

# ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



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Dear Parents, Guardians and Community Members,

I would like to begin by welcoming Dr. Eileen Driscoll Woods to the position of Ottoson Middle School Interim Principal. Dr. Woods has had a distinguished career in education that included serving as the Principal at the South and Sanborn Schools and as the Assistant Superintendent in Andover. She was named Massachusetts Principal of the Year by the Massachusetts Elementary Schools Principals Association in 1998.

Dr. Woods has been part of Arlington Public Schools before, having served as Interim Principal at Dallin Elementary School from 2012-2014. I am pleased to welcome her back. I also want to take a moment to thank former Ottoson Principal Tim Ruggere for his service to our district. Mr. Ruggere, who joined us as OMS Principal in 2009, resigned to become Principal at Triton Regional High School in Byfield. We will begin our search for a permanent OMS Principal early next year.

We look forward to welcoming our young people back to school next month. September 6 is the day students in Grades 1-12 report to classes. Our Kindergarten students will have a different schedule. On September 6, all incoming Kindergarten students and their parents will attend a short open house, lasting about 1/2 to 1 hour. Each school will set the time and length of their open house. Teachers will use the remainder of the day to screen new students who were not able to attend a June screening session.

On September 7, half of each Kindergarten class will attend school for a full day. On September 8, the other half will attend. All students will report for their first full day as a complete class on September 9. Each elementary principal has established class assignments and the days to report. Principal will also set up times for student screening. Kindergarten families who have questions about the schedules should contact their school principal. The schedule is designed to ease the transition for our incoming students.

I hope you will take a few minutes to review the [2016-2017 District Goals](#) that the School Committee approved in June. This document describes how Arlington Public Schools will continue to move forward in pursuit of excellence. Four over-arching goals describe the student, staff, educational environment, operations and stakeholder engagement achievements that form the vision for the district. The individual initiatives and actions that we are pursuing this year in support of these goals are listed below each goal.

**In the newsletter below, you will find information on how to review and update your child's contact information, and I urge you to do so as soon as possible.** Other articles will bring you up-to-date on the Stratton renovation, our enrollment challenges, the grades 6-12 bring-your-own-device program and how to register for after-school enrichment courses. All of us in Arlington Public Schools are excited to begin another year.

Best regards,

Kathleen Bodie, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

## **Headline View**

### **Department News**

#### ***Student Information and Emergency Contact Updates Easy to Accomplish Online***

Starting on August 29, if you already have an account and a password, please enter the [Power School - Parent/Student Portal](#) on the APS website and review and update the data that is on file for your child or children. If you need an account, you will soon receive the necessary information to establish one. All parents, both new and continuing, will receive a Parent Portal Access Letter. This letter will include complete instructions on how to set up your account and link your children to your account. [Learn more>](#)

#### ***Modulars in Place to Meet Renovation and Enrollment Increase Challenges***

Modular classrooms are now in place and will be ready to house all Stratton students and fifth grade students at Thompson at the start of school. These are necessary as the Stratton renovation gets underway and as we cope with the enrollment increases impacting Thompson. [Read more>](#)

#### ***Bring-Your-Own-Device Meetings for Interested OMS and AHS Families This Month***

Students in grades 6-8 who wish to participate in the BYOD program should bring their device and their parents to Ottoson for an information session on August 24. Interested students in grades 10-12 and their parents should attend the meeting at AHS on August 25. Individual appointments can be set up for families unable to attend on those days. [Learn more>](#)

#### ***KidZone and TeenZone Enrichment Programs Now Open for Registration***

Registration for the after-school enrichment programs offered through Arlington Community Education is now open, and you can see the wonderful listing of new courses and old favorites in the [Fall 2016 Youth Catalog](#). [Read more>](#)

### **Grant News**

#### ***Latest AEF Innovations in Education Grants Support Innovative Learning Projects***

The Arlington Education Foundation's latest grants will help students explore their learning styles, create interactive animals, understand solar power and explore flight and communications. [Read more>](#)

### **Continue to read the full August 2016 newsletter**

### **Department News**

#### ***Student Information and Emergency Contact Updates Easy to Accomplish Online***

It is now easier than ever for families to share important information that will help us keep your child safe. Thanks to the efforts of Data Specialists Mike Remy and Jean Zilewicz, you may now go online at your convenience and handle this requirement.

Starting on August 29, if you already have an account and a password, please enter the [Power School - Parent/Student Portal](#) on the APS website and review and update the data that is on file for your child or children. Look for the student information update tab once you have entered the Parent Portal. It is very important that you review the page(s) and make certain that we have your correct email, phone numbers and emergency and medical information. Additionally, review and answer the media release questions.

If you need an account, you will soon receive the necessary information to establish one. All parents, both new and continuing, will be receiving a Parent Portal Access Letter. This letter will include complete instructions on how to set up your account and link your children to your account.

Please take care of this as soon as possible so that we start the year with accurate information. You will also be able to go in and easily make changes as needed throughout the year. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.



### ***Modulars in Place to Meet Renovation and Enrollment Increase Challenges***

This year, some of our students will have a slightly different classroom experience than they have known in the past. The Stratton renovation is underway, and as I have reported previously, this means that the entire school is moving into modular classrooms. As you can see from the picture above, the modular classrooms are now in place. The new "modular school" sits right next to the old building, and the students will still be able to use the cafeteria and gym while other renovations are taking place. Stratton teachers are ready to get their new classrooms set-up at the end of August, so all will be in place for the first day of school.

Modular classrooms for the fifth grade are also in place at Thompson, one of the schools being impacted by Arlington's growing student enrollment. Last June, Arlington voters indicated their support for a debt exclusion override to fund an addition to Thompson. This fall, Town Meeting will be asked to appropriate the necessary funds to begin this process. Thompson was built for three classrooms at each grade level, except for Kindergarten, which has four. The proposed addition will make four classrooms available per grade.

The current numbers of incoming Kindergarten students in our district illustrate the continuing enrollment growth that is necessitating these changes. Last year's Kindergarten class added 474 students to our system. At this point, we have over 540 new Kindergarten students enrolled. While it is impossible to say how many of these students will continue through grade 5, then moving into Ottoson and Arlington High School, the implications for space issues at all levels are clear. Ottoson was designed to accommodate 1,050 students, which translates to about 350 students per grade. This June, 321 students graduated from Arlington High School. I will continue to keep you updated as we move forward on our plans to make the Gibbs School a sixth grade-based school and as we respond to the invitation from the [Massachusetts School Building Authority \(MSBA\)](#) to enter the Eligibility Period in their process to rebuild or renovate Arlington High School.

### ***Bring-Your-Own-Device Meetings for Interested OMS and AHS Families This Month***

As I reported in my June newsletter, students in grades 6-12 are now eligible to bring their own devices (BYOD) if they choose, and they will have access to the school network for the first time. BYOD is limited to Chromebooks, iPad Airs, iPad 4s and MacBooks, and physical security, virus protection and insurance is the responsibility of the owner.

I want to emphasize that this is a voluntary program, and that school-owned devices will be available for use. The advantage to using one's own device is that it can be taken back and forth between home and school so that work done at school is readily available at home. School devices must remain at school, and students need to upload work done during the day to the cloud in order to access it at home. Ottoson students choosing the BYOD option and their parents are asked to bring their devices to the school for an informational meeting on August 24. Participating high school students and their parents are asked to attend their session at AHS on August 25. At these meetings, both parents and students will be asked to sign the BYOD Acceptable Use Policy. More information about both sessions will be forthcoming.

OMS families unable to attend the August 24 meeting should contact Johanna Bradley at [jbradley@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:jbradley@arlington.k12.ma.us) to make an appointment. High school families who cannot attend on August 25 should make an appointment by contacting Jeff Snyder at [jsnyder@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:jsnyder@arlington.k12.ma.us).

### ***KidZone and TeenZone Enrichment Programs Now Open for Registration***

Arlington Community Education announces that registration is open for both *KidZone* and *TeenZone* after-school enrichment programs. Taught by school staff, community members and other qualified professionals, the sessions offer students the opportunity to extend their learning beyond the classroom in a relaxed and fun environment. *KidZone* classes are offered for grades K-5 and various topics are held at each elementary school. Students are free to attend programs at any location. *TeenZone* offers courses for grades 6-9. *All-town Classes for Mixed Ages* includes a variety of classes that span ages, including adults.

The [Fall 2016 Youth Catalog](#) has the full listing, which includes new classes and old favorites. Choices range from running clubs to theater, baking, electronics, bookmaking, coding, language studies, parkour, babysitting basics and much more. Please go [online](#) to complete all youth registrations. If you have questions, you may contact the Arlington Community Education staff at 781-316-3568 or by email at [communityed@arlington.k12.ma.us](mailto:communityed@arlington.k12.ma.us).

### **Grant News**

#### ***Latest AEF Innovations in Education Grants Support Creative Learning Projects***

I am happy to report that the [Arlington Education Foundation \(AEF\)](#) has announced the latest round of Innovations in Education grants. These five grants support a wide variety of teaching and learning projects at the classroom level that will enrich the educational experience for our students. I reported on one of these, *Inside Out Ottoson*, in my last newsletter. This grant was awarded to the Ottoson Visual Arts Department and the [OMS World of Difference](#) program. They will work together on a [public art project](#) that visibly demonstrates that the OMS community is united against hateful words and actions.

The other four grants include:

- *"Grow Your Brain!" - Fostering a Growth Mindset to Increase Motivation and Achievement*, a project to enable Peirce students to develop a sense of themselves as capable learners by becoming aware of their own learning styles and academic strengths
- *ETextiles Interactive Stuffed Animals*, a project that brings design, circuitry, coding and sewing together as Dallin fifth grade students create a stuffed animal
- *Energy Transfer in Solar Cars*, a project to help Bishop students think critically about energy use as they see solar power in action
- *Navigating Through Communications Standards Using Drones*, a project offering Ottoson seventh grade students the opportunity to explore the principles of flight and the components of communication

I want to thank AEF for their continued dedication to supporting our students and teachers.