

TO: SCHOOL COMMITTEE
FROM: ERIC WADDELL, SUPT. OF SCHOOLS
DATE: NOVEMBER 1, 2021
RE: **REPORT FOR NOVEMBER 2, 2021 SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING**

I just counted. Between my bi-weekly reports to you and my weekly communication to families and staff (and you!), this is my 195th written report to the School Committee. I hope you are feeling well informed. All of them are archived on the District website under the 'From the Superintendent' tab.

Later today, Mr. Roberge and I will be part of a live virtual meeting with the Maine School Superintendents' Association, the Maine Principals' Association, and possibly the DOE and DHHS to continue a discussion related to the upcoming winter sports season. Specifically, Maine superintendents are hoping that the Maine Principals' Association will impose statewide requirements for indoor interscholastic activities this winter. The MPA is reluctant to require any safety measures for indoor activities this winter, citing differences in circumstances and philosophies across the state. As you can imagine, an absence of guidance from the MPA (the governing body of interscholastic activities in Maine) has created major turmoil in the State.

Maine Superintendents certainly recognize that not all schools (and communities) within Maine's 16 counties will have exactly the same views about student and spectator safety during winter indoor activities; however, we also know how very confusing it will be for schools within the same conference to have different safety protocols. Another issue is related to enforcement of the safety measures. How can we possibly ask our athletic directors and high school principals to add more to their plates?

Mr. Roberge, for example, usually runs a 'one man show' at Traip Academy's home athletic contents, and that is a big undertaking under 'normal circumstances. Can we possibly expect him and others like him in Maine high schools to enforce safety measures with parents, spectators, parents and spectators from visiting schools, and even players? Maine basketball officials have already made it clear that they will not enforce a mask requirement of players while engaged in competition. Then who? And what will be the 'consequence' for non-compliance? Removal from the venue? A technical foul? Will a police detail be needed?

This is a perfect example (one of many!) of how this school year is much more challenging than last. In fact, I would describe the school year as untenable. It feels like something must 'give' or I'm afraid of the potential fallout across the state.

Allow me to walk you through the agenda:

NOTE: MASKS ARE CURRENTLY REQUIRED IN THE TOWN HALL INCLUDING IN COUNCIL CHAMBERS, SO PLEASE REMEMBER TO WEAR A MASK IF YOU PLANNING TO ATTEND THIS MEETING.

- Those wishing to **speak publicly** during the meeting may do so during Public Comment. Pre-registration is not required. When guests speak, they are asked to share their first and last names and where they reside unless they are under the age of 18).
- Under **Reports & Presentations**, Chairwoman Dow will **recognize Mrs. Gilbert** for her six years of service on the Kittery School Committee. Mrs. Gilbert has served as the Vice Chairperson for the past six years. She has also been a thoughtful member of the Policy Committee. I want to thank Mrs. Gilbert for her steadfast commitment to the children and employees of the Kittery School District. I will miss her calm wisdom and her appreciation for my sense of humor.
- As you know, we have partnered with Kristen Ferullo, School Liaison Officer for the PNSY, this year to provide a **Military & Family Life Counselor** in the District at no cost to the Kittery School District. Linda Chance, LCSW, is the MFLC assigned to the Kittery School District. She will join us for a brief presentation about what the MFLC will do to support military families and children in our schools. I have copies of a booklet about the program which I will share with you at the meeting.
- **Student Representative Robillard** will offer her first in-person monthly report (although she's going to be in Lewiston at the same time, so we'll see how that works!). You may recall that she offered a recorded presentation last month after a last-minute soccer schedule change that took her out of town during the October 5th School Committee meeting.
- Principal Drisko will be joining us to share the newest iteration of the **Traip Academy PBL Family Guide**. This Guide was first created in 2014. It is formatted as a FAQ document with clear answers. The Guide was always intended to be dynamic, and it is reviewed and revised annually by the Traip Academy staff. Principal Drisko will touch upon some of the revisions to the most recent edition of the Guide and answer any questions. Along those lines, I'd like to offer a gentle but sincere reminder that the goal of any presentation during a School Committee meeting is to inform you, the School Committee. It is not an inquisition (although questions are certainly welcome). I am proud of the culture we've created during School Committee meetings to have live presentations. From our Leadership Team to other members of the educational family and beyond, folks are happy to volunteer to share information with you during Reports/Presentations.

- Under my report, I will reference the **11 Category Report** ending 9/30/21. The report was reviewed by the Facilities, Finance, & Safety Committee at its October 20th meeting.
- Also under my report, I will provide the following update on the efforts to have free, universal **Pre-K in Kittery** for the 2022-23 school year. I am working now on a Maine DOE Pre-K Expansion Grant that will be helpful to launch Pre-K in the District. I am also working with the DOE finance department to estimate additional funding that we may receive in our ED 279 for FY23 to help offset costs of the expansion. Ms. Durgin, Principal Gamache, and I met last week with local private pre-school and nursery school providers, and the District is in the process of gauging the need for public pre-K in Kittery through a survey link. We are exploring options for housing the program within our community, and the estimated costs of these options will be included in the grant. It is possible that we could accommodate 64 pre-K students in the program next year. At this point, the program would involve morning and afternoon half-day sessions, five days/week. The grant is due later this week. The District has partnered with Tara Williams Executive Director of Maine Association for the Education of Young Children. She will be an invaluable resource as we continue through this process.
- There is a **short list of new appointments** since our October 19th meeting. I will read those into the record.
- Under New Business, you will consider a recommendation of the Facilities, Finance, & Safety Committee to add an **additional full time Central Office staff member**. This new position would provide support to the Human Resources Department and the Finance Department. The volume of work is barely manageable, and it is not sustainable. The pandemic has introduced new and complex work to both departments, and it won't be subsiding anytime soon. The departure of the current Human Resources Manager amplifies the need to introduce organizational structures in the Central Office that will shore up workflow and ensure that even with an interruption in staffing, the complex responsibilities of both departments will not be compromised.
- Also under New Business, you will consider the **appointment of Sara Sullivan** as the next Payroll Specialist.
- You may have read in the **Policy Committee** meeting minutes that there are several policy recommendations for this meeting.
 - The Policy Committee recommends adding language (on the advice of our policy advisors) to the existing **policy BHC** (School Committee Communication With Staff) to include language from LD 816, a new statute that requires school boards to 'regularly communicate' with school employees.
 - The Committee recommends language added to **Policy GBEC** (Drug-Free Workplace) that addresses the scent of marijuana on an employee. The

Committee agreed that it is important to include the following statement in the policy: *The Kittery School District recognizes that exposure to marijuana can cause a notable scent. Employees are not to have a recognizable odor of marijuana while on the job.*

- LD 880 requires the School Committee to adopt and implement a new Workplace Bullying policy. The School Committee adopted a Workplace Bullying policy in March of 2020. Our policy advisors recommend specific language, however, that is not currently in Policy GBEEA (Workplace Bullying). Therefore, it is the recommendation of the Policy Committee that the School Committee adopt **Policy GBGB** (Workplace Bullying) that would replace Policy GBEEA (adopted March 31, 2020).
- Finally under 'New Business' you will consider accepting a **donation from Town and Country Federal Credit Union** to help support student hunger.
- Following Committee & Reports, you will have an **Executive Session** for the purpose of a routine 'check in' with the Supt. of Schools.

A Few Loose Ends...

- **Veterans Day is Thursday, November 11th.** In honor of this important day, our schools will be marking the day in their own special way:
 - **Traip Academy** will have a short ceremony outside on the apron at 10:35 AM on Wednesday, November 10th. It will involve student speakers and potentially some comments from staff. Veterans from local senior centers will be invited. The event will be approximately 15 minutes long. Traip Academy also does an annual tribute on the Atrium/hall/cafeteria displays for Veterans Day.
 - **Shapleigh School** has traditionally hosted a pancake breakfast for Veterans Day. Since that is not possible amid a pandemic, the school has plans to do a number of tributes including a Wall of Heroes, a deep dive into the history of Veterans Day in all Social Studies classes, and a letter-writing campaign to veterans.
 - **Mitchell Primary School** will host special guests from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard at a ceremony in the Mitchell Primary School circle (outside) on Wednesday, November 10th at 9:00 AM. Students are learning two songs to sing for the occasion. The school will also have a Veterans Honor Wall inside the school.



- We are working closely with York County Emergency Management Agency to offer **COVID 19 vaccine clinics** at Mitchell Primary School and Shapleigh School on November 10th and December 1st. Preliminary survey numbers suggest that the parents/guardians of 250 eligible students will consent to the vaccine. We are moving quickly and carefully to ensure anyone in the District who is eligible is fully vaccinated before the December school break.
- The **Traip Academy Girls Soccer Team** continues to roll! They will compete in the Class C Regional Championship game versus Maranacook in Lewiston on Tuesday, November 2nd, 4:00 PM. The boys team lost a heartbreaking semifinal game in overtime to #3 Lisbon.



- The **Traip Academy NHS Induction Ceremony** is Wednesday, November 3rd at 6:30 PM in the school gymnasium.



For Your Calendars:

- Nov. 2 ~ Election Day (Kittery polls open 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM at KCC)
- Nov. 2 ~ School Committee Meeting 6:00 PM Council Chambers
- Nov. 3 ~ NHS Induction at Traip Academy 6:30 PM
- Nov. 7 ~ Daylight Savings Time Ends
- Nov. 9 ~ Facilities, Finance, & Safety Committee Meeting 3:00 PM
- Nov. 11 ~ Veterans Day (No Classes; All Offices Closed)
- Nov. 12 ~ Staff Professional Dev. Day (No Classes for Students)
- Nov. 12 & 13 ~ Traip Academy Musical Review at KCC's Star Theatre (2 shows at 7:00 PM and one Saturday matinee)
- Nov. 13 ~ Traip Academy Athletic Boosters Annual Craft Sale
- Nov. 16 ~ School Committee Meeting 6:00 PM Council Chambers

