



Sheepscot Valley RSU 12
August 2021
Superintendent's Report
Information, Recognitions, and Celebrations

Superintendent Report

Welcome to the 2021-2022 school year

It has been a busy summer in RSU 12 as we prepare for a new school year. Year-round staff have been busy cleaning the schools and accepting new student registrations. The administrative team has been busy preparing for a new school year. Educators are now in the buildings preparing for their students. There have been many changes throughout the district including facilities improvements and the hiring of new staff. As of today, we have hired over 15 new staff members.

Opening of School Safety Protocols

On June 30, 2021, the Governor declared that the state of emergency was over and COVID-19 cases had dwindled very low. Restrictions around social distancing and mask-wearing in schools were lifted except on school buses.

Unfortunately, now, in mid-August, cases are on the rise again in Maine and the Maine CDC is strongly recommending that we put some protocols back in place to start the school year. Recommendations include three-foot social distancing to the extent possible and wearing of face coverings for all students and staff during the school day. These recommendations are in line with the United States CDC guidelines for schools and the American Academy of Pediatrics. U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, Maine CDC, American Academy of Pediatrics, Department of Education, Maine Education Association, Maine School Management Association, Maine School Superintendent Association, Leadership of Augusta Education Association, and pediatric doctors in Augusta and Winthrop all support opening schools with universal masking for all students, staff, and visitors. The majority of school districts in Maine are starting the school year with universal masking.

RSU 12 was fortunate to offer in-person learning five days a week last year. Thank you to the diligent and creative educators in RSU 12 for making this happen. While no one wants to return to our safety protocols from last year, it seems necessary for the safety of our students, staff, and community. Most safety protocols from last year are being relaxed including social distancing and cohorts. However, universal masking should continue at the start of the school year.

Our goal is to provide the safest learning environment possible with as much in-person learning time as possible for as many students as possible. We are able to do this by having our safety protocols in place.

Here is a list of some of our proposed safety protocols:

1. Mask/face coverings worn by all students, staff, and visitors inside the building
2. Ionization and UVC systems installed
3. Consistent Hand washing and/or Hand sanitizing
4. Three feet of physical distancing to the extent possible
5. Cohorting of classes to the extent possible
6. Self-check health screening

Curriculum and Technology Report

RSU 12, thanks to a grant from the Information Technology Disaster Resource Center, has been able to install outdoor, all-weather Internet access points on the outside of each of our school buildings. This provides free Internet access to students, parents, and other community members on large portions of our school grounds. Typical coverage includes our school playground areas and/or parking areas.

The Maine Department of Education has rolled out MLTI (Maine Learning Technology Initiative) 2.0. This program is funding enough chromebooks to ensure that we have a new device for every 7th and 8th grader. The program will also support professional development and coaching for staff to help them refine their abilities to meaningfully use technology in the classroom.

Because the Maine Department of Education partnered with NWEA for the Maine's Educational Assessment this year, there will be State testing requirements in the fall and spring of this school year. RSU 12 has a long history with NWEA and has used it for its local assessments since 2009.

Westport Island Student Count Information

Student Count information will be available in November

Alna Student Count Information

Student Count information will be available in November

Somerville Student Count Information

Student Count information will be available in November

Chelsea Elementary School Report

We have been working hard here at Chelsea Elementary to get the school ready for everyone to come back in a couple weeks! The building is looking great and we have hired some fantastic new teachers to join our team. In the middle school we have welcomed Mrs. Elizabeth

Hall, Miss Karen Prem, and Miss Jessica McCaslin. Our PreK-2 team has been joined by first grade teacher Mrs. Anna Grant, and our 3-5 team has been joined by Mrs. Tamee Cargill.

Additional staff members that have joined our team here at Chelsea are Mrs. Kayla Guenard, who moved from a PreK Ed Tech position or our Title I Ed Tech position, and joining our ABLE Ed Tech staff are Katie Boynton, Bonnie Bridgforth, and Amber Grady.

We are so excited to have everyone on board. While some of us were busy finding the great new staff for our school, others were busy continuing to support kids during the summer. We successfully held many different summer programs here at Chelsea: Extended School Year (ESY) for special education, Title I reading and math support, a district PreK program to help support learners who were in our PreK program last year get ready for Kindergarten, Camp Chelsea (CCLC Boys and Girls Program), and Boys and Girls Club childcare. The building was always filled with learning and laughter all summer long!

We are all looking forward to school reopening in just a couple short weeks! We'll continue to be busy here making sure we are ready for opening day on the 31st with kiddos!

Palermo Consolidated School Report

We are all looking forward to the start of a new school year. Nick and Jane, our custodians, have worked hard all summer to make sure the school is clean and looks great. Even though people are curious about protocols related to Covid19, we can't wait to see the kids again and provide them with a great educational experience!

We have a few new staff joining us this year. Holly Morgan has been hired for our special education teacher position. She has a lot of knowledge and expertise in teaching students with special needs. Courtney Desmarias is our new third grade teacher and she is excited to bring her hands-on learning approach to our kids. Lastly, we have added Tracy Dowling as an ed tech III to assist in providing educational and behavioral support to our students.

We have an amazing team ready to start the new year with hopes that there are not too many interruptions from Covid19. Everyone did a great job last year and we will continue to get through this together!

Whitefield Elementary School Report

_____Our summer at WHES has been consumed with the standard thorough cleaning that always takes place as well as two summer programs (Title 1 Summer School & Special Education ESY programming). Our kitchen was also responsible for preparing the breakfasts and lunches for the entire RSU this summer. Ashley Burdick spearheaded that program that resulted in feeding a large number of children throughout most of the summer. I had the pleasure

of driving the RSU #12 Food Service van several times this summer, doing the Wednesday meals delivery, and can attest to the number of families in Whitefield who benefitted from this service.

Finally, we acquired a used (but in great condition) greenhouse via funds from the Perloff Family Foundation and we've completed the groundwork necessary to get ready for the "greenhouse raising!" This will expand our greenhouse program substantially and it will also provide us with another outdoor classroom for the entire school to use.

New staff at WHES will include Joe Grant who will be functioning as a special educator in our Life Skills program and Joni Jones who will join our Special Education Team as an Ed Tech 3. Welcome to those individuals. Also, Molly Brewer, 5th grade teacher at WHES, will be going out on leave at some point during the month of September for the birth of her second child and we are pleased to have hired Erin McNichols as a long term sub taking over for Molly. Erin has experience in New Hampshire with fulfilling long-term sub positions and brings great enthusiasm and knowledge to this very difficult to fill position.

Windsor Elementary School Report

We have been busy this summer at Windsor School. We had three different summer programs happening; the CCLC Boys/Girls Club program, the Title I reading and math program, and the extended school year program. All programs were successful, with student learning and playing. Our custodial staff has been hard at work getting the classrooms ready for students, and teachers are already preparing their rooms for the first day.

Several staff members have helped with some fun outdoor and indoor projects this summer. First, we painted a giant scale-sized United States map on the playground. That prompted us to continue and add some newly painted four-square areas. We also updated a flower garden in our bus circle, have maintained the school garden, and gave the conference room a makeover.

A few staff members have been hired for the new year. Symphony Davis fills our full-time night custodial position. Beth Choate joins us in the middle school, teaching 7th and 8th grade ELA. Kelly Lamoreau moved from an ed tech position to 3rd grade teacher. Abby Haskell is our new special education ed tech. Theresa Wight is joining us in the pre-k classroom, and Kristel Anuszewski is our new learning commons teacher. We are thrilled with the talented educators we have hired to join our staff.

On behalf of the staff at Windsor, I am excited for the new school year and the promise of a more normal experience for our students and staff.