

Positive School News – November 2021

BOWDOINHAM COMMUNITY SCHOOL

The Bowdoinham Community School Leadership Team met during the Professional Development day of November 2nd. The Leadership Team discussed best practices for communicating student learning with parents and guardians. The Team made school-wide recommendations for our faculty regarding report cards and parent-teacher conferences, including that we will share individualized and personal comments about every single student, and put a focus on students' strengths. Principal Lajoie hosted a parent focus group on Monday, November 15th, to share the school's personalized approach to report cards and conferences and hear feedback and questions from parents.

WILLIAMS-CONE SCHOOL

Nationally-known children's author and illustrator Chris Van Dusen visited Williams-Cone School via Zoom on October 29th and read the story "If I Built a School" to Williams-Cone students. Mr. Van Dusen, who broadcasted from his home studio in Camden, Maine, also shared some pictures of an upcoming book that he is currently illustrating as well as some anecdotal information about how he writes and illustrates books. Staff and students alike were thrilled to meet Mr. Van Dusen who had a natural and instant rapport with everyone.

HARPSWELL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

Harpswell Community School continues to be so fortunate to have Julia McLeod and the Harpswell Heritage Land Trust to support outdoor education and scientific inquiry. Julia worked with several classrooms throughout the fall, with a different educational focus at each grade level. Moving forward for the rest of the school year, she will be visiting once a month to set up a nature-based play series. When given the opportunity to drive their own play and exploration in the forest, kids connect with peers, experiment, observe, build strength and agility, see their own ideas and observations as important, think scientifically, work together, and have lots of fun. This time can help children socially, emotionally, physically, and

academically. November's exploration involved a forest kitchen; and in December children will investigate physics with ramps, tunnels, balls, and cars. We can't wait to see what else Julia has in store for us.

BOWDOIN CENTRAL SCHOOL

Bowdoin Central School is back up and fully running our school-wide positive school climate initiatives within our school. Students are recognized for great work with our core values of Unity, Perseverance, Empathy, Honesty and Integrity, and Love of Learning along with being Respectful, Responsible, and Safe. We do this through our Student Spotlight. So far we have three students in the spotlight this school year. In addition, students earn points for their classes by responsibly doing homework, meeting school expectations, and going above and beyond. Finally, classes are recognized by specials teachers (Art, Music, PE, and Learning Commons) as Golden Award Recipients.

WOODSIDE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

As a return to school in August, all Woodside teachers participated in an outdoor immersion hosted by "Through the Trees," a nature-based education non-profit located in Freeport, Maine. Teachers engaged in simple, repeatable practices to prepare to meet more of their students' needs in an outdoor setting. Forest Fridays at Woodside Elementary School have emerged as one solution to helping kids connect back to positive social and emotional learning opportunities in the school setting. Kids are able to experience outdoor social and learning opportunities as part of a regular scheduled approach to meeting academic and social-emotional priorities for the week. Participating students and teachers alike are loving Forest Fridays at Woodside.

MT. ARARAT HIGH SCHOOL

Mt. Ararat High School has been a positive place this fall with a happy return to lots of extracurricular activities. Mt. Ararat High School saw the close of a successful fall athletic season, with boys' and girls' soccer, field hockey, football and cross country all reaching post-season successes. The

Mt. Ararat High School Math Team has also been successful in its first two meets, beating Brunswick by one point (172-171) in its most recent competition. We're seeing record participation in other clubs, with about 70 students having signed up for Art Club, while we're also looking forward to the Mt. Ararat High School Theater Company's production of *Puffs* December 3-5, 2021, at the Orion Performing Arts Center.

Mt. Ararat Middle School

This positive news highlights student leadership opportunities at Mt. Ararat Middle School. Three years ago our seventh grade Team Androscoggin created a leadership group called the House of Representatives in order to give students the voice and opportunity to make decisions for their team. Each homeroom sends two representatives to the leadership team, and elections are held for President and Vice-President. The President (or Co-Presidents, as happened this year) and Vice-President take applications from their classmates for other leadership roles including Treasurer, Secretary, Public Relations, Newspaper Editor, and Parliamentarian (who helps meetings run efficiently using basic concepts of **Robert's Rules of Order!**) Two members from this leadership group also serve on the school-wide Student Council. This group is responsible for many initiatives including the establishment of an Eagle Bucks store, where students can spend "Eagle Bucks" earned for Focused, Respectful, Responsible, and Kind behavior; the creation of a student bank with debit cards for spending Eagle Bucks; and the institution of team-wide SOP's. Other teams have modeled their student leadership groups after the system created by Team Androscoggin.

I wanted to let you know that Isaac Wright was selected for the Maine Department of Education Student (DOE) Cabinet.