



**Sheepscoot Valley RSU 12
September 2022
Superintendent's Report
Information, Recognitions, and Celebrations**

Superintendent Report

Welcome Back!

Welcome to the 2022-2023 school year. We have had a successful start to the school year in RSU 12. Thank you to the staff who worked throughout the summer getting our buildings and programs ready for the first day of school. We have exciting news that our PreK program is almost at capacity. We have 80 slots for 4-year olds and 71 PreK 4-year olds are now registered and attending. We still have room at both Whitefield and Chelsea Schools if you are interested.

Summer Programming and School Nutrition

We had a very busy and exciting summer in RSU 12. Over 300 RSU 12 students participated in summer enrichment and tutoring programs throughout the summer. Thank you to all the staff who made this happen. Also, our school nutrition staff served approximately 7,000 reimbursable meals this summer both to our summer program students and to students involved in our food delivery program. Our school nutrition staff is amazing! Thank you for making this happen for our community and our students.

COVID-19 Update

The Maine Department of Education and the Maine CDC have recommended to Superintendents that moving forward COVID-19 should be treated as we treat any other contagious disease. Maine's Standard Operating Procedures for schools have been retired. We will continue our cleaning practices and continue to filter the air with our state-of-the-art filtration systems. Masks are optional, and testing is available. If more than 20% of students/staff are absent in a building due to COVID-19, we may need to take extra precautions. We encourage everyone to stay home if they are sick and social distance to the extent possible. Testing kits are currently available through the school for students and staff if needed and symptomatic. We look forward to a successful year and will continue to monitor the COVID-19 situation and make adjustments as conditions change.

Electric Bus Grant

RSU 12 is listed as a high-priority district in the recently released electric bus grant. RSU 12 has submitted an application to receive two electric buses, which would replace two aging diesel buses if awarded. Grant recipients will be announced by November.

Curriculum and Technology Report

A team of teachers and administrators attended a 2-day summit hosted by the Collaborative for Customized Learning where we explored ways to continue to improve our ability to design learning experiences that are consistent with our beliefs about how students learn - that they learn in different ways and different time frames, that mistakes are inherent in learning, and

that success breeds success and influences esteem, attitudes and motivation. We are excited to share our new learning with colleagues and implement our ideas in the classroom.

During our opening workshop days, some of our teachers engaged in some intensive Math teaching training delivered by the Maine Math and Science Alliance while others designed personalized learning plans to advance their own professional development in areas such as executive functioning, interdisciplinary units, assessment, classroom management and more.

RSU 12 Learning Commons staff are preparing dash robots and accessories for coding exercises with students thanks to a Computer Science grant awarded to RSU 12 by the Maine Department of Education. We are excited to create coding challenges and inter-school competitions with our students.

Westport Island Student Count Information

This will be available in November

Alna Student Count Information

This will be available in November

Somerville Student Count Information

This will be available in November

Chelsea Elementary School Report

“Hurray, you’re back!” and “Where’s the baby?” Those were the common exclamations and questions that we heard as I greeted all the excited smiling faces at Open House on August 30th. I’m so happy to be back with all of the students, parents and staff. Chelsea Elementary is truly an amazing community!

Our custodians worked tirelessly to make sure the school was clean and ready for the opening day on Wednesday, August 31 for our two hundred and eighty one students. Everything is sparkling and ready for another year of fun, interactive learning! Our playground has some wonderful upgrades thanks to some local volunteers from Central Church. Our basketball court lines have been painted, the 4-square courts have paint, a gaga pit was built for recess and PE, a sensory movement path was painted on the sidewalk that goes around the older kid's playground equipment, and lots of other improvements happened as well both outside and inside of the building.

Our staff is welcoming many new faces this year as we said goodbye to our colleagues that moved on to other positions. During our workshop day on Tuesday, the atmosphere was positive and welcoming. We are embracing the quote “Nine-tenths of education is encouragement.” by Anatole France this year and encouraging each other, our students, our parents, and ourselves to see the positive even in challenging situations and to seek support when needed.

Palermo Consolidated School Report

“Sprinkle Kindness Like Confetti” is our theme for the year. I want to be able to imprint the importance of people being kind to one another and the positive impact it has in our world. We will be celebrating acts of kindness by announcing these students' actions during our assemblies and posting their names on our bulletin board. Each of our schools received acts of kindness from a local church that wanted to show their appreciation to our teachers. Throughout the district they helped improve the look of the school grounds, painted structures, put up basketball hoops, made quiet spaces for students and improved staff lunch rooms. We certainly appreciated their hard work which showed all our staff how much they are valued!

There are two staff at Palermo Consolidated School that are celebrating the start of their 30th year of education. Coleen Jewett, our 4th grade teacher, and Melissa Guyon, our 2nd grade teacher, have worked at Palermo for all or most of their teaching career. We hope to express our appreciation for their dedication throughout the year so they know what a difference they make in the lives of children.

We are excited to start the new school year and will continue the work of building a positive school culture through our restorative practices and our PBIS approach. The teachers supported our students by supporting them with clear and consistent expectations, building relationships in circle conversations, and building up a positive acknowledgement system. We love to express our appreciation to our students for being Safe, Responsible, and Respectful!

Whitefield Elementary School Report

WHES started the year in a very positive manner with 183 students. Our trend was to find us adding students throughout the summer with fewer departures. We have split our 29 8th graders into two divisions, as was discussed at the last board meeting, and that is already showing positive benefits, both socially and academically. Our new staff members are integrating well into our community and we still have Ed Tech positions yet to be filled. This has forced us to be creative in providing support to students with IEPs and will, in the short-term, keep the learners' services running in accordance to their plans. Like many schools across the state and nation, locating viable candidates for many educational positions is posing a genuine challenge.

Schools have a myriad of protocols and procedures, as well as a million different details that must be addressed and be functional to keep a school running effectively. We had an example of what can occur when a small procedure, easily handled in a timely manner, gets forgotten or ignored and the result has very negative potential ramifications. Ours involved one of our bus safety protocols and, while the end result was acceptable, it pointed to the need and significance of all of these things we, as a school, put in place. In our situation, we reviewed and revised the procedure and set new expectations for the staff responsible for carrying out this procedure. We learn from the error that was made and design responses so we can be assured that there will never be a reoccurrence of the issue. As we often emphasize with our learners, it is okay when a mistake is made and our goal is to never keep making the same mistake. A good lesson for pertinent school staff to reexamine.

Windsor Elementary School Report

What a fantastic start to the school year we had at Windsor School! Our custodial staff worked diligently all summer to be sure we had shiny hallways and clean classrooms to greet our students and staff. We also were excited to see the improvements to our campus and building that were done by Central Church over the last weekend in July. Many members spent hours at our school working on our playground, garden, softball and baseball fields, and flower gardens. They also created a Calm Room for our students, which we are so grateful for.

As a staff, we gathered on Tuesday, August 30, over breakfast to go over lots of housekeeping items and plans for the year. We also got to meet our new staff in person, and ended the day with a “flower bar” so that all staff could brighten up their space with flowers and/or a plant.

Two hundred ninety-six students (not counting pre-k) arrived on Wednesday, and it was all hands on deck as we navigated some new bus routes and the transport of nineteen pre-k students to Somerville. It truly was a team effort and gets smoother each day.

Our staff is embarking on the next stage in implementation of Restorative Schools Practices, and are all using circles to greet students each day, build relationships, and strengthen bonds. Thank you to Niki Mathews for her leadership in this effort. Windsor School wishes everyone a wonderful school year!