

December 12, 2021

Alton & Viola Rand Elementary Schools

RSU34 School Board Report



Covid 19 Impact on Schools Update

As the cold weather sets in, we are seeing an uptick in the number of positive cases in these schools. September was a pretty frenzied month, as we adjusted to the shift from last year when children by and large were not affected by the Corona Virus. When school started this fall, we found that young students were contracting the virus, bringing far more concern to protecting students and staff. The positive cases and quarantined classes slowed down for a few weeks. Since we have returned from Thanksgiving break, we are seeing more children test positive. The pooled tests in Alton have continued to be negative, but we have had two positive pooled tests at the Viola Rand School recently. Virtually all staff at both schools are participating in the weekly pooled tests and we continue to increase the number of students who are involved in this weekly check. Every time we have a positive exposure in a classroom, we rack up the students who are then signed up. One glitch we have been experiencing is the problem with communication between after school child care programs and the schools. Although we share children, the sharing of information about cases of Covid to enforce quarantines for close contacts has been tricky. Concerns about confidentiality has created a barrier to the exchange of information. We have been working on this, but the transparency of information with all after school care providers is inconsistent, at best. We appreciate when parents are forthcoming and provide the information needed to maintain the SOP we are entrusted to follow.

Upcoming Events

December 20 12:30

Caroling around the Bradley Loop

December 22

Crafts and Polar Express at AES

Winter Wonderland Day at VRS

5-2-1-0

Students in Alton and Bradley continue to be encouraged to bring healthy snacks, choose active pursuits daily, cut down on screen time and drink lots of water. Mr. Dyjak takes students outside for PE the vast majority of the time.

We also continually focus on our basic 4 character traits – Respect, Caring, Responsibility and the pursuit of Knowledge.

Both schools have had a focus on acts of caring and kindness this month.

Holiday break is scheduled for Thursday December 23rd - Monday January 3rd.

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UMaine Women's Soccer Team

Last month, Captain Hannah Bamford contacted me about doing some community outreach in the Alton and Viola Rand Schools. We did some brainstorming and I was encouraging something around the idea of healthy choices both nutritionally and physically. The University connection also naturally lends itself to aspirations for students as well. Liis Abbott, the assistant coach for the womens team has done a lot of work with youth programs and she provided great leadership to her players when they came to the Viola Rand School on December 2nd. Students had a terrific time, getting moving in a variety of ways with different motivations. In between these activities, they wove in conversations with our students about their lives – where they come from, what motivates them and how they incorporate healthy choices into their lives to get to the place where they are able to play a sport at the D1 level. The second day, when they came to Alton Elementary, the Coach Liis was tied up with recruits on campus, but the players were ready to lead the afternoon themselves. They did a terrific job managing students and the messages they were presenting. In each school, we had two sessions. One for the younger students and another for the older students. This breakdown worked well to create a more reasonable size group to work with and also for the content to be geared to the right level developmentally.



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