



School Union 69
Office of the Superintendent
Hope, Appleton & Lincolville

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Superintendent's Report for: February 2025

Hope School Committee

Superintendent's Goals:

- Collaborate with Business Manager to implement new procedures and reporting structures throughout the three districts to facilitate more accurate and timely communication.
- Collaborate with Director of Student Services to ensure that all students and staff in the three districts are provided appropriate training and services.
- Build the leadership capacity of the new Director of Student Services and new Principal of Appleton Village School.
- Prepare for transition to new Superintendent in 2025.

Ongoing Superintendent Professional Development:

- Ongoing: Midcoast Superintendents
- Breaking Bold: MSSA Professional Development Series with Weston Kieshcnick. December through February.
- Winter Convocation: January 16 and 17 in Portland

General Information:

Changes in Federal Protocols: In the last few weeks, we have gotten news of significant changes to Federal programs that may or may not affect our school. As each change comes through, we gather as much information as we can and often receive guidance from the DOE and/or our attorneys. When needed, protocols for managing the changes are put into place as quickly as possible and any family that may be impacted is contacted. However we have also learned this week that, given time, big announcements and impending changes may not come to fruition. At every juncture, we will meet our obligations under current school law and the Maine Human Rights Act. In the midst of the turmoil that comes with the change of administrations, please know that we will continue to monitor any and all changes and communicate any major changes to the community once we have clear and consistent guidance from both the state and the federal government.

Changes to our retirement offerings: Our school union has an obligation to provide support for employees who wish to put part of their paycheck aside for retirement. We do not offer a match program, but we do set up automatic payments through our payroll system. However, our office is not sufficiently staffed to keep up with changing laws or expectations. To better service our employees, Steph did some significant research to find a third party administrator who would, for a nominal fee, manage the retirement benefits for

our employees and keep our practices current. For the services provided, the school will pay \$1,000, all other fees are absorbed by the participants.

Powerschool breach: A notice went out to all staff and families today to provide links to resources those impacted by the breach may need. On January 29th, Powerschool began the process of contacting involved parties via email; they have also set up a call center through Experian. Powerschool is offering two years of identity protection and credit monitoring for those who choose to access those resources.

Finance:

After two appointments that had to be rescheduled due to snow, the auditors were in the office today, February 11, 2025 in a push to finish the 2023 audit. We hope to see that final audit by the end of next month.

Budget Presentation: As we develop the FY '26 budget and finalize numbers still in flux, we are also developing a budget presentation to make key points easily accessible and hopefully, easier to understand. We did get our ED 279 from the DOE this week. Hope's subsidy increased \$255,000 and the local allocation increased by \$31,000, which should help to offset the additional local contribution.

Respectfully submitted,

Kate