals
- Teacher observations
- SBIRT (Grades 9 and 11)
- Chemical Health Policy Violations
- Police Information (School Resource Officer)

## Training

- 90% of Staff Trained in Youth Mental Health First Aid
  - Prerequisite training for all new teachers
- 30 Teachers have completed Lesley Coursework on Trauma Sensitive Practices
- Several staff have attended and/or presented at workshops on social emotional learning topics
- Superintendent is member of Safe and Supportive Schools Commission enacted by State Legislature
- M.A.S.S. has focused professional development activities on this topic

## Looking Ahead

- District Information Session for Parents (TBD)
  - Will communicate once final plans made
- Town and School Building Security Study
  - Completed in Fall, 2017
- Review of Safety Plans in Summer

## Kindergarten

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## Communication Was Inconsistent

- October letter stated that there would be half day programs at each school
- November Presentation did state that half day programs may not be assigned to each school
  - Presentation slide had information, but no follow up letter to parents
- January budget presentations did state that there would not be half day programs at each school

## Kindergarten Points of Focus

- Maintain class sizes to 18-22 students
- Provide tuition based full day kindergarten for families
  - Provide FDK as an option for students on free and reduced lunch
  - Provide FDK for students who have FDK as part of their individualized education plan
  - Integrated kindergarten is not the optimum program for kindergarten programs. Goal is to have separate half day and full day classes

## Factors Associated with Kindergarten Placement

*Need Flexibility Because Factors Change Annually*

- Census is not a definitive predictor of who will be attending kindergarten
  - Provides trends, not exact enrollments
- Classroom space availability is dependent upon
  - Grades 1-5 classrooms
  - Dedicated art and music classrooms
  - Special education programs and learning centers
- 2 Separate Programs (Half Day, Full Day)
- Students who require full day kindergarten due to IEP need to be assigned to specific schools based on assigned program
- Each year is different based on above factors

## Kindergarten Information

- Full Day Participation has steadily increased since 2005-06 school year (From 32% to 86% projected for 2018-19), while half day numbers have decreased in each school.
- Due to space constraints we have not been able to offer separate full day and half day programs consistently at each school for the last few years. This current year (2017-18 school year) we do not have separate programs in any school.
- In some cases, we have offered an integrated program where half day students and full day students are in the same classroom. During the 2017-18 school year, all five elementary schools have integrated kindergarten.
- Educationally, integrated kindergarten is not an optimum learning environment for all students because certain curriculum areas are compacted in the morning. Teachers and parents have commented on the challenges of integrated classrooms.
- Next year, half day kindergarten will be offered at Killam and Joshua Eaton due to space constraints in the other elementary schools.
  - Wood End, Birch Meadow and Killam half day students will attend Killam
  - Barrows and Joshua Eaton half day students will attend Joshua Eaton

## Current Kindergarten Enrollment

*As of 2/26/2018, May Not Include All Students Assigned To Special Education Programs*

	Barrows	Birch Meadow	Eaton	Killam	Wood End	Total
Half Day Enrollment	8	12	10	8	8	46
Full Day Enrollment	60	55	52	66	42	275
<b>Total</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>321</b>
Number of Classrooms Available for Kindergarten	3	3	4	4	2	16
Number of Half Day Students at Killam				28		
Number of Half Day Students at Eaton			18			
Number of Classrooms needed at each school with campus model at Killam and Eaton and no integrated.	3	3	3.5	4	2	15.5
<b>Class Size for Full Day Kindergarten classes using this model</b>	20	18.3	17.3	22	21	
<b>Class Size for Half Day Kindergarten classes using this model</b>			18.0	14.0		
Class Size if Integrated in neighborhood school	22.6	22.3	20.6	18.5	25.0	

## Spot Redistricting

- In order to balance class sizes across the district, the School Committee gave the Superintendent the ability, beginning in the 2010-11 school year, to spot redistrict kindergarten students and any students new to the Reading Public Schools.
- The purpose was to create sustainable class sizes in the 18-22 student range at the elementary level from school to school.
- This practice has consistently been used since the 2010-11 school year.

## Information from Attorney Joyce

- All kindergarten students must receive a minimum of 425 annual hours of structured learning time.
  - Currently half day students receive 540 annual hours of structured learning time.
- Although school districts are required to establish kindergarten programs for students, each school district has broad discretion on how to implement the kindergarten program for students.
- There is no merit to any allegation that the policy of assignment of half day students discriminates against individuals ability to pay.
- The reason for the different school assignment for half-day and full-day kindergarten services was to a) ensure continuity of instruction within the separate programs; and b) the significantly lower enrollment number of half-day kindergarten students necessitates consolidation of those students into fewer schools to maintain appropriate class sizes and staffing ratios consistent with student enrollment while still maintaining high quality instruction for all kindergarten students.