

Kittery

School District

Truth & Knowledge

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June 11, 2021

Good morning to all...

June 11th--the last Friday of the 2020-21 school year. I had big plans to capture '**the year that was**' in this final Weekly Communication to you all. Frankly, I wouldn't know where to begin. Instead, I want to leave you with a few highlights and then sign off until later in the summer.

I'm feeling nostalgic today. Last evening, I had the pleasure of attending the **Shapleigh School 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony** which was held in-person outside on the track/softball field. It could not have been a nicer evening. As one parent described it to me, "it was eerily comforting to gather as a class, with all the students and parents after such a long absence." My role was to 'bump elbows' with the graduates and hand them their diploma as Principal Ellis announced their names. In the process, I came to realize that these students (the Traip Academy Class of 2025) entered kindergarten the same year I arrived in Kittery--**nostalgic moment number one**.

Tonight's **Traip Academy Commencement for the Class of 2021** will be the first that I won't be in attendance for since arriving in Kittery in 2012. My own daughter will be graduating from a neighboring high school tonight, so I'll be there cheering her on (seated on hard, metal bleachers rather than feeling the cool breeze off the Piscataqua River at Fort Foster Park with my Traip Academy friends)--**nostalgic moment number two**.

And of course, there are the feelings that come from having **weathered these last 16 months**. We've turned a corner; I don't think anyone can dispute that, and with that sense of turning a page, we leave something behind, even if it was, at many points, incredibly difficult and not-at-all pleasant. For decades, we will reference this past school year as the most trying and difficult year that most of us will ever deal with--the COVID year, and that is my **nostalgic moment number three**.

Enough of that (as my mom would say)! It's a great day, and the weekend forecast looks beautiful. I have a few other reminders for you before I sign off:

- **Tuesday is the last day of school.** It is an early dismissal day (11:05 AM for Traip Academy and Shapleigh School; 12:05 PM for Mitchell Primary School). If you have any questions about dismissal or bus transportation, please reach out to your student's principal. Our teachers and support staff will spend the remainder of the school day on Tuesday putting classrooms back together after a year of pushing a cart around the school for many of them. The District is also treating our staff to a well-deserved lunch on Tuesday. It's a small expression of appreciation for a BIG effort this year.
- **Thank you to the voters of Kittery.** On Tuesday, our 2021-22 school budget passed with a resounding vote of support. We will work hard to live up to the confidence you all have in us.
- Remember that our **summer breakfast and lunch program** (free to everyone under the age of 18), begins Monday, June 21st. The flyer is attached.

- **Meals 4 Kids** (a program sponsored by Gather) has announced its summer schedule. They will be at the Kittery Post Office (10 Shapleigh Road) from 1:30 - 3:00 PM) every Wednesday. The flyer is attached.
- On Saturday, June 26 at 9:00 AM, you will want to be at Memorial Park behind the Town Hall for the annual **Kittery Independence Day Celebration**. It is a dramatic re-enactment of the signing of the Declaration of Independence including a portrayal of Kittery's own Gen. William Whipple. A fife & drum corps, a musket salute, a swivel gun, and the PNSY color guard will make the event very special. Please stay for refreshments following the ceremony at the Historical & Naval Museum (adjacent to Town Hall).
- Thank you to Mrs. Matty, Principal Ellis, Mrs. Perry, and anyone else who helped to make the 7th/8th grade **Nooney Farm experience** a success during phase IV this year. WMTW (Channel 8) was in town on Tuesday and produced a great story about the program. The video features several Shapleigh School students. Take a look by clicking [here](#)!
- It's not too late to complete the **Pooled Testing survey** (staff too!). If you haven't already, click [here](#) to complete the survey. I will follow up this summer with more information about registration, parent/guardian consent, details about testing frequency, and other testing-related protocols.
- Want to tip your hat to the Class of 2021? The **Parade of Graduates** leaves Memorial Field this afternoon at approximately 3:00 PM and should take about an hour to reach Fort Foster Park. Here is the parade route...let's make some noise for the GRADS!

*Leave Memorial Field on Old Post Road between 3:00 and 3:10 PM
 Head to Kittery traffic circle
 Take a right onto 236 (right after DQ)
 Continue on Rogers Road
 Continue on 103
 Turn right onto Chauncey Creek Road
 Turn right onto Pocahontas
 Continue to Fort Foster Park*

Until next time,



Eric Waddell
 Superintendent of Schools