

Maine School Administrative District #51

Cumberland ~ North Yarmouth

Jeffrey Porter ~ Superintendent of Schools

Scott Poulin ~ Director of Finance, Human Resources and Operation

Sally Loughlin ~ Director of Curriculum, Assessment, Instruction & Professional Development

Julie Olsen ~ Director of Special Education

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December 4, 2014

Greetings to the MSAD #51 Community,

The first quarter of the new school year is complete and with snow on the ground the holiday season is upon us. The past few months have been busy and productive for the MSAD #51 Board and our school community. I would like to take a few minutes of your time to update you on the progress of the Board, and inform you of some upcoming discussions.

This year the MSAD #51 Board, Administration, and community embarked on the final stages of developing a Strategic Plan for the district. Under the direction of our new Superintendent, Jeff Porter, the Strategic Planning Committee met regularly throughout the fall to plan our Community Dialogue, held Monday, November 10th in the Greely Middle School gym. This successful and well-attended event brought together over 120 staff, students, and community members to engage in a robust discussion of 21st century education and its impact upon teaching and learning for the future. Participants helped identify what is working in our district, what could be improved, and explored aspirations for the future. Information from this dialogue can be found on our district website or through the following link: [Community Dialogue Event](#).

Moving forward, the Strategic Planning Committee, Jeff Porter, and our District Leadership Team will utilize information gathered at the Community Dialogue, our Superintendent Focus Groups last year, and Jeff Porter's Entry Plan meetings this fall, to develop a final Strategic Plan by the end of this school year. Thank you to all who participated in any of these discussions - the Board appreciates your time and energy, and views your feedback as very important.

Sally Loughlin, our Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment and Professional Development Director, recently presented an update on the district's work toward implementing a Proficiency Based Diploma by 2021. Sally is leading a dedicated and hardworking team of teachers and administrators to identify the content standards, grading systems, and professional development needed to successfully implement this law. The Board's Policy Committee is also working diligently to ensure that our policies are up-to-date relative to these new requirements.

Additionally, our Facilities Committee initiated the development of a 5-year plan for facilities maintenance and improvement. Using a process that involves a review of our current

facilities plan and an extensive tour of each of our facilities to identify needed improvements, this group has worked tirelessly to gather information on necessary repairs and facility upgrades. Presently, work is being done at the Central Office to conduct necessary repairs, utilize office space more effectively, and align with building codes. The Board will be reviewing the ongoing work of the Facilities Committee at our mid-year retreat, January 13, 2015.

Last spring the Board identified the need for a Community Development and Resources Manager and this position was included in the 2014-15 budget approved by our community last June. Jeff Porter and Julie Olsen led a Search Committee comprised of staff, Board, and community members this fall through a rigorous search. As announced previously, we are pleased that Ashley Caswell was hired and began work in the district on November 18, 2014. Ashley brings a wealth of development and community relations experience with her from her previous position working for Camp Sunshine. We look forward to utilizing her skills and expertise to improve our students' and district's ability to partner with businesses and community members more effectively to provide learning opportunities for our students both inside and outside the classroom.

Upcoming work for the Board includes our semi-annual Board Retreat in January, when we will review progress towards the four goals identified by the Board at our August retreat. In January, the Board will also host an informational workshop with volunteer community members who serve on the Turf Field Committee and the Performing Arts Committee. This workshop will provide an update on their progress, and is intended to be informational only. As these Committees progress in the development of their proposals, I anticipate further engagement by the community at Board meetings later in the spring. Finally, the Administration and the Board will begin work on the 2015-16 school budget in December. Our Finance Committee will take the lead on this issue with the Superintendent's budget due to be rolled out to the full board and community on March 16, 2015.

It is my hope that this update on the work of the Board and district thus far is helpful to you as members of the MSAD#51 community. As we conduct this important work the Board and the district remain focused upon our mission; *guiding all students as they acquire enthusiasm for learning, assume responsibility for their education, achieve academic excellence, and discover and attain their personal best*, in a manner that is efficient and cost effective. Please feel free to contact me or any member of the School Board directly with any comments or questions you may have.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish you all a happy and healthy holiday season!

Sincerely,

Karen Campbell
Chair, MSAD #51 Board of Directors