
District Planning Update 1-15-19

Westport School District Outreach Message <Connect-ED@westportps.org>
Reply-To: Connect-ED@westportps.org

Tue, Jan 15, 2019 at 3:58 PM



WESTPORT PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Dear Families of Westport Students,

As we return from the holidays, our District professionals have ramped up their work to complete all aspects of the design work to implement the K-6 model in our five elementary schools for this coming fall. We are going to work as expeditiously as possible to provide clarity to details as we continue the planning process. I will continue to send out messages as we have any updates on the details of this model.

The winter weather patterns have been kind to us thus far this year, with no snow days required. We expect light snow to greet us Friday morning as the day begins, so please stay tuned if there is a need for any weather delay. As a reminder, the District can call for a 1, 2, or 3 hour delay to school. Fingers crossed that it is all slush!

Sincerely,
Colleen Palmer

Select K-6 Questions and Answers

Q: What is the progress with the portables?

A: The District has hired a project manager to oversee this work, Paul Drummey, who presented an overview of the process at a recent BoE meeting and will again update the BoE at the meeting on January 22. A timeline has been established to complete the Town processes, BoE approvals, Town approvals, RFP and delivery/installation process to have the portable classrooms installed in August. Today, District administrators met in Hartford with the SDE School Construction Unit to review the process for applying for applicable state reimbursement for these classrooms. With assistance from Jim Marpe, our District team for the portables met with the necessary group of Town officials this past week to discuss the process for Town approval, e.g. P&Z, ZBA, wetlands, engineering, P&R, etc. The collaborative spirit of all our Town officials is appreciated as we move this project forward without delay.

Q: What elementary schools will be on tier 2 of bussing?

Sandy Evangelista, Director of Transportation, is mapping out the bus routes for the fall. She will have the final determination of what elementary schools will be on tier 2 and tier 3 (SHS is tier 1) no later than February 1. In this way, families can plan accordingly for the fall.

Q: Will each grade 6 team have a team leader?

Yes, each team at every elementary school will have a team leader. This person will be an additional person with whom parents of grade 6 students may contact for support with the success of their student – the same role as at BMS/CMS.

Q: Will grade 5 have moving up ceremonies?

No, there will not be moving up ceremonies. Our elementary principals are working to create a special experience for our students at the end of the year, in collaboration with our PTAs.

Q: Will there be a way for grade 6 students to get before-school extra help as they do at the middle school now?

Yes, we will work out a way for this to happen at the elementary schools as well.

Q: Will the grade 6 schedule include all the encore classes as BMS/CMS offer for grade 6?

Yes, STEM, health, theater, and all encore classes will be taught at the elementary schools in the same manner as at BMS/CMS. The schedule of a grade 6 student in the elementary school will mirror that of grade 6 this year at BMS/CMS.

Q: What about lockers, class set-ups, etc. for grade 6?

There is a design team of professionals (teachers and administrators) working on these details for the transition. As soon as they are finalized, they will be shared.

Q: How are you addressing security of the portable classrooms?

The District is working closely with Police Chief Koskinas to ensure that appropriate District safety and security standards will be in place, including communication and monitoring. The District's budget proposal for 2019-20 maintains the security personnel from CMS to shift to a more District role, including the ongoing visits to all five elementary schools to review the security operations of the school and to provide coverage in the event one of the elementary security personnel is absent for a day.

Q: What role are the grade 6 teachers playing in the planning of this transition?

Our grade 6 teachers are central to the planning process. They, as well as professionals from other grades and support roles in our schools have enthusiastically embraced the planning process and are intimately involved with all aspects of the design work.