

# EDUCATION

## ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS 2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT

The tradition of excellence in the classroom, performing and visual arts, and athletics continued in the 2018-2019 school year. Motivated students, great teachers, dedicated administrators, involved parents, and a supportive community made this possible. This year continued the focus of building on past successes and moving forward on the vision of the Arlington Public Schools (APS) as detailed in the four over-arching district goals.



- The Arlington Public Schools will ensure that every graduate is prepared to enter and complete a post-secondary degree program, pursue a career, and be an active citizen in an ever-changing world by offering a rigorous, comprehensive, standards-based and data-driven K-12 system of curriculum, instruction, and assessment that integrates social, emotional and wellness support.
- The Arlington Public Schools will recruit, hire, retain, and build the capacity of a diverse staff to be excellent teachers and administrators by providing high quality professional development aligned to needs, instructional support, coaching, and an evaluation framework that fosters continuous improvement.
- The Arlington Public Schools will offer a cost effective education that maximizes the impact of taxpayer dollars and utilizes best practices, academic research, and rigorous self-evaluation to provide students and staff the resources, materials and infrastructure required for optimum teaching and learning in a safe and healthy environment.
- The Arlington Public Schools will be run smoothly, efficiently and professionally. The district will operate transparently and engage in effective collaboration and responsive communication with all stakeholders. It will provide timely, accurate data to support financial decision-making, envisioning of the district's future, and long-range planning in partnership with other Town officials. Through these actions it will create broad support for a high quality education system that is the community's most valuable asset.

APS teachers and administrators in collaboration with members of the community and School Committee developed a vision of what skills, knowledge, and dispositions Arlington students should attain and develop during their years in Arlington Public Schools.

### **Vision of Student as Learner**

The APS vision for students as learners and global citizens outlines what the district wants all students to know and be able to do by the time that they graduate from Arlington High School (AHS). This requires that all students experience a coherent curriculum that is aligned with the Massachusetts State

Curriculum Frameworks that support the development of critical thinking, social-emotional and relationship skills. Students are supported in their development by highly qualified teachers, who engage in continuous professional learning. This vision informs the strategic initiatives, instructional decisions and budget requests in the multi-year plan.

These characteristics will be demonstrated by student's ability to:

- work independently and collaboratively.
- observe, analyze, and synthesize information from a variety of sources to enhance existing understandings and construct new knowledge.
- demonstrate perseverance by using repeated reasoning and inquiry.
- participate in rigorous, focused discourse.
- develop and defend arguments based on evidence and respectfully consider different perspectives.
- create and critique original work.

### **Vision of Student as a Global Citizen**

Students will strive to be empathic, responsible, active members of a local and global community who are aware of the role that bias and prejudice play in society, as demonstrated by their ability to:

- speak with and listen to others in a manner that is respectful of multiple perspectives.
- cultivate and maintain healthy and rewarding relationships with diverse individuals and groups.
- develop self-awareness and self-understanding.

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- think critically and reflect upon choices and their impact on others.
- participate as a consumer of and contributor to the cultural and civic life of local and global communities.

The results of our efforts include:

- Clear expectations for what every child should know and be able to do (standards-based education) continued to be refined and integrated into daily life in the classroom with curriculum aligned to the Massachusetts State Standards. District-wide common assessments continued to be refined and updated in all disciplines at all levels, including mathematics, English, and writing to help teachers pace their instruction and inform them about students who had mastered the skills and content and those who needed further instruction. At all levels, teachers and administrators focused on incorporating the Vision of Student as Learner and Global Citizen skills into every classroom with emphasis on team work, working in a multicultural global society, perseverance, communication skills, creative problem-solving, and the ability to evaluate and synthesize information.
- Sixth grade students and staff moved into the newly renovated Gibbs School in September 2018. The Gibbs School will house sixth grade classes in order to alleviate over-crowding at the Ottoson Middle School. Six new classrooms were completed on time at Hardy Elementary School in December 2018. The building expansion projects are in response to growing enrollment in the Arlington Public Schools. Student enrollment has increased by over 900 students since 2013. The District welcomed 117 additional students this year, representing a 2% growth from last year.
- The Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) Board of Directors approved Arlington moving into Schematic Design for the new high school at their meeting in August 2018 following submittal of the Preliminary Design Program and a Preferred Schematic Report in July 2018. A Schematic Design is a design plan of sufficient detail to establish the scope, budget and schedule for the Proposed Project.
- In 2018, Grades 3-8 took the new Next

Generation MCAS test for ELA and Math. This was the second year that this test was administered state-wide. District baseline results for the Next Generation MCAS are positive, with all schools showing strong results. In general, the new standards for Meeting Expectations on the Next Generation MCAS are more rigorous than the standards for reaching the Proficient level on the legacy MCAS. On the Next Generation MCAS, the majority of students in subgroup populations, including Special Education, English Language Learner (ELL), Former ELL, and economically disadvantaged students, are scoring above state averages. Arlington High School received an accountability rating of 1, the highest rating. There is no accountability rating based on 2017 results for schools that include grades 3-8. Fifth and eighth grade students took the Legacy MCAS for Science and Technology/Engineering. Tenth grade students took the Legacy MCAS for ELA, Math, Science and Technology/Engineering. Grades 4-8 took the computer-based Next Generation MCAS, while third grade students took the paper-based Next Generation MCAS. The Next Generation MCAS focuses on a student's critical thinking abilities, application of knowledge, and the ability to make connections between reading and writing. It also gives a clearer indication of career and college readiness. Next Generation MCAS 2017 results are baseline; they cannot be compared to prior results. The percentage of Arlington students in each grade who are meeting or exceeding grade level expectations is considerably higher than the state average in each assessed content area. 2018 is the first year Arlington received an accountability rating since the inception of the Next Generation MCAS. The district received an accountability rating of "Partially Meeting" expectations. This will serve as a baseline for how the district improves over future years.

- During the 2018-2019 school year, the staff, teachers, and administrators of Arlington Public Schools participated in professional development focused on topics which enable the district to effectively work towards increasing the capacity of all staff to deliver an effective learning experience for all students. Teachers at all levels participated in professional development centered around instructional techniques that are necessary to close the achievement gap between struggling and

succeeding students, to assist teachers in creating supports necessary to provide each student with the social-emotional growth that will prepare them to become purposeful adults, and to provide teachers with the skills necessary to integrate the development of twenty-first century skills into the curriculum K-12. Major curriculum initiatives included a continuation of aligning classroom resources and units of study with the common core curriculum and state standards. Work was also completed to support district goal 1.2, which states, “Students will develop their social and emotional (SEL) skills through age-appropriate SEL instruction that includes an awareness of cultural bias, and by learning in classrooms where responsible decision making, empathy, and the importance of positive relationships are the norm.” The plan supported all district personnel receiving ten hours of professional development. Coupled with the district focus on Cultural Competency, 60 elementary teachers and 30 middle school teachers participated in a summer training in “Responsive Classroom.” Responsive Classroom is an evidence-based approach to teaching that focuses on engaging academics, positive community, effective community, effective management, and developmental awareness. The underlying foundation for Responsive Classroom assists with building the five SEL competencies of self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, social awareness, and relationship skills.

- To further support curriculum work and to ensure that classroom instruction continues to respond to the individual needs of students, professional development opportunities that focus on using data were offered throughout the year. This focus on data also addresses goal objective 3.1 which states, “Research and implement a data platform to support the district in collecting, aggregating, analyzing and sharing student data in order to assist teachers in targeting instruction and improving student learning and wellness.” This year the district piloted the newly developed Data Bank at the elementary level. The Data Bank is designed to house student assessment data that is collected from district and state testing. Coupled with the implementation of the Data Bank, 10 staff members took an afterschool course that taught them how to use the Data Wise Improvement Cycle, collect

multiple forms of data, build a repertoire of strategies for guiding teams to understand, analyze and use data in decision-making and to communicate data results in ways that empower community members to envision their role in improvement. Building and district administrators took a similar version of the Data course which was made possible through a grant from the Arlington Education Foundation (AEF).

- Arlington Public Schools understands the importance of having safe and supportive schools so that every child feels known and appreciated in school, while also supported in learning age-appropriate social-emotional skills in an atmosphere of equity. This work is shared by all administrators, faculty, and staff. It is supported by specific programs that the district has adopted, as well as through a variety of professional development offerings and school and district-level Safe and Supportive Schools teams. Curricula and programs such as Tools of the Mind, Responsive Classroom and Open Circle help build predictable, safe, and energizing classrooms. Over 240 faculty and administrators have been certified in Youth Mental Health First Aid, and a cohort of teachers has completed a graduate certificate program in Trauma and Learning. Teachers have attended professional development on cultural competency offered district-wide.
- Arlington High School (AHS) continues to provide high levels of academic quality and a positive environment in spite of persistent challenges in facilities. AHS continues to grow in a number of areas including use of technology, school climate, student leadership, and learning beyond the school walls. AHS continues to excel on assessments of academic quality reflecting both high achievement and improvements in academic equity. AHS has again received Gold Medal distinction in the U.S. News & World Report Best High School Rankings, rising in its ranking for the 5th consecutive year both in the state and nationally. This year AHS ranked 9th among Massachusetts schools, up from 12th the year before, and in the top 2% of schools nationally. AHS is recognized as a top school in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, or STEM, ranking 166 nationally. Students at AHS also continue high levels of performance in the National

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Merit Scholarship Competition over the years.

- Arlington Public Schools was named a 2018 recipient of the US Department of Education's Massachusetts Green Ribbon School District, being listed as an environmentally aware and civic minded school system. Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) announced that Arlington Public Schools was named a 2018 Massachusetts Green Ribbon School District. The District received this honor in recognition of its leadership in reducing environmental impact and costs, improving the health and wellness of students and staff, and delivering effective environmental and sustainability education that incorporates science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), civic skills, and green career pathways. The state designation qualified the District for nomination for a similar award at the national level. Arlington Public Schools was one of six districts across the country to receive the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School District Sustainability Award. This honor recognizes three areas of excellence: reduction of greenhouse gases, efforts to address the nutrition, fitness, mindfulness, and overall health of students and staff, and the incorporation of curricula that addresses environmental topics at all school levels.
- The Technology Plan was further implemented this year by increasing technology hardware, including LCD projectors, in all schools. Purchased and deployed additional Chromebooks and carts to all elementary schools to support the addition of the Third Grade Students taking MCAS test electronically this year. VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) Telephony implementations were completed at the Gibbs School, Brackett School, Hardy School, and IT Department. Installed at Gibbs were 550 Chromebooks and 24 Carts for students and teachers. The capacity of the school Internet circuits were increased from two 1Gig circuits to two 2Gig redundant circuits located at the Ottoson and AHS. The AHS CADD, STEM, Music, and Digital Media Lab Equipment were updated. Kindergarten electronic registration enabled 584 students to register for Kindergarten this year. The Elementary School Electronic

Report Card Process was developed and implemented.

- Grants received by the District supported the expansion of technology, curriculum initiatives, professional development and academic and social-emotional support for students. Arlington Education Foundation (AEF), MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), and Community Health Network Area 17 (CHNA17) all supported initiatives to help ensure that Arlington's students feel safe and supported at school, learn mindfulness techniques along with their teachers, and learn skills that help youth make good decisions about substance use as they grow into healthy adults. AEF continued its commitment to a three-year initiative with the Arlington Public Schools, investing in behavioral health so that every student, preschool to high school, has the best environment in which to learn. The grant supported Youth Mental Health First Aid training for 300 teachers, staff, administrators, and support staff. All schools implemented actions plans for Safe and Supportive Schools with the support of AEF and a Safe and Supportive Schools grant from the DESE. AEF also provided key support for innovative educational projects in the humanities, arts, and STEM areas. CHNA 17 awarded the district a Mental Health and Racial Equity grant to address issues regarding access to mental health care among Arlington's African-American/Black students. This comes out of CHNA 17's Mental Health and Racial Equity report that explored the experiences of American-Born Blacks in Arlington, Belmont, Cambridge, Somerville, Waltham, and Watertown. Bishop, Brackett, and Hardy elementary schools, along with district leaders, were accepted into the "Systemic Student Support (S3) Academy" supported by the DESE, Rennie Center, and Boston College. Arlington's interest is integrating student supports to address the whole child, in inclusive settings, while addressing the barriers to access and equity; not just at an individualized level of targeted interventions, but at a universal, all students level. AEF awarded AHS a grant to integrate DBT (dialectical behavior therapy) for students with social/emotional/behavioral difficulties at AHS. AEF provided funding support for the AHS Wellness Day. A course for teachers in "Building Culturally Responsive Skills



for Engaging All Students” was supported by a grant from AEF and the METCO grant. The district is also grateful for additional AEF grants in a wide variety of areas, including: STEM - Beautiful Brain: AP Psychology Conference at the MIT Museum, Fun & Games with Math in the Community for Gibbs, and Mobile & Flexible Digital Investigating for science at AHS. Humanities - Discovering Our Voices with Literature Circle at Gibbs School, Diversify & Innovate Stratton Library, and Crafting Minds, and Targeted Reading Intervention at the elementary schools.

- The schools continued to work in partnership with the police, town, and community to ensure consistent and coordinated responses to inappropriate student behaviors. The Diversion Program started in 2006, which focuses on restitution and rehabilitation for first time, non-violent behavior, has proven to be an effective model. The APS partnered again this year with community and nonprofit organizations to provide more options for counseling services. Meeting the social and emotional needs of children is as high a priority as meeting the academic needs of our students. The Parent Forum series continued again this year, free to all parents and community members. These forums included a variety of topics including: This year the topics ranged from: “Encouraging Honest Conversation with your Elementary-Age Children about LGBTQIA+”, “Redefining Mealtime”, “Screenagers” (the impact of digital time on children), “Changing the Culture Around Mental Health”, “How to Raise Ethical/ Thoughtful Children in The Age of Me Too”, “Smoking Cessation”, “Partying=intoxication a harmful message for teens”, “Unstuck: An OCD Kids Movie”, “Guiding Good Choices”, “Smoking and Vaping: Preventing Teen Trends”, “Homesick and Happy”, “I’m Done; What Do I Do Now?”

For additional information, please see the Superintendent’s newsletters: <http://www.arlington.k12.ma.us/administration/newsletters/>

The Arlington Public Schools have a team of talented professionals working together towards our shared vision: All students will achieve at their full social, emotional, creative, and academic potential, and will be prepared for higher level academics, workforce success, active citizenship, and life-long learning.



## ARLINGTON

**Annual Report to the Towns  
Minuteman High School  
Dr. Edward A. Bouquillon, Superintendent-Director  
January, 2019 – November, 2019**

### A Historical Year for Minuteman

The year 2019 marked a pivotal and historic moment in the history of Minuteman High School, with the opening of a cutting-edge building to begin the school year in September, one year ahead of schedule and on-budget, increasing enrollment of students from member district towns, increasing enrollment of adult students in Minuteman Technical Institute, and 99% of Class of 2019 graduates entering college, career, or advanced technical training.

### Class of 2019 Achievements

Of the Minuteman High School Class of 2019, 63% enrolled in a two- or four-year college/university, 33% entered a career, and 3% began advanced technical training. Nearly all students who sought certifications in their respective fields received them prior to graduation, which includes various certifications from Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in hazardous materials removal, biotechnology, plant science, and health care, among others. Members of the Class of 2019 were accepted to 80 different colleges and universities, including Boston University, Carnegie Mellon, Roger Williams University, George Washington University, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and many more.

### Outstanding Students from Arlington

Nearly all Class of 2019 students from Arlington enrolled in a college/university or a career in their trade of study. **Anthony Attar**, a design and visual communication major, enrolled in Middlesex Community College; **Benjamin Cook** (environmental science), enrolled in University of Vermont; **Sabrina Correa** (health assisting), enrolled in UMass Lowell; **Treyvon Dix** (carpentry), began a carpentry apprenticeship; **Fae Eisenheim** (horticulture), enrolled in Gordon College; **Lyazzat Feldman** (design and visual communication), enrolled in California College of the Arts; **Rosa Fox** (health assisting), began work at the Animal Rescue League of Boston; **Erica Grandon** (electrical), enrolled in Bridgewater State University; **Adnan Kabir** (automotive), enrolled in UMass Dartmouth; **Joseph Perry** (design and visual communication), enrolled in Lesley University;

**Edwin Randolph** (plumbing), began a plumbing apprenticeship; **Daniel Spencer** (environmental science), enrolled in UMass Lowell; **Amanda Sullivan** (health assisting), enrolled in Salem State University; **Gaetano Taranto** (robotics), joined the U.S. Coast Guard; **Samantha Thebodo** (biotechnology), enrolled in Lasell College; and **Dara Wall** (biotechnology), enrolled in University of New Haven.

## Grand Opening of the New Minuteman Regional Vocational Technical High School

The Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of the new Minuteman High School took place on October 4, 2019, launching a new chapter in college and career academy-style learning for students in a state-of-the-art building.

The opening of the facility, on the same campus as the former Minuteman building at 758 Marrett Road in Lexington, was the culmination of a momentous effort over a decade. The architecturally stunning and practical building is designed to foster collaboration, a safe and secure environment, and to serve as a showplace for exceptional technical and academic learning for decades to come.

“We have built a school that lets us dream big and be brave,” Superintendent-Director Dr. Edward A. Bouquillon said during the ceremony. “We have built a school that unites the disciplines and promotes our commitment to deep integration of academics and high-quality career and technical education. For those of you who have been with us since the beginning, I thank you from the bottom of my heart.”

The new Minuteman was designed to integrate rigorous academics with relevant technical programming in occupational areas. The academy model was adopted to create smaller “schools within a school” for more personalized learning.

As an accredited member of the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC), Minuteman inspires all students to attain their full potential, accelerate their learning, and become purposeful citizens in the global community.

## Increasing Enrollment

As word spreads that Minuteman High School produces successful college and career results for students, and helps fill the statewide and national skills gap, the number of applications to attend Minuteman has increased tremendously in the past two years from students living in the district’s member towns. The number of students attending Minuteman from mem-

ber towns, including Arlington, has increased from 337 in FY17 to 395 in FY20, and is projected to reach 502 for next school year in FY21. The number of students from Arlington has increased from 115 in FY18 to 142 in FY20. As of March 2, 2020, an additional 92 students from Arlington applied to attend Minuteman in the ninth grade for the fall of 2021.

Minuteman Technical Institute, the 10-month-long evening program for adults seeking certifications in trades such as advanced manufacturing, automotive, electrical, and metal fabrication/welding, and others, experienced an enrollment increase from 25 to 42 students over the past year. This year, Governor Charlie Baker has proposed awarding \$15 million to regional vocational-technical schools that offer Technical Institutes, such as Minuteman, to help alleviate the state-wide skills gap and ensure more people are receiving education for high-demand, high-paying careers.

## About Minuteman

Minuteman is an award-winning regional career and technical high school and continuing education institution that integrates robust academic and technical learning. As an accredited member of the New England Association of Schools & Colleges (NEASC), Minuteman challenges all students to aspire to their full potential, accelerate their learning, and achieve success in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century global community. Located in Lexington in a new state-of-the-art facility, Minuteman’s member towns are currently Acton, Arlington, Belmont, Bolton, Concord, Dover, Lancaster, Lexington, Needham, and Stow.