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**CITY OF FRAMINGHAM SCHOOL COMMITTEE VOTES TO PASS  
NUMEROUS IMPORTANT MEASURES TO SUPPORT THE PUBLIC  
SCHOOL SYSTEM**

***Eliminating athletic fees for student athletes, new policy on inclusive sports participation, \$3.2 million in capital projects, resolution in support of school safety & security, among newly passed efforts***

Framingham, MA – Last night the City of Framingham’s School Committee voted to support multiple priorities at their first meeting of the month. These actions are intended to benefit students, staff, and the community in the areas of athletics, school building infrastructure, safety and security, civics education, and more.

“I am so pleased with the productive and meaningful actions of our School Committee members,” said Adam Freudberg, Chair of the Framingham School Committee. “We are working hard to make tangible progress on the issues we care so deeply about for the Framingham Public Schools. Together, we were able to team up with our Superintendent and move forward to eliminate athletic fees, pass a much needed policy on inclusive sports participation, invest \$3.2 million in necessary school improvement projects, finalize the 2018-2019 school year calendar, and partner with our students, Mayor Spicer, and the City Council to take a stand in favor of better school security and gun violence prevention efforts.”

“I’m thrilled to be leading a school district that has the support of a School Committee that is committed to improving access and opportunities for students,” said Superintendent of Schools, Dr. Robert A. Tremblay. “These bold moves help to strengthen the Framingham Public Schools by rightly and appropriately investing in student equity, supporting a welcoming and accepting school environment for students and staff, and addressing the safety and security needs that not only harden the exterior of our facilities, but which also empower our students and staff to have a voice and take action to ensure a public school system that is safe, supportive, and accessible to all.”

***Athletic Fees*** - Based on the recommendation of the High School Administration and Athletic Department, and the Framingham Central Administration, the School Committee voted to completely eliminate the athletic fee for students in the FY19 Budget and to build an offsetting budget within the Athletic Department budget to compensate for this fee elimination. Over the past several years, the School Committee has voted to reduce fees twice and the resulting increase in student participation has more than justified those reductions while also providing financial support to the Athletic Department to offset the loss of fee revenue.

***Inclusive Sports Participation*** - The School Committee passed an updated policy to ensure that all students shall have the opportunity to participate in Framingham Public Schools athletics and/or co-curricular activities in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity, irrespective of the gender listed on a student's records and without prior medical or mental health care. The policy states, "Interscholastic athletic and co-curricular participation are valuable to students' physical, intellectual, social, and/or character development and accordingly, we value inclusion. Guided by this value and in compliance with all applicable laws, our policy ensures that students can participate in athletics and co-curricular activities in a manner consistent with their gender identity." The policy also has new text for schools to follow to ensure inclusion in areas such as dress codes and team uniforms, training and education for students and staff, and more.

***Fiscal Year 2019 Capital Plan for School Building Improvements*** - The School Committee voted to support the investment of \$3.2 million of projects for FY19 funding. The projects now go before the Mayor and City Council for their review and approval before funding is released. Funded projects proposed and supported by the Framingham Public Schools and School Committee are:

- Technology upgrades at all schools
- A pre-feasibility study on necessary improvements for Hemenway Elementary School
- Replacing old furniture and purchasing new furniture for parts of all schools
- Renovating the gym floors at Stapleton Elementary School and Walsh Middle School
- Playground renovations at Dunning Elementary School
- A bucket truck for the FPS Building and Grounds Department
- Renovations at the Farley Building to support the relocation of the FPS Building and Grounds Department
- Masonry repointing and repair at Stapleton Elementary School
- Bathroom renovations to ensure ADA compliance at Barbieri Elementary School
- School infrastructure projects in support of multiple security camera upgrades to enhance the already robust security system at all schools

***2018-2019 School Year Calendar*** - The calendar was approved as early as possible this year in order to support planning for the summer and beyond.

***School Safety & Security and Gun Violence Prevention Resolution and Funding*** - Mayor Yvonne M. Spicer and Superintendent Dr. Robert Tremblay along with the City of Framingham's Student Advisory Committee, City Council, and School Committee issued a joint resolution. This resolution, approved 11-0 by the City Council on March 6 and 9-0 by the School Committee March 12 calls for the prioritization of the safety and security of students and

school employees and recognizes the March 14<sup>th</sup> national recognition on this topic including a local student led ceremony scheduled at Framingham High School. Dr. Tremblay and the city's elected officials coordinated with Framingham's Student Advisory Committee on this resolution as a way to partner with students and allow their voices to be heard. By doing so, this created a civics and advocacy education opportunity, allowing students to see the impact of their activism in affecting change.

"As students, we are deeply aware and concerned with our safety and our security throughout the school day," said Ohad Klopman, Framingham High School Senior and Chair of the Student Advisory Committee. "We understand that the discussion concerning gun control is sensitive, but as we continue to push to the wayside debate on gun control, our academic well-being makes no improvement. We must make certain that those who should not have guns never get them, and those who use their arms responsibly are given the services they need to continue to do so. We thank the Framingham City Council, School Committee, and Mayor for their continued support. The time for change is now."

"It is heartwarming to see our students mobilizing to express their deep concerns and convictions on school safety and gun violence," said Dennis Giombetti, Chair of the Framingham City Council. "It is my hope that this becomes a community effort. The City Council stands firmly behind the intent and language of the joint resolution and proud to be part of it."

The Framingham Public Schools have prioritized improving safety and security efforts, educator and staff professional development, mental health supports, available tools to reduce student stress and anxiety, and focused efforts on better connecting and communicating with students, and will continue to reflect school safety as a priority in the Fiscal Year 2019 Budget. This includes \$200,000 for school infrastructure projects in support of multiple security camera upgrades to enhance the already robust system at all schools. Also last night Superintendent Dr. Tremblay outlined his plans for the Framingham Public School's Director of Safety and Security position.

For more information about these topics, visit the March 12th Agenda, Minutes & Actions section of <https://www.framingham.k12.ma.us/schoolcommittee>

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