



School Union 69
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Superintendent's Report for: January 2021

Hope School Committee

District Goals:

- Identify the lessons we can carry forward from the pandemic. What are the new practices and structures that are working well and could be expanded?
 - staff allocation
 - delivery of instruction
 - space allocation
- Support the school in their effort to partner, communicate with and engage the parents and the larger Hope community in maintaining academic growth during the pandemic
- Support school administration in maintaining a safe and supportive environment during the pandemic for all students and staff.

Surveys designed to check in with families are in development, and should go out in late January. Input into survey questions has been sought out from the Association, and the Board is welcome to give feedback as well. Staff were surveyed in December, Danielle has those results and will work with her staff to determine the best use of the information gathered from the survey. Hope taught remotely during the week of January 4-8, 2021. This experience should provide Danielle and her staff with increased data on the best possible online teaching practices, and how to best support students when they are learning remotely. Feedback thus far has indicated a preference for in-person learning among staff. The state has released information that the deadline for spending CRF2 funds is now extended through June 30, 2021. This is helpful to Hope as the Yurt project is still underway. The district also expects increased ESSER funding through the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act. We should have more details about these funds later this week.

Classroom visits

Classroom visits will resume this month, starting with Lincolnville Middle School classes. Those visits have not been scheduled as yet, and will most likely be scheduled for the middle of the month. Going forward, the plan is to visit AVS grades 3-5 and then HES, grades 3-4, and then grade 5.

Ongoing Superintendent Professional Development:

Regional Superintendents meetings (cancelled for December, next meeting January 21)
MSSA: New Superintendent's Workshops (Budgets)
Family Engagement Webinar, members of Harvard's School of Education and others discussed strategies to effectively communicate with and support families.

Coronavirus Update:**County Designations, as of December 31, 2020:**

Knox: Green (next update January 15, 2021)

Per the CDC Director, as of December 27, 2020, the state should brace for a significant increase in cases due to holiday travel, gatherings as well as increased testing. Dr. Shah reported that the MCDC will not be able to report in the specific way that they have been reporting so far, so we may not have as clear data as we have had in the past. While the papers appear to be the best source of data on new cases each day, I have found that towns do not get specific, accurate up to date information about Hope on a regular basis either. This means that families communicating directly with Nurse Winsper and Danielle is even more imperative. Open, honest communication without fear of exposure or retaliation is the only way we will be able to manage cases in the school.

Draft statement regarding use of iObservation Tool:

The PEPG Steering Committee met twice in the month of December to discuss elements of the iObservation Tool that may not be appropriate for teaching in person under the current health and safety rules or teaching remotely. After reviewing each of the domains, strategies and evidentiary elements, the team determined that rather than remove any language from the tool, an overall statement of caution would suffice. This decision was made based on the ever changing nature of the environment in which we teach and the wide range of evidence available in the tool. The statement is still in draft form, with members of the PEPG reviewing it currently. With the understanding that the final document may be somewhat different, the draft statement is shared here for your review:

Due to the unique nature of the in-person health and safety protocols, as well as remote teaching and learning, the Evaluation Steering Committee reviewed the current iObservation Tool in use for Teacher professional evaluation and growth, adopted by this committee in 2017. Upon review of the domains, strategies and evidentiary elements outlined in the tool, the Evaluation Steering Committee agreed that the pandemic has imposed restrictions on the use of some teaching strategies, and that these restrictions should be taken into consideration when using the tool. Therefore, the Evaluation Steering Committee has drafted the following precaution:

When using the iObservation Tool for classroom observations either of in-person or remote teaching, the unique context of the pandemic and the limitations of health and safety protocols and/or remote teaching should be taken into account. As is always the case, it is not the expectation that every suggestion of evidence in the tool should be accounted for, and some may not be appropriate, depending on the way in which instruction is being delivered. No matter what the delivery model, the purpose of the process and the tool is to provide a learning model designed to promote professional growth.

Additionally, the MDOE has put out a Priority Notice, attached to this report, further supporting the district's intention to take into consideration the circumstances imposed upon schools by the pandemic.

Earned Paid Leave:

Maine's Earned Paid Leave law went into effect on January 1, 2021. Changes required from this law do not apply to current Collective Bargaining Agreements, but will need to be negotiated when that contract expires. However, the effects of this law do go into effect immediately for staff that are not covered under the CBA, such as custodians, Ed Techs, and substitutes. We are currently working on protocols at the Central Office to track days of employment, (staff worker does not qualify for this benefit until 120 days worked), track time worked, and track EPL requests and accrual.

Budgets: The principal's preliminary budget is due to the Central Office on January 19th. From there, Danielle will meet with the superintendent and bookkeeper to review the budget and make adjustments as necessary. The preliminary budget will be presented to the Board at the February Board meeting. The Town Manager and other town officials will be invited to attend that meeting. In addition, we will work with the town offices to keep them apprised of our budgets early and often.