

Notes from Superintendent Holcomb & the School Committee
2.1.26 Parent & Staff Newsletter

Stephen C. Flanagan Enrichment Fund



At Thursday evening's School Committee meeting, Swansea School Department staff were honored as recipients of enrichment funds generously awarded by Cynde Flannigan. These funds, made possible through the Stephen C. Flannigan Enrichment Fund, are dedicated to enhancing educational opportunities for students across the district.

The fund was established in memory of Stephen C. Flannigan, former Superintendent of Swansea Public Schools, whose passion for education and commitment to students continue to inspire our community. Though Stephen's life was tragically cut short, his legacy lives on through this meaningful support of innovative teaching and learning.

Pictured above are Cynde Flannigan, her son Chris, her grandchildren, along with district principals and staff recipients, all coming together to celebrate Stephen's enduring impact on Swansea Public Schools.

This year's recipients are:

- Kathleen Golden-Bernier - Joseph Case High School - Interactive Skull Models
- Marina Jackson - Brown School - Classroom visits from the Plimouth Patuxet Museum
- Kerrie Moreau - Hoyle School - Indi Robots STEM
- Kristen DosSantos - Hoyle School - Pre-K STEM Materials
- Christine Medeiros - Gardner School - Enhancing 1st Grade Science Learning with Microscopes



Solar Power Update

The School Department will be moving forward with two strategic initiatives designed to reduce operational costs and maximize the effective use of taxpayer dollars.

First, the district will proceed with leasing roof space at the high school to a third-party solar vendor. This project will generate monthly lease revenue for the School Department at **zero out-of-pocket cost**. The solar system will be fully installed, maintained, and monitored by the vendor. Once operational, the system is expected to generate tens of thousands of dollars in revenue each year, over the coming decades. All Massachusetts procurement laws will be strictly followed throughout this process.

In addition, the School Department will issue a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a potential Performance Contract with a qualified Energy Service Company (ESCO). This process will allow the district to conduct a comprehensive assessment of all seven school buildings to identify opportunities to reduce energy and fuel costs and improve overall operational efficiency.

Additional details can be found in the School Committee agenda and supporting materials from the January 5, 2026 meeting.



VAPE DETECTORS

As part of our ongoing commitment to maintaining a safe and healthy school environment, the School Department will be installing vape detectors in restrooms at the high school. These highly sensitive devices alert administrators when vaping activity is detected, allowing staff to respond promptly and appropriately.

The district will be using the HALO Smart Sensor System by Morolla Solutions, a widely used technology designed to help schools address vaping while respecting student privacy.

For families who are concerned about the health risks associated with vaping, additional information and resources are available by clicking here.

Please remember that under Massachusetts law, nicotine products, including tobacco, e-cigarettes, and vaping devices, are not permitted to be used or possessed on school grounds by students or other individuals. This prohibition applies to school property, school buildings, school buses, and all school-sponsored events..

Call for Volunteers: Public Relations Committee

Swansea Public Schools has a powerful story to tell, one rooted in student success, dedicated educators, and a strong partnership with our community. To better share that story and strengthen communication with families and residents, the district is forming a Public Relations Committee, and we are seeking volunteers to participate.

The purpose of this committee is to support clear, consistent, and positive communication about our schools. Members will help highlight the many successes happening across the district, provide feedback on how we communicate with the community, and assist in strengthening public understanding of our schools' programs, needs, and goals. This work is especially important as we continue to navigate changing educational, financial, and community priorities.

We are looking for parents, staff, community members, and stakeholders who are interested in supporting Swansea Public Schools through collaboration, outreach, and advocacy. No prior experience in public relations is required, just an interest in our great schools and a willingness to contribute ideas and perspectives.

By working together, we can ensure that our community remains informed, engaged, and connected to the important work happening in our classrooms and in our district every day. If you are interested in serving on the Public Relations Committee or have any questions, please contact Superintendent Holcomb at scott.holcomb@swanseaschools.org. Meetings will be held once a month and can be done virtually and/or hybrid (in person and virtual).

We look forward to partnering with you to help tell the story of Swansea Public Schools.

School Committee Meeting

The next School Committee meeting is scheduled for Monday, February 9th, at 6:00 PM in the School Committee Conference Room located in the Central Administration Building. The meeting will also be broadcast live on the Swansea Community Network Channel via their Facebook page.

School Department Budget for 2026-2027 School Year

The School Department will present its proposed FY 2026–2027 budget to the Advisory and Finance (A&F) Board on Wednesday, February 25. Following this presentation, the anticipated next step is for A&F to vote to advance the budget to Town Meeting for consideration in May. Additional information will be shared as the date approaches.

Obituary

As many of you are aware, Swansea Public Schools recently experienced the heartbreaking loss of Mason Stringer, a second-grade student at Gardner Elementary School. Mason's obituary is available here for those who wish to learn more or share their condolences.

Mason will forever remain in our hearts, along with his family and all those affected by this profound loss. Our thoughts and prayers are with all during this difficult time.

Child Care

The Stoico/FIRSTFED YMCA will be offering free child care for Swansea families attending services for Mason Stringer on February 7th. Child care for school age children (ages 5-12) will be available from 1:30-5:30p. Please fill out the form by clicking here.