

NEW BUSINESS

1. COVID cases update (Pam Doyen)

Pam first responded to the question that B. Bordeau had about where the numbers were collected. She said she gets the numbers from the nurses at all three schools and are compiled into the spreadsheet she reports out.

She went back over all the numbers since the beginning of school. Most recent 11/24-12/14:

DES: 14 positive students, 92 in close contact quarantine, 0 staff

DMS: 12 positive students, 19 in close contact quarantine, 0 staff

DHS: 11 positive students, 40 in close contact quarantine, 2 staff in close contact quarantine

Total # of students out of school: 188

Total # of staff out of work: 2

Pam wanted to be clear that not all the positive cases were identified within the school. The numbers we are listing are all the students that are out of school whether positive or close contact even if it was from outside of school.

DES is not currently listed as outbreak status from the CDC. DHS was just recently listed as outbreak status from October.

2. RSU 56 Goal Review (Goal #1)

Goal #1: To increase the number of students who complete their secondary education with some form of certification.

Objective: By 2024, 90% of 12th grade DHS students will either graduate, enroll in Adult Ed or commit to a 5th year at DHS.

Action Plan: The pandemic has not been conducive to this plan. It has been challenging. 2021 graduation for DHS was 84.75%-State Average: 86.12%, Buckfield: 81.08%, MV: 76.47%, Spruce Mtn: 63.44%, Telstar: 77.78%

1. Provide mentors for at risk students (staff, students, community members, Big Sisters/Big Brothers). Have been calling and meeting with parents/guardians as needed. Have had some outside groups, but not the number of outside mentors we would normally have due to the pandemic
2. Increase effectiveness of the Advisory Program. Have been adjusting and improving the advisory program this year.
3. Drop-Out Prevention Committee- becomes viable & effective. Do have this committee and in fact they met tonight.
4. Provide Professional Development to all staff around the best practices to prevent drop out. We do TCI training across the district. Have also done trauma informed training. Most of our staff that have been here are trained. We want to make sure that our new staff is trained and that there is continued training.
5. Provide & promote volunteer opportunities for students. There is an opportunity in grades 6-8 and there is a service requirement here at DHS so all students participate in some type of volunteer service.
6. Improve culture in all Dirigo schools so that students feel welcome and connected. It's been a little challenging again with the pandemic and the in/out. There is data that shows that it is

improving some at the MS. We are continually working on things to help improve the culture at DHS.

7. DHS guidance office to provide reports to students/parents on credits and proficiency.
8. Provide a wide variety of programs that interest students.
9. Guide students to clarify their aspirations and establish appropriate pathways.

A board member asked how do we know this is being done? Pam, suggested that maybe a small group should reconvene and set some goals that are measurable to ensure what is being done is working. It's not as clear as it could be if there was data to support it. Pam asked if the board wanted to wait until after going through all the goals to get a small group together to do any rewording.

It was also suggested to get the number of Adult Ed this year and last year.

3. Disposal of buses, out to bid (Kenny Robbins)

Kenny is looking for permission to put a couple buses out to bid. The first one is a 2000, with 202,000 miles. The second is 2005, with 210,000 miles. Both buses have not been used lately. The general consensus from the board was to give Kenny permission to put them out to bid.

4. Bus Garage conversation (Pam Doyen, Kenny Robbins)

Looking at if it makes sense to continue paying the lease at the town garage Or add on to the bus lounge at the middle school and build our own bus garage. The lease will be \$26k a year after this year. Pam has asked Kenny to pull together some specks and she asked Mary to look into a bond, which would be similar to the cost of the current lease. The district is close to getting the final numbers for our audit for this current school year and there could be the potential possibility of going to the voters to put in \$425k to expend it and be able to pay for it outright. Need the board to determine if this is something that we want to pursue. If there is a general consensus, we would need \$25k upfront money to work with the architect to get the plans underway. Kenny said he spoke with the state and because it is a public building we have to hire an architect. Kenny has spoken to an architect that was used prior at Mtn Valley for the roof.

After some discussion from each of the board members the general consensus was that building the bus garage would be a win-win situation for the district and should move ahead to do this. Pam made it clear that as Superintendent she will designate up to \$25k to move forward with the architect.

5. 2022-23 Budget Schedule

Pam went over the dates for the budget schedule, with budget presentations from the different groups beginning the second board meeting in January.

April 12th Board should vote on the budget, May 10th Board to sign warrants, May 24th Budget Hearing/Validation meeting, June 14th Budget Referendum Vote in all four towns.

6. Insurance -out to bid (Pam Doyen, Mary Dailey)

RSU 56 is in year 5 of our existence and according to policy every 3-5 years we need to go out to bid for our insurance. The state expects districts to go out to bid every 3-5 years. When we went

through the withdrawal process it was advised at that time to stay with the current insurance. Mary has contacted a person to help with the process of looking at insurances at the cost of a minimum amount of \$8500. MSMA is doing a training in January for district's to do this on their own and there wouldn't be a cost. This is for property and casualty. Brad offered if Mary needed help finding someone to help with the bid process he could help with that. Kyes insurance is our current agent.

OLD BUSINESS

None

SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE

Superintendent's Report: Pam Doyen

Nathan Schultz is one of 30 Fenway Sports Honor Roll nominees selected out of over 200 candidates throughout New England as part of this recognition program sponsored by the Boston Globe. Mr. Schultz has been invited to attend the 2021 Fenway Bowl as part of this celebration of New England educators. Congratulations Nate.

According to Commissioner Makin, we will be receiving an updated "overhauled" SOP for the start of the new year- some light, Christmas break reading for me. Once it is published, I will provide an overview to the board of the changes.

We are in the midst of our annual RSU 56 Spirit Challenge week. Currently, Dirigo Elementary School is leading. For fun pictures, check out the newsletter this Friday. (Final results will not be available until later in the day Friday as Friday is the last day of the challenge.

Administrator's Report: Heidi Connelly

Special Education Department updates include the following:

- The audit with the DOE was completed last year and we have been effectively working through the corrective action plan that is due to be completed by May 2022. We have completed 90% of the corrective action plan at this time. As part of this plan staff have received additional training and documentation practices have been updated. Included in this is tightening up with goal progress monitoring and really being data specific with our interventions and services. This correlates to ensuring all students are getting what they need and that they are with their peers and in the least restrictive learning environment as possible.
- We are continuing to hold many IEP meetings over Zoom and have remained on time with all required timelines for meetings and evaluations with nothing past due at this time. We continue to implement individualized remote learning plans when students must be out for extended periods of time due to the pandemic. The plans were updated with parent input at the start of the year.
The blueink program continues to work well with obtaining signatures for required documentation.
- We have purchased and are implementing the K-8th grade Step up to Writing program for students who require specially designed instruction in writing and one of our own staff is

scheduled to be trained as a trainer for this program this winter so we will always have an expert in the program within our district. We have used corrective reading for decoding for years, but this year have also begun using it for reading comprehension needs as well.

- We have begun some co-taught math classes at the high school level which allows students to be learning alongside their peers in the general education setting while also receiving specially designed instruction in math.
- At this time we have 141 (approximately 138 at this time last year) students identified with disabilities making them eligible for special education services across the district. Five of our students have successfully graduated out of special education services thus far this year. We've had 3 students who have been referred and qualified for services so far this year.

I wanted to end my update with a positive email that was sent to the commissioner of education, Pam Doyen, and myself from the Department of Education Director of Special Education that I'd like to share with you:

I got a call from a parent who wanted to share with the Department of Education what amazing special education services her children were receiving. This person explained to me that her job has required her to live all over the country. She could not express enough that her experience in RSU 56 was the best school experience her family has ever had, especially in the area of special education. This parent shared that the special education services were not only exceptional and that her children were thriving, but that all of the staff from RSU 56 go above and beyond all of the time on behalf of their students.

Congratulations to you and your dedicated staff. You are making a difference.

We truly have a wonderful staff here at RSU 56 and I am especially grateful for the dedicated special services team we have here.

Reporting of New Hires:

Linda Adams, Transportation Student Monitor

Kate Tuell, TWKDMS Special Education, Ed-Tech III

Stipended and Coaching Positions:

Cole Brown, TWKDMS Boys JV Basketball Coach

Resignations/Retirements:

Nathan Gould, Bus Driver/Custodian

Chantal Bean, Special Education Ed-Tech III at DHS, at the end of the school year

Michael Herrera, DHS Math Teacher, January 2022

COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Student Representative Report- Still working on getting a student rep

2. Policy Committee- Had a zoom meeting- Went through 10 policies because of new laws. Hoping after Christmas to go through and get them ready for first readings. There are still about 16 more
3. Finance Committee- Have not met but assume it will be in the works now that we have a timeline - Budget
4. Curriculum Committee- Chairperson not present- Have not met
5. Buildings & Grounds Committee- Have not met as a committee but B. Ross met with Kenny- As Kenny stated there are 2 old buses being put out to bid. Kenny is applying to see if we can get approved for another bus this year. Our fleet is in fairly decent shape. Our maintenance crew is taking care of the buses we have. Through the Covid funds we've gotten a few new buses, vans and were able to upgrade our other equipment. Every year we need to look at getting a new bus and retire an old one so we don't end up in the category where we start falling behind. Bruce and Kenny went to see the progress of the new furnace in the high school. It's coming along quite well. It's going to be another thing that once it's going and online it will be another savings on fuel.
6. Negotiations Committee- 3 bargaining units that will want to start to talk after the beginning of the year.
7. Personnel Committee- Chairperson not present
8. Ad-hoc Committee- Chairperson not present. Barbara commented that the committee is working through and meeting each month.

BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Bruce Ross- asked Pam if when she gets a design plan from the architect would she be sharing it with the board? It would be nice to see a printout for each board member to look at, to understand the process.

Pam replied, she would do that.

ADJOURNMENT

1. Motion to adjourn

Motion: B. Ross

Seconded: D. Whittemore

Motion Carried

Meeting adjourned @ 7:35 pm