The onset of June signals the end of the school year. The number of school days canceled due to snow or some other factor really does not matter. Students, staff, families, all know that the end of the school year is near. June is the time that we both celebrate and reflect. We celebrate the many accomplishments our students and staff have achieved and we reflect on the year gone by in preparation for the year.

While I would be the first to say that this year has presented challenges in numbers and in nature we have yet to experience, I should also be the first to acknowledge the ways in which our community persevered. Chronicled in a recent presentation by Deputy Superintendent Ruggiero, the district experienced record high graduation rates with the class of 2021, and a record low dropout rate. Members of the class of 2022 received numerous college acceptances, some of which were to the nation’s top institutions of higher learning. This year our athletics teams performed masterfully, earning numerous conference titles and invitations to state tournament play. Our musicians were recognized at state competitions. The Classical High School chapter of Best Buddies recently won the award for Best Buddies MA & RI High School Chapter Rookie of the Year, and just this week, Breed Middle School was named the overall winner at the state civics contest for their “Water Bottle Fill Station” proposal.

I could go on with additional accomplishments worthy of celebration – there are many more. They are all meaningful. They are all important. There is another praiseworthy accomplishment that will not be recognized by an award. I believe deeply that the entire LPS community, our beloved students, our talented and dedicated staff, our families, our partners, did something praiseworthy this year. We persevered. We pulled through the slog of ever-changing guidance, rules, in spikes in positive cases. We kept going, despite any understandable fear or unpredictable barrier. Who knows what lies ahead with respect to the pandemic, but this community has yet again demonstrated incredible resolve, an impressive ability to keep going despite profound challenges. That is deserving of the highest praise and recognition.

While we are working hard to ensure a smooth and fulfilling close to the 2021-22 school year, that we are also looking ahead to next year. Some major pieces of work happening next year have been brought to the school committee (newly adopted curricula, continued focus on blended learning, and so forth). We have substantive foci in our sights that will support our
continued effort to meet the social and emotional needs (STABILIZE, HEAL) of our students first and foremost and to accelerate learning (TRANSFORM). We hope to experience fewer challenges related to the pandemic next year but are wholly prepared for them if we do.

Finally, we continue to make solid progress on the Pickering building project. Earlier this week, as a result of the Massachusetts School Building Authority review panel, the city was able to finalize LeftField as our owner’s project manager. This is an important and foundational step in the process. LeftField was the unanimous choice by the sub-committee to the building committee whose responsibility it was to identify an owner’s project manager. Among many impressive qualities, LeftField personnel have significant experience working in Lynn. We are very excited about our partnership with them. The next step which will happen over the course of the summer will involve identifying a designer. That process is planned for completion by the end of August. Thereafter, we can begin the feasibility study, which should span approximately six months. The progress continues.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patrick Tutwiler, PhD
Superintendent