



## From the Director

Dear Franklin families,

This month, we are addressing a serious issue - bias speech and bullying in school. This isn't something we are newly addressing, and it isn't something unique to our school. Across the country, school leaders and teachers are seeing an increase in the incidence of bullying, especially issues related to identity, such as ethnicity, religion, gender, ableness, and sexual orientation. National organizations that track these kinds of issues in schools are seeing alarming increases. In 2017, the Anti-Defamation League found that K-12 schools had more anti-Semitic incident reports than any other location - more than public spaces like parks and streets, private homes, businesses, Jewish institutions, or college campuses. And where incidents of anti-Semitism are taking place, other identity-based issues are happening as well. Nationally, our norms around what we say in public, and how we speak to one another, have been shifting, and we are seeing this reflected in schools.

You may recall that several months back, we surveyed our students to learn about the culture in our school and what they are seeing and hearing. We looked at the responses in detail, breaking the data into smaller groups based on grade level, ethnicity, and reported gender identification. There was a lot of positive information. The majority of students across all grades report that there is at least one adult at school who really cares about them, and believes they can be successful. Few students report that they have been pushed, shoved, or hit, or that they have had mean or hateful things said to them.

But there are issues that require attention. About half of our students report seeing offensive or biased words or drawings around campus at least once (in places such as lids of trash bins, or bathroom walls), and about half have heard another student use a slur or make a biased joke at least once. **This is not ok.**

So what are we doing about it? While this isn't new work for us, we are stepping up our urgency. We started with ourselves. Over the summer, our school leadership team reviewed our Code of Conduct, and our strategies and consequences for behaviors that are out of line with our expectations. Before school started, we reviewed these expectations and consequences with all faculty. During the first weeks of school, teachers explicitly taught expectations and established norms with students. In September, we dedicated a teacher work day to examining our own biases. We broke into smaller groups and looked at the types of bias students might experience in school. Each group then created lessons teachers could use throughout the year to respond to bias.

In December, we brought educators from the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) to work with all faculty in a 3-hour training on how to identify and respond to bias. Teachers met the following week to dig deeper into the materials provided by the ADL, and committed to actions they will take whenever they see or hear bias in our school.

This month, teachers at every grade level will review our school expectations around bullying and

harassment (you can read our policy in our student handbook). Throughout the month, each grade level will lead Crew lessons to respond to issues they are seeing and hearing among their students.

Finally, we are working to make it easier for everyone to report issues of concern. We are reviewing programs that support anonymous reporting, and we will be rolling this out shortly. Please watch for more information in the coming weeks. Until then, we encourage students and parents to report all incidents and concerns to any trusted adult at school. You can email, call, or slip us a note. You do not have to identify yourself to report a concern, but please do provide enough information so that we can take action. Generally, concerns should go to your principals - Sarah Jean Smith ([sjsmith@thefsi.us](mailto:sjsmith@thefsi.us)) or Walter Plotkin ([wplotkin@thefsi.us](mailto:wplotkin@thefsi.us)), or you can email me at [mvruwink@thefsi.us](mailto:mvruwink@thefsi.us).

We're asking students to join in this effort. In high school, our peer support council members have received training on bias, and are being called upon to respond to incidents. Through our Crew lessons, we are asking students to be involved, to become upstanders, and to help us create a school that is safe and welcoming for all.

And we need the support of our parents and community. This issue is so much bigger than one school. We know that when we work with parents, and when students hear the same messages at home and at school, the impact is much greater. Here are a few conversation starters and resources you can use to help us in this important work.

- [What Bullying Is and Is Not](#): This resource from the ADL includes a definition of bullying along with age-appropriate questions for family conversations.
- [Responding to CyberHate](#): Another great resource from the ADL's "Table Talk" series.
- [Speak Up at School Pocket Guide](#): Print out this guide with specific actions to take when you hear or see bias. Talk about what might make it hard to take action, and why students may choose to ignore or go along with something they know isn't right.

Bias and hate have no place in our school. Together we can make a difference. I appreciate your help.

Warmly,

Michelle

## Upcoming Events

***Stay in the loop! Our community calendar is posted on the website: [Community Calendar](#)***

### **February Community Events**

**Tues, Feb 5, 9 am** - School Tour for Prospective Families

**Wed, Feb 6, 1:00 - 4:00 pm** Attendance Make-up (High School Only)

**Thurs, Feb 7, 5:30 pm** in Carver Bldg: Info Session for Prospective Families

**Tues, Feb 12**

-9 am: School Tour for Prospective Families

-6:00 pm: Board of Directors meeting (Parks bldg)

**Wed, Feb 13** - Full day (3:15/3:35 release)

**Thurs, Feb 14, 8:15 am:** Parent Crew meeting. Come meet other FSI parents and learn how to get involved! Meeting is in Einstein bldg.

**Fri, Feb 15** - No school (professional development/mid-year review)

**Tues, Feb 19, 7 - 9 pm:** Noble Cider Adult Social Event! Come on out for a fun night with other FSI parents! \$5 ticket/cash at the door; 50/50 raffle, Escape Room competition, cash bar, food truck available. 356 New Leicester Highway.

**Thurs, Feb 21, 4 pm:** School Improvement Team meeting (Carver bldg)

**Tues, Feb 26, 9 am:** School Tour for Prospective Families

**Thurs, Feb 28, 8:15 am:** Parent Coffee (Einstein bldg)

### **February Athletics Events**

Fri, Feb 1, 4 pm: HS Basketball at Asheville School

Tues, Feb 5, 4:15 pm: MS Basketball vs Francine Delaney at Reid Center

Tues, Feb 12, 4:15 pm: MS Basketball vs TLC at Reid Center

## **School News**

### **United Way Homework Diners**

Have you heard about the United Way Homework Diners? Our students and families can participate in this great program! The Homework Diners take place at four area middle schools, Asheville, Enka, Erwin, and Owen. Families are invited to the cafeteria during the scheduled time each week. No pre-registration is required to attend. Students receive tutoring, and a great meal is provided by Asheville's Green Opportunity. All are open to any family with a K-12 student who lives in the surrounding school district, An adult family member must be in attendance with the participating student.

#### **The 2018-19 Homework Diner schedule:**

- Erwin Middle on Monday nights from 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- Asheville Middle on Tuesday nights from 5-7:00 p.m.
- Enka Middle on Tuesday nights from 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- Owen Middle on Thursday nights from 5:30-7:00 p.m.

They can also use volunteers to help! Learn more about how you can help with this wonderful community resource: <https://www.handsonasheville.org/middleschool/homework-diners/>

## New STEM Opportunity

We are excited about a new partnership with the Asheville Museum of Science (AMOS)! Beginning mid-March, middle school students will have the opportunity to participate in an afterschool STEM workshop, "How to Invent Anything". Students will use tools of engineers and scientists, such as 3D printing, soldering, laser-cutting, and electronics. We need a minimum of 10 students; spaces are limited to 14. Cost will be \$80 for the 8-week session. Register and pay online on the BtB site. Because this is an outside organization, the financial aid offered through BtB does not apply.

## Building International Relationships

Interested in some cross-cultural experiences? On April 25 and 26, FSI will again be hosting a group of international students at school. We hosted a group in the fall, and our student enjoyed the opportunity to meet kids from another country and culture, and to show them a bit about school life in the US. Several families asked about hosting a student in their home, and we now have that opportunity! "Visions USA is an ESL immersion program in Asheville. They are looking for host families for students visiting April 15-27th. Our visiting students participate in English classes a few mornings a week, and explore what Asheville has to offer during the afternoons. Here's what a Visions USA host family has to say about the experience: *"Our family has hosted two international students over the past two summers. It was a truly enriching experience for our own children. Not only did they bond and make lifelong friends, but they now have a connection to Norway and Germany that will broaden their understanding of the world as they grow into adulthood."* - **Andrea and Brian B., Asheville, NC.** Want to learn more? Contact Director Katie Wilson at [Katie.wilson@visionsusa.org](mailto:Katie.wilson@visionsusa.org) Or check us out on the web! <https://www.visionsusa.org/>

## Box Tops for Education

It's time to send in your Box Tops! Thank you to parent Kathleen Emory, who helps us collect and earn \$\$ for our Box Tops. Funds support our music and theatre programs - this is an easy way to support the arts at FSI!

Bring in your Box Tops - please cut them out (and check the expiration date). You can bring them to the office any time we are open.

Not into cutting out box tops? You can still help! Download the Box Tops for Education app, scan your grocery receipt, and earn funds for our school! Learn more on the [Box Tops for Education site](#), or download the app:

[Download on the App Store](#)

[Download for Android](#)

## Remember! Open Enrollment is Jan 1 - March 30

Open Enrollment for new students runs January 1 - March 30. Our next two Info Sessions are January 17 and February 7 at 5:30 pm, in the Carver Building.

### **Sibling Enrollment - enroll today!**

If you plan to enroll a sibling next year, you need to submit an application during Open Enrollment. Siblings receive preference in our lottery, but only if the applications are submitted during Open Enrollment.

## **Returning Students - Re-Enrollment**

We will begin re-enrollment later this month. You do not need to submit a new application for returning students. Like last year, we will complete re-enrollment through SchoolMint, the online enrollment program.

## **Construction & Calendar Updates**

Construction continues moving right along! Despite all the challenging weather, we are only about a week behind - which is within our completion schedule. The exterior walls are all in place. We miss the excitement of the big crane, but we are glad to be on track.

Remember that we have begun adding 5 minutes to each day, as part of our plan to make up missed days. We will have school on Friday, June 7. Thursday, June 6 will be a regular release day (this was previously scheduled as an early release). Keep holding June 10 and 11 as possible make up days, as winter isn't over yet! .

## **Reminders - Check here for info you may have missed!**

### **Stay Informed - Where to find what you need to know**

Homework, sports, social events, and more -keeping up with family schedules takes some serious organization! We want to help you find all the information you need to know, when you need it!

Here are the ways you will hear from us, and some helpful links when you're looking for something and just not sure where to find it:

**Monthly Newsletter:** This newsletter will be sent the 1st week of each month. The newsletter highlights activities taking place at school, as well as some of why we do what we do. The newsletters are published on our website - on the Parent page - in case you ever miss an issue, or want to go back and read it again.

**[Community Calendar:](#)** Find our online calendar on our website! The Community Calendar is the place to find all daily/weekly events taking place at Franklin.

**[Facebook Page:](#)** Franklin maintains a school-wide Facebook page. We'll post about events, topics of interest, and general happenings. Like us and follow us!

**[Carpooling Group:](#)** Find other Franklin parents looking for rideshares and carpooling on this closed Facebook group. You'll be asked to answer a couple questions before you join.

**[Bolts Athletics:](#)** Our Athletics Program has a Facebook page as well - follow it to keep up with our teams. We hope to see lots of fans on the sideline this year!

**[FSI Website:](#)** You'll find lots of information on our website! Check the Parent tab for the calendar, forms, our handbook, archived copies of our newsletter, and more!

## Who do I go to when....

Whether you are new or returning to Franklin, we know you will have questions, and we want to help you find the best person to answer them, quickly and efficiently. We hope this little guide will help you navigate!

***I have a question about my child's grade, an assignment, or something specific to one class:***

Start with your child - what do they know? Then, the classroom teacher

***I'm worried about my child's overall progress, or progress in multiple classes:***

Your child's Crew advisor can help coordinate a team response or meeting

***My child seems anxious, sad, or unhappy:*** Lindsey Foster is on maternity leave. [Lindy Wiens](#)

has stepped in as our middle school counselor, and [Katherine Becker](#) is our high school counselor

***I think my child is being bullied, or other behavior/discipline concerns:*** [Walter Plotkin](#), Middle

School Principal or [Sarah Jean Smith](#), High School Principal

***My child will miss school:*** For short-term absences (illness, doctor's appointments, etc), send

an email to [attendance@thefsi.us](mailto:attendance@thefsi.us), or bring a written note to the front office. Educational leave requests require prior approval from the Executive Director, [Michelle Vruwink](#).

***I've contacted a teacher, but the problem isn't resolved:*** Your child's Principal

***I think my child may need special education services or accommodations:*** [Donnie Stahlke](#),

Director of Special Services

***My child has an IEP, and I have questions about the services provided:*** Your child's Exceptional

Children teacher is your first contact:

- Grades 5 - 6: [Tammy Leahy](#)
- Grades 7 - 8: [Meagan Barnhard](#)
- Grade 9: [Lindsay Furst](#)
- Grade 10: [Jennifer Nathanson](#)
- Grades 11 -12: [Serena Campbell](#)

***I have questions about sports:*** [Kim Burke](#), Athletic Director

***I want to know more about after or before-school services:*** [McKenzie Eury](#), Beyond the Bell Coordinator

***I want to know more about your band program:*** [Chris Wilson](#), Band Director

***I have questions about your school bus:*** [Deeana Bennett](#), Director of Operations

***I am interested in carpooling/ride-sharing:*** Check out our carpool facebook group (you need to request to join):

***I want to know more about college planning, including advanced courses like AP and Dual Enrollment, financial aid, or the college application process:*** [JaneAnne Tager](#), College & Career Counselor

***I have high level concerns or questions about the school, such as a problem that hasn't been resolved through my principal, an immediate school safety concern, or more general questions about the school's philosophy, approach, or plans for the future:*** [Michelle Vruwink](#), Executive Director

# Directory

Executive Director, Michelle Vruwink: [mvruwink@thefsi.us](mailto:mvruwink@thefsi.us)  
HS Principal, Sarah Jean Smith: [sjsmith@thefsi.us](mailto:sjsmith@thefsi.us)  
MS Principal, Walter Plotkin: [wplotkin@thefsi.us](mailto:wplotkin@thefsi.us)  
EC Director, Donnie Stahlke: [dstahlke@thefsi.us](mailto:dstahlke@thefsi.us)  
College Counselor, JaneAnne Tager: [jtager@thefsi.us](mailto:jtager@thefsi.us)  
HS Counselor, Katherine Becker: [kbecker@thefsi.us](mailto:kbecker@thefsi.us)  
MS Counselor, Lindsey Foster: [lfoster@thefsi.us](mailto:lfoster@thefsi.us)  
Director of Operations, Deeana Bennett: [dbennett@thefsi.us](mailto:dbennett@thefsi.us)  
Student Services Coordinator, Erinn Otten: [eotten@thefsi.us](mailto:eotten@thefsi.us)

## Faculty:

### 5th Grade

Katie Lapinski, ELA & Social Studies: [klapinski@thefsi.us](mailto:klapinski@thefsi.us)  
Peggy McKay, Science & Math: [pmckay@thefsi.us](mailto:pmckay@thefsi.us)

### 6th Grade

Tony Freeman, ELA & Social Studies: [tfreeman@thefsi.us](mailto:tfreeman@thefsi.us)  
Charlie Keller, Math & Social Studies: [ckeller@thefsi.us](mailto:ckeller@thefsi.us)  
Samuel "Latt" Berry Foster., Science & Social Studies: [sfoster@thefsi.us](mailto:sfoster@thefsi.us)

### 7th Grade

Ethan Burns, ELA: [eburns@thefsi.us](mailto:eburns@thefsi.us)  
Bryan Clendenin, Social Studies: [bclendenin@thefsi.us](mailto:bclendenin@thefsi.us)  
Judy Carhart, Math: [jcarhart@thefsi.us](mailto:jcarhart@thefsi.us)  
Nick Liu, Science: [nliu@thefsi.us](mailto:nliu@thefsi.us)

### 8th Grade

Dan Torrington, ELA: & Social Studies: [dtorrington@thefsi.us](mailto:dtorrington@thefsi.us)  
Lucas Myers, Math: [lmyers@thefsi.us](mailto:lmyers@thefsi.us)  
Elizabeth Post, Science & Social Studies: [epost@thefsi.us](mailto:epost@thefsi.us)

### 9th Grade

Drew Fowler, ELA: [dfowler@thefsi.us](mailto:dfowler@thefsi.us)  
Jerry Lubos, World History: [jlubos@thefsi.us](mailto:jlubos@thefsi.us)  
Austin Proctor, Math 1: [aproctor@thefsi.us](mailto:aproctor@thefsi.us)  
Robin Devitt-Ryder, Math 1: [rdevitt-ryder@thefsi.us](mailto:rdevitt-ryder@thefsi.us)  
Jill Padfield, Math 2: [jpadfield@thefsi.us](mailto:jpadfield@thefsi.us)  
Chris DeFiore, Earth Science: [cdefiore@thefsi.us](mailto:cdefiore@thefsi.us)

### 10th Grade

Carly Connor, ELA: [cconnor@thefsi.us](mailto:cconnor@thefsi.us)  
Matt Reynolds, Civics & Economics: [mreynolds@thefsi.us](mailto:mreynolds@thefsi.us)  
Jill Padfield, Math 2: [jpadfield@thefsi.us](mailto:jpadfield@thefsi.us)  
Teshale Byan, Math 3 & Calculus: [tbyan@thefsi.us](mailto:tbyan@thefsi.us)  
Jessica Bragdon, Biology: [jbragdon@thefsi.us](mailto:jbragdon@thefsi.us)

### 11th Grade

Katie Washburn, English III & AP Lang: [kwashburn@thefsi.us](mailto:kwashburn@thefsi.us)

Meghan Moore-Hubbard, American History I: [mmoorehubbard@thefsi.us](mailto:mmoorehubbard@thefsi.us)

Teshale Byan, Math 3 & Calculus: [tbyan@thefsi.us](mailto:tbyan@thefsi.us)

Robin Devitt-Ryder, PreCalc: [rdevitt-ryder@thefsi.us](mailto:rdevitt-ryder@thefsi.us)

Melissa Kee (formerly Parton), Chemistry & Conceptual Physics: [mparton@thefsi.us](mailto:mparton@thefsi.us)

#### 12th Grade

Laura Walton (formerly Bubacz,) English IV & AP Lit: [lwalton@thefsi.us](mailto:lwalton@thefsi.us)

Tess Barnes Dunn, American History II: [tbarnesdunn@thefsi.us](mailto:tbarnesdunn@thefsi.us)

Teshale Byan, Calculus: [tbyan@thefsi.us](mailto:tbyan@thefsi.us)

Robin Devitt-Ryder, PreCalc: [rdevitt-ryder@thefsi.us](mailto:rdevitt-ryder@thefsi.us)

Melissa Kee (formerly Parton), Conceptual Physics: [mparton@thefsi.us](mailto:mparton@thefsi.us)

Austin Proctor, Physics: [aproctor@thefsi.us](mailto:aproctor@thefsi.us)

#### Elective Teachers:

MS PE: Kendra Parks (formerly Orians), [korians@thefsi.us](mailto:korians@thefsi.us)

HS PE & Athletic Director: Kimberly Burke, [kburke@thefsi.us](mailto:kburke@thefsi.us)

MS Art: Diane Strazzer, [dstrazzer@thefsi.us](mailto:dstrazzer@thefsi.us)

HS Art: Kati Robbins, [krobbins@thefsi.us](mailto:krobbins@thefsi.us)

MS Lit Lab: Hannah Allen, [hallen@thefsi.us](mailto:hallen@thefsi.us)

MS Tech: Matt Mikulski, [mmikulski@thefsi.us](mailto:mmikulski@thefsi.us)

MS Guidance (and counselor): Lindsey Foster, [lfoster@thefsi.us](mailto:lfoster@thefsi.us)

Music: Cary Cooper, [ccooper@thefsi.us](mailto:ccooper@thefsi.us)

Theatre: Chris Martin, [cmartin@thefsi.us](mailto:cmartin@thefsi.us)

French: Stephanie Hellert, [shellert@thefsi.us](mailto:shellert@thefsi.us)

Spanish: Heather Kabat, [hkabat@thefsi.us](mailto:hkabat@thefsi.us)

Spanish: Alfredo Herrero Debon, [aherrerodebon@thefsi.us](mailto:aherrerodebon@thefsi.us)

ASL: Desiree Delbert, [ddelbert@thefsi.us](mailto:ddelbert@thefsi.us)

#### Support Teachers

5th/6th grade EC: Tammy Leahy, [tleahy@thefsi.us](mailto:t Leahy@thefsi.us)

7th/8th grade EC: Meagan Barnhard, [mbarnhard@thefsi.us](mailto:mbarnhard@thefsi.us)

MS EC Intensive: Meaghann Denkenberger, [mdenkenberger@thefsi.us](mailto:mdenkenberger@thefsi.us)

9th grade EC: Lindsay Furst, [lfurst@thefsi.us](mailto:lfurst@thefsi.us)

10th grade EC: Jennifer Nathanson, [jnathanson@thefsi.us](mailto:jnathanson@thefsi.us)

11th/12th grade EC: Serena Campbell, [scampbell@thefsi.us](mailto:scampbell@thefsi.us)

MS EC Assistant: Diana Schofield, [dschofield@thefsi.us](mailto:dschofield@thefsi.us)

HS EC Assistant: Paul Szumski, [pszumski@thefsi.us](mailto:pszumski@thefsi.us)

Behavior Specialist: Kyle Hancock, [khancock@thefsi.us](mailto:khancock@thefsi.us)