

# SUPERINTENDENT'S EDUCATION UPDATE October 10, 2024

2024-2025 School Year

# **Teaching & Learning**



On Wednesday, October 9th the Donovan community celebrated the official ribbon cutting ceremony for Randolph's new Mobile Library, the "Page Turner"! We are so excited for the mobile library to begin visiting our schools. Thank you to all of the town officials who made this dream a reality and especially to Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley's support for this project!



# Science, Technology, & Engineering

Randolph High School's science teachers are rolling out a new curriculum this year! Physics, biology, and chemistry classes will be using OpenSciEd, which is a program that has been used in Randolph Community Middle School's science classes for the past three years.

OpenSciEd is designed to increase accessibility for all students. The units included in OpenSciEd use a science storyline approach, which gives students a learning experience grounded by the students' own desire to explain what they don't understand. Storylines are sequenced lessons that encourage students to answer their own questions in order to figure out a piece of a science idea. The embedded science ideas are observable events, which we refer to as phenomena. Students use science talk to make sense of these phenomena. Their talk in the form of words and drawings progresses from making sense of their own thinking to deepening their reasoning, which depends on how students think with others (i.e., agree/disagree, feedback). Teachers and students have a responsibility within OpenSciEd to work together to figure things out as a community of learners, just as scientists do in the real world.

Students will learn about specific topics in-depth through OpenSciEd. As a result, there will be fewer units of study, but more time spent on each. Students will also be expected to use science and engineering practices to make sense of these topics, rather than string together a list of disconnected facts. Examples of phenomena include the following.

Physics - How can we design more reliable systems to meet our communities' energy needs?

- How do forces in Earth's interior determine what will happen to the surface we see?



Biology - Who gets cancer and why? What can we do about it?

- How do ecosystems work, and how can understanding them help us protect them?

Chemistry - How can we slow the flow of energy on Earth to protect vulnerable coastal communities?

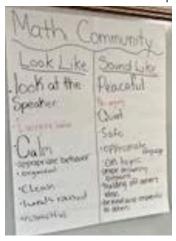
- What causes lightning and why are some places safer than others when it strikes?

#### Math Department

#### RCMS and RHS

We are excited to announce the implementation of **Illustrative Mathematics** (IM) from Imagine Learning for secondary math. These high quality instructional materials bring a new approach and emphasizes active learning. Students will tackle challenging, meaningful problems, which will help them develop skills to think like mathematicians.

The curriculum promotes teamwork with students discussing and solving problems together. Our classrooms have started to build a "Math Community" to set norms and expectations when we are working together in math.



We look forward to seeing the positive impact that Illustrative Mathematics will have on student learning!



## Elementary:

Our elementary math team has started a curriculum review process for SY24-25. Part of this process is finding high quality instructional materials that align with our math vision. After moving throughout the curriculum review process, we will decide on a new curriculum to implement in SY25-26.

#### **Vision**

We believe every student is a brilliant mathematician. Randolph Public Schools embrace the diversity of our community by building strong collaboration among students, staff, and families. In our classrooms, we strive to bring joy to the learning of mathematics and build problem solvers who apply mathematics in the real world.

This is year 2 of implementing ST math for grades K-5. Students have met JiJi the penguin and are solving math puzzles related to grade level standards. Check out some of the ST Math bulletin boards to track school progress!





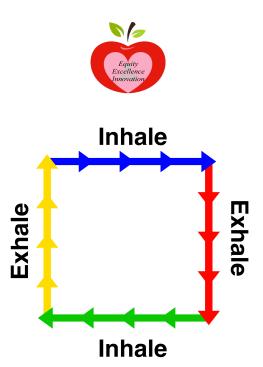


# School Update Donovan Elementary School (Donovan School)

Families enjoyed gathering at the Donovan School for our open house. They were greeted by our Dragon, JiJi, and Luna!



Donovan Elementary has been engaged in Happiness Practices, including journaling, expressing three things they're grateful for, and daily meditation. This breathing square is our latest calming strategy. Donovan is our Happy Place!



Thank you to the PTO and Coleen Burgess for organizing our first Donovan family movie night! We enjoyed watching the Emoji movie together!



Our students are back to completing math puzzles in ST Math! Congratulations to Grade One students for completing the most puzzles!





# John F. Kennedy School (JFK School)

# The First Month of School: Embracing Safety and Building a Strong Foundation

As we settle into the first month of the school year, we are excited to see our community thriving. We have prioritized our core values of *Safety*, *Teamwork*, *Aspire*, *Responsibility*, and *Respect*, and it's inspiring to see these values come to life through the actions of our students, staff, and families.

This year, we are especially excited to welcome the Kindergarten Class of 2030 to our school community. Their energy and enthusiasm have been contagious, and we are committed to ensuring that their transition into school is both safe and positive.



At the forefront of our efforts is the value of safety. Ensuring that every student feels secure in their learning environment is our top priority. From revisiting our safety protocols to reinforcing safe behaviors in classrooms, hallways, and during arrival and dismissal, we are dedicated to creating a space where students can thrive without fear or uncertainty. Our staff and students are practicing safe habits daily, whether it's through physical safety measures or fostering emotional well-being.

Beyond safety, we have strengthened our *Teamwork* through collaborative practices among our staff, supported by the district's strong *Common Planning Time* structure. This intentional time allows teachers to deeply focus on instructional strategies, align their goals, and share best practices, ensuring that our students receive high-quality instruction. These collaborative efforts are empowering us to *Aspire* toward new levels of academic excellence as we take *Responsibility* for each student's learning experience.

Finally, we continue to foster a culture of *Respect* in every interaction, from how we engage with one another to how we care for our shared environment. Together, we are building a community where each individual feels valued and respected, paving the way for a successful school year.

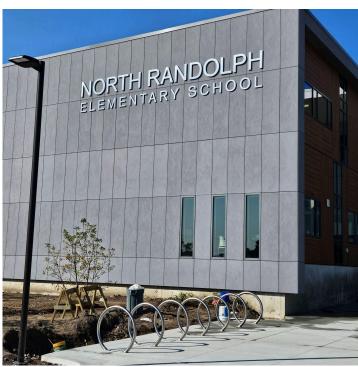
We look forward to the continued growth and success of all our students, with safety and core values at the heart of everything we do.

#### North Randolph School (North Randolph)

We celebrated the opening of our new building for the new school year!



Students are so excited to use all of the new learning spaces! We have a beautiful gym with a rock wall, an outdoor learning classroom, and a bright and cheery cafe to have lunch in.

















Our 5th grade students at North Randolph Elementary have started participating in the Ron Clark Academy (RCA) house system! The house system creates a community among our students while encouraging student leadership and motivation to succeed in school. One of the key benefits of the RCA house system is that it promotes a sense of belonging among students! Each student was assigned to one of four houses.



#### The House of Altruismo

Altruismo traces its origins to the rainforests of the Amazon, where a group of powerful Brazilians were given the name because of the Portuguese meaning behind it: "the Givers."





#### The House of Amistad

Amistad is the House that originates from Mexico. A group of kind but powerful individuals that are known most for their unconquered spirit. They are the protectors of the realm and everyone's best friend. This is why, in the language of their ancestry, their name means "friendship."



#### The House of Isibindi

Isibindi is a tight-knit group of individuals, like a pride of African lions, where family means everything. The House's symbolic animals, the mute swan and the lion, serve to empower incoming members. While new students might be quiet or shy at first,



the longer that they are in the House, the more they begin to display the characteristics of strength and bravery. In Zulu, Isibindi means "courage."



#### The House of Rêveur

Rêveur is a royal House whose name in French means "dreamers" or "idealists" — because the members who fill this group are students filled with freedom and wild abandon who recognize their dreams and will let nothing stand in the way of achieving them. This can be seen in the unicorn, which is on the center of the House's crest, a powerful creature who is almost impossible to tame. Similarly, the House of Rêveur is a House of passion.



Students participate in house-specific events and activities throughout the year. This sense of belonging can help students feel more connected to their school and peers, which leads to greater engagement and motivation in their studies.







## **Young Elementary School (Young School)**

The Young School had a wonderful start to the school year. Open House was very well attended and our amazing PTO welcomed the Young School community with an ice cream truck that evening. We also held an extra meet and greet with the new administration before parents visited classrooms. Our weekly recognition of "Bucket Fillers" has begun and our House System will begin very soon with third graders and new students in grades 4 and 5 being assigned to one of four houses. We are also discussing the power of the word "yet" here at Young. If you can't do something, you can't do it yet. Or if you don't know something, you don't know it yet. Keep an eye out for our Young School "yet" messages!

Mrs. Horgan's Grade 2 Reading class is exploring Communities and students are building their literacy and citizenship skills as they engage in a study of schools. Students began the module by participating in a series of focused read-alouds to explore the module guiding question, "What is school, and why

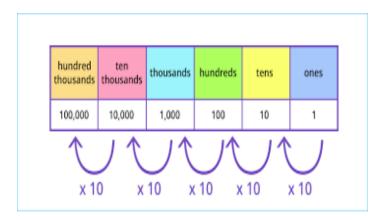
are schools important?" In Unit 2, students are building on this understanding by engaging in close read-alouds of the text *Off to Class: Incredible and Unusual Schools around the World* by Susan Hughes. Through this text, students learn about schools around the world and the challenges some communities face in sending their students to school and how they solve these challenges. To support their understanding of this text, students take notes and write in response to their reading.





Throughout our EL Education module 1, students participate in collaborative conversations with their peers to process and extend their understanding of the similarities and differences between their own school and the school they have researched.

Grade 4 students have been working on exploring the place value of a digit in a number. They are then exploring what patterns exist in a place value chart,



and how the value of a digit increases or decreases based upon its placement.

Students then apply this knowledge to rounding and comparing numbers.

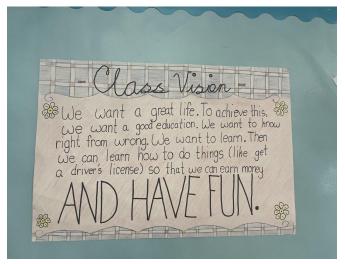


In ELA Class, students will be reading the novel Love That Dog by Sharon Creech. This novel is written in poem form. The unit combines comprehension skills with learning about the characteristics of poetry.





Grade four also completed a Donors Choose project and purchased books that promote inclusion and equity in the classroom!



Grade 5 students in Mrs. Donovan's class created "About Me" Portraits and used them to develop a class vision that was turned into a beautiful poster by student Angela A.

## **School (RCMS)**



# Randolph Community Middle

RCMS is off to a wonderful start! We held our highly attended Open House on September 19th. Our PTO presented and hosted a table for parent sign-ups. One of our community partners, Codman Square, was in attendance.

Codman provides wraparound services to students and families in the district. For example, they can help with food insecurity, and accessing medical care/insurance as well as employment opportunities. In addition, Stajez (a local



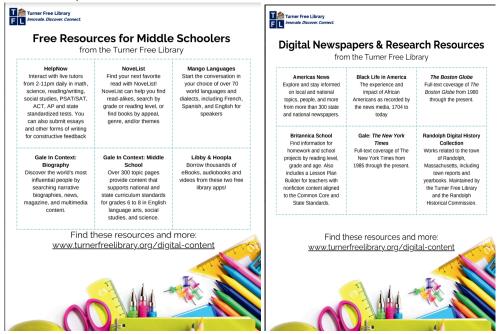
dance company) was present. We are fortunate to have a dance instructor from Stajez teaching a movement class for some of our students.







RMCS is also partnering with the Turner Free Library (TFL), including planning visits from the new Bookmobile and supporting our students in getting library cards so that they can access the vast resources TFL offers.





Ms. Pomarole, Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning wrote a grant for a Little Free Library at RCMS. The Little Free Library supplied the library and several culturally responsive and multilingual books. Please come by to browse the selection!





Coming soon....



Ms. Pomarole also wrote a grant for a Pollinator Garden through Keep Massachusetts Beautiful (KMB). They partner with organizations to take action and make Massachusetts a cleaner, greener place to live, work, and play. Our 6th grade science team will be planting this soon. \$\oint\text{\$\ointer}\$ \$\mathbb{\omega}\$ \$\mathbb{\omega}\$\$\mathbb{\omega}\$\$ \$\mathbb{\omega}\$\$ \$\m

Mrs. Sleboda, Mr. Smith and Ms. Pomarole collaborated on a grant to renovate the RCMS Library. We were excited to be awarded the grant



the RCMS Library. We were excited to be awarded the grant from Mass Life Sciences Center to renovate the space into a modern MakerSpace. MLSC's mission is to serve as the hub of the world's life sciences ecosystem, encourage innovation through investments in good science and business, strengthen and protect Massachusetts' global leadership position in the life sciences, accelerate the commercialization of promising treatments, therapies, and cures that will improve patient care,



create jobs, drive economic development and STEM workforce development. Details will be shared as the project moves forward.

## RCMS Athletics Updates

Winter Sports registration: Winter sports registration is now open and will promptly close on December 6th.

RCMS will offer both Boys and Girls Basketball. Additionally, 8th graders at RCMS are eligible to participate at the high school level in Boys & Girls Indoor Track and Wrestling. Register here for all RCMS sports:

https://students.arbitersports.com/randolph-schools/middle-school-athletics-registration-winter-2024-2025

Thank you to our coaches: A sincere thank you to our teacher-coaches who make our athletic programs work Without their tireless efforts the student-athletes of Randolph Public Schools would not be able to participate in these life-long memories of being a student athlete.

Additionally, we want to specifically recognize Lynn Collins and Amy Wilkins for stepping up and leading the RCMS Soccer programs. Without their coaching efforts these programs may not have run. Many of our coaches are teachers or full time-employees in the community and work their full day in the classroom or job, then are at practice well into the evening. Furthermore, we are especially thankful to our volunteer coaches who provide excellent role-models of selfless service to their community.



Amy Wilkins - RCMS Boys Soccer
Lynn Collins- RCMS Girls Soccer
Lauren Webb- RCMS Girls Soccer
Brian Seibert- RCMS XC
Katie McCabe- RCMS XC
James Horst- RCMS Football
Osende Monteiro- RCMS Football
Calvin Duncan-RCMS Football (Volunteer)

## Randolph High School (RHS)

It's been a great start to the school year at RHS. We kicked the year off with families with a Freshman orientation in August and Open House for 10th-12th families. We are now in full swing with academics, athletics and the music programs. Clubs and other activities will be starting shortly so stay tuned for more information. Below are school highlights as well as some info on upcoming events.

#### Meet the RHS Leadership Team:

RHS has made some changes to our leadership team this school year.

Mr. John Licorish, Principal

Mr. Steadman Graves, Assistant Principal for Special Education

Ms. Laurinda Briggs, Assistant Principal for Teaching & Learning

Ms. Desiree Joseph, Dean of Student Culture

Mr. Prentis ("PJ") Douglas, Assistant Dean of Student Culture

Ms. Meaghan Dwyer, AIM Director

Please click on the link below to learn about our leadership team members. Meet the RHS Leadership Team - Google Docs



#### RHS School Site Council - First Meeting - October 29th

Our first School Site Council meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 29th, at 6:00 pm. A zoom link will be sent out prior to the meeting. We are looking for family members and community members to join us and take part in the decision-making process in order to improve achievement. While being a part of the RHS School Site Council, you will have an active voice in assisting the Principal in adopting educational goals, identifying the educational needs of the students attending the RHS, reviewing the annual school building budget, and formulating a school improvement plan among other school concerns and initiatives.

#### RHS New Schedule for the 24-25 School Year

After months of collaboration and negotiation between school leadership and the teacher's union, we came to the agreement on an improved schedule that will incorporate "long blocks" and a "VVI.N." (VVhat I Need) intervention block. This new schedule was approved by the School Committee in August. The RHS school hours for the 24-25 school year are 7:50 am - 2:35 pm on full days and 7:50 am - 11:40 am on early release days.

## Incorporation of Long Blocks

RHS has historically had traditional periods that are between 45-60 minutes in length. The new "long block" at the high school level involves classes that are approximately 90 minutes in length. Benefits to "long block" schedules include:

- <u>Deeper Learning</u> Students and teachers have more time to delve into complex topics, conduct detailed discussions, and engage in comprehensive projects or labs.
- Enhanced Student Engagement Extended class periods can lead to more engaging and interactive lessons. Teachers have more flexibility to



incorporate various teaching methods, such as group work, hands-on activities, and experiments.

 <u>Reduced Transition Time</u> - With fewer, longer periods in a day, there are fewer transitions between classes. This can reduce the amount of time students spend moving between classes and help maintain a more focused learning environment.

#### Incorporation of the W.I.N. (What I Need) Block

We are excited to introduce an important addition to our school schedule: the W.I.N. Intervention Block This dedicated time daily for 25 minutes is designed to provide targeted support to all our students, ensuring they receive the individualized attention they need to succeed academically, socially, and emotionally. This will start during the week of October 14th.

#### W.I.N. options will include:

- MCAS intervention for ELA, Math, Physics, Biology
- Social worker-led interventions/support
- SAT prep
- Small group interventions (basic support in core subjects)
- Basic math intervention
- Credit recovery
- College application assistance
- AP exam preparation
- AP organizational skills/study habits
- Additional extracurriculars such as Debate, Public Speaking, Chorus,
- Lab-based science activities



## RHS Athletics Updates



## Upcoming RHS Meetings & Events

October 17 .....Progress reports issued

October 18.....College & Career Fair

October 21-25......S.T.E.A.M. Week Activities

October 29.....School Site Council at 6:00 pm via Zoom

November 6 & 7.....ELA MCAS Retest Sessions

November 12 & 13...Math MCAS Retest Sessions

November 14.....Parent Teacher Conferences at RHS

#### Humanities Department

Digging into Data

A team of educators from Young Elementary School examine data and discuss the instructional implications for the grade 2 students. Pictured above from right foreground to left background are: Shalem Livingston (Instructional Coach), Natan Kotlyar (Assistant Principal), Amber Haswell (Reading Specialist), Damian Sugrue (Principal), Susan Rudden-Horgan (Grade 2 Teacher) and Meaghan Leoncavallo (Speech/Language Pathologist).

The beginning of the 2024-2025 school year is well underway at Randolph Public Schools (RPS)! Students have been welcomed, routines have been set, learning is happening, and data is alive and well. There are several reading assessments, including DIBELS (for grades K-5) and iReady (for grades 2-5), that are used at the elementary level that help us to determine instructional needs of each student. These assessments are administered three times a year. Once the data is collected, teams of teachers, reading specialists, service



providers, instructional coaches, and leaders meet to analyze data from each grade level and identify instructional strengths and needs for each student. Data meetings are a vital component of our commitment to student achievement. By harnessing the power of data, we can create targeted strategies that support every child's learning journey.

# **Special Education and Student Services**

Dear Families,

#### MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS UPDATES:



The Randolph Public Schools Multilingual Learners Department is proud to consider multilingualism as a powerful asset for all. We are starting the new school year with an updated mission statement that holds this motto at the heart:

"The mission of the Randolph Public Schools Multilingual Education Department is to empower all multilingual students to excel both within and beyond the classroom. We are committed to offering the highest quality educational experiences in our schools by providing explicit language instruction and targeted supports to ensure equitable access to meaningful and rigorous



learning opportunities that engage all students in cultivating essential knowledge and skills to prepare them to reach their fullest potential.

At the heart of the RPS Multilingual Education Department's vision for student success is our belief that "Multilingualism is a superpower." Thus, we strive to foster thriving learning environments in which all multilingual learners and their families have a sense of belonging and are known, respected and valued for the linguistic and cultural assets they bring to our community."

We are starting this new school year with renewed focus on ensuring access to high-quality curriculum and learning opportunities as well as engaging and empowering our diverse community of families and students. Stay tuned for updates about adult ESL classes, multilingual family surveys, and more!

Starting strong in the spirit of family engagement, on September 20th, JFK ESL teachers held their annual multilingual learner family breakfast event. Families were invited to spend a morning together to meet teachers and other families of multilingual learners

while enjoying some breakfast together. Families also had the opportunity to ask questions in a more intimate setting, take home free books and take fun family photos.

#### PRE-K NEWSI

What a wonderful start to the 2024-2025 school year. Our students and teachers are back together. We are building routines and getting to know each other. Morning meetings are such a great time to connect!





Our staff is about to launch First Fridays. Every first Friday of the month, we will share a story or other activity featuring staff, with our families.

#### • DEIB UPDATE:

October is recognized as <u>Filipino American History Month</u>, celebrating the rich history, culture, and contributions of Filipino Americans to the United States. This month was first officially recognized in 2009, though Filipino Americans have been a vital part of American society for over 400 years. October was chosen to commemorate the arrival of the first Filipino immigrants to what is now the United States on October 18, 1587. It's a time to honor the impact of the Filipino community in all areas of American life, from arts and culture to science and public service.





Fun fact: Filipino Americans are the second-largest Asian American group in the nation.

Please take a moment to read this slidedeck created by one of our teachers, Christine Miley-Letourneau about the Filipino-American History Month.



• REGISTRATION UPDATE:



We are excited to welcome more students to Randolph Public Schools! Due to the high volume of daily enrollments, we kindly ask for your patience. Please allow up to **two weeks** from the date you begin your enrollment process for it to be completed.

As you <u>consider enrolling at RPS</u>, please remember that we strictly enforce our residency policy. Violating this policy may result in fines. Thank you for your cooperation!

The Randolph Public Schools Residency Policy and Massachusetts State Law [MGL Chapter 76 Section 5] state that "only students who actually reside in the Town of Randolph are entitled to attend Randolph Public Schools."

Pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, every person shall have a right to attend the public schools of the town where he actually resides, and no school committee is required to enroll a person who does not actually reside in the town unless said enrollment is authorized by law or by the school committee. M.G.L. c.76, §5.

Any person who violates or assists in the violation of this provision may be required to remit full restitution to the town of the improperly-attended public schools. M.G.L. c.76, §5. Similarly, pursuant to Randolph Public Schools' School Committee Policies, students who are found to temporarily reside in the Town of Randolph for the purpose of attending one of Randolph Public Schools may be immediately dismissed and parent, guardians, and others may be jointly and severally liable to Randolph Public Schools for the student's tuition for the full academic year(s). Randolph Public Schools may also impose other penalties on the family such as legal fees incurred by legal action and the withholding of certain scholarships and prizes. Randolph Public Schools' School Committee Policy JCAC.

For more information on how to register at RPS, please click this link



#### SPECIAL EDUCATION and STUDENT SERVICES UPDATES:



The <u>New IEP (Individualized Education Program) Improvement Project</u> has begun to be used this year by our teachers. We are hopeful that the new IEP format will allow for more collaborative conversations between the student's school team and family and it will look different than it has in the past.

Keep a lookout for more information on a parent session around learning more about the New IEP (Individualized Education Plan), offered through the Special Education Advisory Committee (SEPAC).

## SEL Update

At the start of the school year, our focus has been on supporting schools with Tier 1 and Tier 2 Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) needs. We have collaborated with social workers and principals to better understand what students need to build resilience through self-regulation.

This month, we have introduced the Toolbox Project, which helps students develop emotional intelligence through self-regulation strategies. For the month of October, our focus is on "Empathy." We are using small group instruction, community meetings, and morning meetings to foster intentional conversations about how to demonstrate empathy.



Adults are modeling this work for students by engaging in self-reflection through the Toolbox Project handbook, considering their "why?" and their hopes for the students they support. As we continue providing consistent support for students, opportunities are embedded within the school day to practice teaching and learning about empathy.

Ther 1 work on Empathy (using the toolbox project handout and/or video):

- Morning Meeting
- Community Meeting
- Classroom Reset
- Modeling the work outlined in the Toolbox Project handout for students and/or providing opportunities for students to engage in the work as well.

## Ther 2 Opportunities to teach Empathy

- Lunch Bunch
- Small Group (social work or academic)
- Student Mediation

## Tier 3 Opportunities to teach Empathy

- During redirection/de-escalation
- During 1:1 time with School Adjustment/Social Worker

#### For more information, please see the following resources:

- SEL Video: All About Empathy (for kids!)
- TOOLBOX Project IHandout 2020 (1).





## Sincerely,

Alpha Sanford, M.Ed CAGS, Director of Special Education and Student Services

Danielle Galvin, Assistant Director of Special Education

Dr. Jennifer Herring, Assistant Director of Student Services

Kait Zanzerkia, Assistant Director of Multilingual Learners and World

Languages

Renee Downes-Gilkes, Early Childhood Coordinator



- \* Tanpri souple kontakte lyezon pou fanmi ki pale Kreyòl Ayisyen yo nan 781-807-0081.

- \* Para ayuda en Español, por favor llame al 339-209-2539. \* Para auxílio em Português, por favor ligue para o número 339-204-5505. \* Néu quý vị có câu hỏi nào khác, làm ơn liên hệ phiên dịch viên tiếng Việt, tại 339-216-2400.