



Regional School Unit #34

Alton, Bradley, and Old Town

Jon Doty, Ed.D.

Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

576 Stillwater Ave. – Old Town, ME 04468 – (207) 827-3932 - Fax (207) 827-3926 – jon.doty@rsu34.org

May 15th, 2019 – Report to the Board

My Perspective on Agenda Item #4

I write to share with the Board and public readers my perspective on agenda item #4, the proposal to create many more opportunities for students by shifting the times at which we operate each school and the ways in which we currently transport students.

I firmly believe the pros of this proposal overwhelmingly exceed the cons. We have an opportunity, at no additional cost to the taxpayer, to create an extra 1,700 hours of opportunity for a student across her or his K-12 journey with us, without transportation barriers. This cumulative opportunity across their thirteen years of public education is the same quantity of time as offering up to an additional year and a half of schooling. How individual students use that opportunity will vary. Some will use it here and there for the supported work environment or to engage in an extra-curricular opportunity. Some will use it occasionally to do some make-up work with the support of a knowledgeable staff member. Some will use it for some classic interventions, and others will engage in fun sessions that support their learning. Some will rarely use it, and others will use it heavily.

In thinking of creating this opportunity, I think of current students, our future students, and of past students of mine. I think of my 6th grader whose family lived in a car for part of the year, for whom that extra time in a safe, stable place with transportation would have made a huge difference. I think of my many students who had great barriers to staying after school with me for extra help or for an earned consequence, because of transportation barriers. I think of one of the most able students with whom I've ever worked, who could not thrive in advanced classes because his bedroom was the living room. Getting 5.5 hours of sleep was a good night much less having a good place to do his homework, and a supported work environment with transportation would have been a big contributor to future success. I think to how much more successful many of my students would have been in the year(s) I taught them with these extra opportunities, and then I'm blown away when I think about the potential gains if they'd had those extra opportunities every year before and after their time with me.

But for me, the biggest impact of this isn't a "haves" vs. "have nots". Moving the critical mass of your class's readiness and productivity through some extra support benefits *everyone*. The extra time available without transportation barriers also creates a layer of accountability that helps everyone. My junior high

Every student deserves to make continuous progress in school.

school had a late bus, and I know the “no excuses” atmosphere it enabled helped me stay productive a few times.

There are some other benefits too, not least of which is moving a chunk of our instruction for adolescents to what the experts are convinced is a better learning time. We know for sure there will be challenges. Change is disruptive. Families, organizations, teams, clubs, and more will need to shift the way they do things, and while we’ve worked very hard to address all the challenges we know of, there may be some losses we can’t address.

I think a critical question is: *If we were already doing the proposed system, would we ever consider cutting 1,700 hours of opportunity for each student over their time with us, and increasing transportation barriers for our students, in order to gain the things that have been raised as challenges?*

Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment Highlights

- Early last week I submitted the Civil Rights Data Collection, which happens on alternating years for the RSU and begins with this inspiring notice:

Collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1870-0504. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 14.2 hours per school survey response and 4.2 hours per local educational agency (LEA) survey response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is mandatory (20 U.S.C. § 3413, § 3472, § 7913)

Much thanks to all of those who worked on components of the report!

- It was great to have some former students presenting at World of Work Day – Adam Letourneau and Ben Smith. Both are finishing up Masters’ degrees in Engineering and are representing us proudly! Much thanks to Vicki Wilcox and Trysha Lunn for making the day happen!

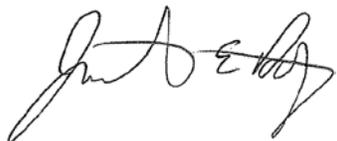
OTHS STEM Leaders Program and Honors Diploma Program Highlights

- I believe you’ve each received an invitation to this year’s capstone presentation and celebration for these programs! Thursday May 23rd, 7:30 PM at OTHS.

Title IA/IIA/IVA Programs

- The programs funded under the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (Title IA, IIA, IV-A) are undergoing budget development in parallel with the overall RSU budget. Please contact me for more information on how to be involved; public involvement is sought and welcomed!

Respectfully Submitted,



Jon Doty