



LINK-22

RSU 22 • HAMPDEN • NEWBURGH • WINTERPORT • FRANKFORT 24 MAIN ROAD NORTH, HAMPDEN ME 04444 FEBRUARY 2024

Charlie Bea, the Therapy Dog Visits Leroy H. Smith School



Public Safety Visitors at Breakfast

McGraw students have been playing host to community members during our daily breakfast each month. In October, RSU 22 Student Resource Officer, Josh Ewing, joined students for breakfast. November we were joined by Hampden Fire Lieutenant Chris Grindle. Our students have enjoyed the chance to get to know some of our community members, and we are excited to continue with hosting more community members for breakfast throughout the year.



Smith School students were very excited to meet Mrs. Krummel and her therapy dog, Charlie Bea, in December! Students learned about the difference between therapy dogs and service dogs. Therapy dogs are trained to offer comfort and affection to groups of people in places like schools, libraries, and nursing homes. Service dogs are trained to assist one person with a disability. Both kinds of dogs need lots of specialized training!



Fourth graders got to pet Charlie and learned about the many things she had to master in order to become a therapy dog. Charlie must follow directions, like “wait,” “stay,” and “come,” and stay calm around big groups of people. Students asked questions and saw Charlie show off some of her skills. Thank you, Mrs. Krummel and Charlie! We had a great time learning from you!

School Oral Health Program in RSU 22

During the fall semester many of our schools participated in the Maine School Oral Health Program sponsored by the Maine CDC and Maine DOE. The school nurses worked with local dental hygienists to provide assessments and fluoride applications. A total of 345 students at McGraw, Weatherbee, and Smith were served by this program. RSU 22 also works with Prevention Works, a local dental organization, to provide assessments, cleanings, and minor restoration to students at Smith and



Sara Jacobs (Local Dental Hygienist and Smith PIE Volunteer), Stella Davis (4th Grade)

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Student Success

Professional Excellence

Community Partnerships

Operational Excellence

Superintendent's Message

Celebrating a Year of Achievements in Regional School Unit 22

By Nicholas Raymond, Superintendent of Schools, RSU 22

Dear RSU 22 Families and Community Members,

As we reflect on the past year, it brings me great joy to share the many achievements and successes that have shaped our school community due to the hard work of our staff and community. We still have many areas for growth, but in our last year together, we have witnessed growth in student engagement, continued professional excellence, increased community involvement, and improved operational efficiencies.

In the past year, our students have shown exceptional enthusiasm for learning, both inside and outside the classroom. From hands-on experiences such as the Model United Nations Conference to creative activities like 3D printing their own ingenious eating utensils for a beginning foods course, students eagerness to explore and discover has been truly inspiring.

Furthermore, in accordance with the strategic plan, team members are working to ensure that our graduates are world and life ready for whatever path they choose. Our CTE partner, United Technologies Center in Bangor, currently educates 101 Hampden Academy students. Additionally, 89 HA students are taking college level courses off site. We continually assess what interests students and craft new courses at our high school that will capture student attention while addressing those essential graduation requirements.

We celebrate the diverse talents and achievements of each student, and you will see just some illustrations of this in this issue of the Link 22. We could never keep up with all that our students accomplish. We serve remarkable young people and their families. So please read our newsletters and check out our social media posts to watch for ongoing student success throughout the year.

In RSU 22, we continue to work toward fostering an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued. Only then does everyone have the opportunity for true greatness. Thanks to the work of our Equity Committee, RSU 22 has begun our study of the book *Belonging Through a Culture of Dignity*. This work continues through coaching with administrators and small building based teams. A team of educators have also committed themselves to this book study. *Belonging* has been an ongoing focus on professional development days and buildings are establishing the strategies that fit their age and developmental levels. Baseline data has been collected, and we will revisit that data at the end of the year looking for areas of improvement and next steps.

Our dedicated team of educators have continued to demonstrate unwavering commitment to our students and families through their professional excellence. Through continuous learning and collaboration, our teachers have embraced innovative teaching methods such as Building Thinking Classrooms. We now can claim sixteen nationally board certified teachers! Twelve more teachers are on their way to national certification as well. Research shows that this level of professional excellence translates to additional months of learning for each child in those classrooms! Created by teachers for teachers, the NBTC process is rigorous and requires that teachers are applying the best practices that lead to improved outcomes. We are fortunate to have so many nationally board certified teachers among us and to have a veteran coach who mentors and supports others in the

journey.

In RSU 22, we know that we need students to want to come to our schools. Our educators are working to create this environment from the ground up. From smiling and greeting students at the door, to the check ins before they leave, adults in RSU 22 are focused on learners. During and after covid, schools experienced attendance issues. RSU 22 is not immune to this, and we are focused on getting students into our schools. This happens through developmentally appropriate school wide initiatives and through the creativity that each teacher brings to their lessons on a daily basis. Improved school attendance does not happen by accident. Thanks to all those who make RSU 22 a place where students want to be.

Furthermore, our team member's passion for fostering a positive and supportive learning environment has played a crucial role in our students' success in that each school has developed a way to celebrate individual students. Whether it is a "McGraw Paw" or a "Busted" ticket from Wagner Middle School, through celebrating positive behaviors in every school, we are focused on celebrating the good in every student. We want to recognize not only those students who have made great gains in their education, but those who come to school day after day and make the right choices who would otherwise fly under the radar. Those students who are compliant and work hard are among those who deserve a high five or a good job, and we are putting concerted effort into their recognition.

Through the development of school based and district wide comprehensive needs assessments (CNA's), we have established and defined school and district goals that will improve academic achievement. These CNA's are required of all districts. In RSU 22 our CNA helps us stay focused on the strategies that research proves will increase learning. Thank you to our leaders and educators who are keeping their eyes on the prize, increased achievement.

Our schools are not just a place of education, they are hubs of community engagement. We have seen incredible support from parents, guardians, and community members throughout the year. Thank you to all who participated in parent conferences, emailed and communicated with a question or concern, or reached out in other ways. We want to know! Thanks to those who donated during the winter holiday and those who sponsor our monthly



Nicholas Raymond

"Leader Among Us" prize winners. Whether it's volunteering, attending events, or actively participating in school initiatives, your involvement has strengthened the bonds within our community. Together, we are building a foundation for life-long learning and growth. RSU 22 can not do this alone.

Behind the scenes, our dedicated staff has worked tirelessly to ensure the smooth operation of our school. None of the above could be accomplished without a comfortable and functioning learning environment. From regular maintenance of our facilities to implementing efficient processes, this team's commitment to operational excellence has created a conducive environment for teaching and learning. In the last year, we have increased safety and security measures within all schools with new security cameras as well as upgrading fire panels in some of our schools. There has been an emphasis on our fund balance throughout the year and what steps to take to lessen the burden on our community members. In addition, our Ad Hoc Restructure Committee continues to meet to investigate the details about whether or not a potential restructure would improve the district. We express our gratitude for the hard work and dedication to all of those involved who have the well-being of our entire school community front and center.

Through productive solicitation of grant dollars and efficient use of taxpayer dollars, we are positioned to move through a solid budget process where our goal remains to return money to towns and still prioritize student and staff needs. This has not always been and will not always be the case. The Finance, Budget, and Building Committees recognize this and have prioritized portions of the fund balance being used to absorb costs to taxpayers.

As we celebrate these accomplishments, we also look forward to the opportunities that the coming year holds. Together, we will continue to ensure that RSU 22's Strategic Plan is not a shelf document but is alive and well, informing next steps. We thank you again for helping us create this vision two years ago, and we are happy to share our progress toward this plan with you. Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership. Our collective efforts make a significant impact on the lives of our students and contribute to the success of our school community.

Wishing you a healthy and happy new year.

Nick Raymond
Superintendent of Schools



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Curriculum Office Update

By Jennifer Nickerson, Director of Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment

Fostering Critical Thinking in the Classroom

Over 25 educators in RSU 22 are currently participating in an exciting year long professional development course focused on cultivating critical thinking skills in students. The course, led by facilitator Becky Tapley from the Maine Math Science Alliance, centers around the research and strategies outlined in Peter Liljedahl's book *Building Thinking Classrooms*.

The Key Ideas

The course explores 14 "toolkits" from Liljedahl's book that teachers can implement to transform their classrooms into places where students learn to think critically. Some of the big ideas include:

- Having students collaborate on vertical non-permanent surfaces like whiteboards. Studies show this leads to more time on task, increased discussion, and greater risk-taking.
- Designing "thin-slicing" sequences in the curriculum where students grapple with new concepts in a structured way.
- Fostering an environment where deep thinking is valued over getting the "right" answer.

Putting Ideas into Practice

Throughout the year, participants have monthly training sessions where they learn about the toolkits, watch model teaching videos, and reflect on how the strategies can be integrated into their own classrooms. Educators also get hands-on experience with the techniques together as learners.

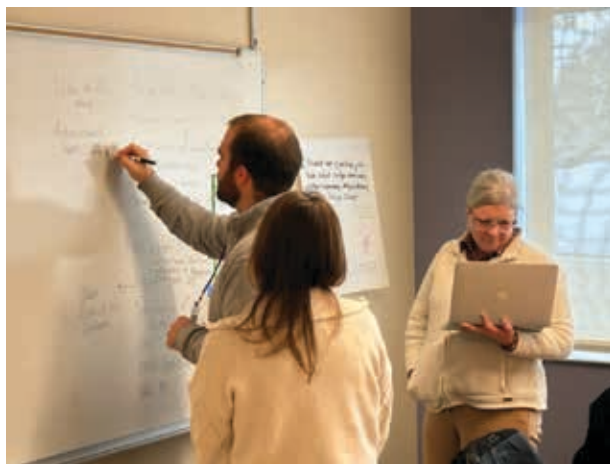
Between sessions, teachers experiment with implementing the toolkits and collaborating vertically in their lesson planning. They share their successes and challenges with the cohort for feedback and encouragement.

Administrators Lead the Way

School leaders have also embraced Liljedahl's methods for cultivating thinking classrooms. They

have begun using vertical non-permanent surfaces and discussion-based strategies in their own team meetings. During the January inservice, administrators modeled these techniques for staff as well.

The professional development course has sparked meaningful conversations about how we can collectively foster stronger critical thinking skills in RSU 22 students. We look forward to seeing the innovative strategies teachers develop as they progress through their learning.



Leading by Example: Administrators model Building Thinking Classrooms strategies, like collaborating at vertical non-permanent surfaces, during district meetings to promote critical thinking.



Putting Learning Into Practice: Educators collaborate at a vertical non-permanent surface during a Building Thinking Classrooms training to integrate critical thinking strategies, like vertical collaboration, into their own lesson plans.



Growing Young Readers with a New Literacy Approach

This school year, RSU 22 elementary schools are rolling out an exciting new core reading program in grades K-2 called *Being a Reader*. This comprehensive curriculum aims to foster literate, engaged students through a blend of foundational skills instruction, reading comprehension strategies, and rich language experiences.

Grounded in Scientific Reading Research

Being a Reader follows the continuum of reading development, meeting students at their level and providing targeted instruction to continue propelling their literacy learning forward. The lessons and materials are rooted in current scientific research around best practices for teaching reading. There is also a Tier 2 intervention model (SIPPS) for students who need more support developing phonics and decoding skills and strategies that works seamlessly with *Being a Reader*.

An Integrated Approach

The program interweaves several key components:

- Phonics and decoding strategies
- Vocabulary building
- Fluency and comprehension skill-building
- Writing and speaking connections
- Social-emotional learning

This integrated framework helps students blossom into confident, thoughtful readers.

Customized to Each Learner

Ongoing assessment tools provide teachers with concrete data to inform instructional decisions. This allows them to provide customized support, interventions, and enrichment to ensure all students make progress.

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By: Brittany Layman
Director of Wellness

Wellness

Our Farm and Sea to School program is alive and well in RSU 22! During the course of this year, we are working on a variety of activities to promote local agriculture and gardens. One of our programs is the Harvest of the Month reading program. Harvest of the Month is a Department of Education program that highlights different local products each month. To try to capture as many students as possible, we are going to start reading a story during lunch time! Once a month, a reader will come into the cafeteria to read a short story that highlights the harvest of the month product being served. In September, we read *Chicks and Salsa* by Aaron Reynolds which highlighted tomatoes!!

Spring is right around the corner. We are looking for volunteers to join our garden program. We would love to have interested people join our group to help manage and maintain various gardens and work with our students to promote garden education. Please reach out to Brittany Layman if interested! blayman@rsu22.us

National Certified School Nurse

Laura Norris, RN, school nurse at Smith and Wagner, successfully passed her examination to be a nationally certified school nurse. Board certification in school nursing is a formal recognition of advanced knowledge, competence, and a personal commitment to excellence in the specialty practice of school nursing on behalf of the better health and education of school-age children. RSU 22 now has 3 school nurses who are nationally certified. Congratulations Laura!



Flu Illness Reminders

Flu like illnesses are back and on the rise in our area. Please be aware of flu symptoms and how it spreads.

Symptoms include:

- Fever or feeling feverish/chills
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy nose
- Muscle or body aches
- Headaches
- Fatigue (tiredness)
- Some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults

Please keep your children home if they are sick. They can return to school if they have been 24 hours fever free without the use of fever reducing medications such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen. Also if your student has an uncontrolled cough, we ask that they stay home until the cough improves; and they can eat and drink. Please reach out to your student's school nurse if you have questions regarding flu like illnesses or if your child should attend school.



McGraw Bulletin Boards

McGraw students have enjoyed fun and exciting bulletin board displays in our main hallway this year. McGraw custodian, Arich Hawes, and Wagner kitchen manager, Brenda White, have created a number of fun and meaningful thematic displays this year. Students, staff, and families appreciate their efforts to create a welcoming atmosphere for all!



STEM Ambassadors

McGraw students celebrated Computer Science Week by working on an Hour of Code provided by Code.org during their STEM class with teacher Anne Carchedi. They practiced coding an interactive dance party using AI to create custom backgrounds for their projects. Two Computer Science Ambassadors from Hampden Academy, Brigid Salib and Grace Daigle, joined us one day to help the students with their coding.



New Staff at Earl C. McGraw School

Elas Seip Grade 2

Elas Seip has joined McGraw this year as a member of our 2nd grade team. He resides in Hermon with his wife and two cats, Tigger and Winnie.



Mr. Seip grew up in Pennsylvania before relocating to the Ellsworth area over a decade ago. During his time in Ellsworth, he pursued his bachelor's degree in education at the University of Maine at Augusta, with an eye on potentially obtaining a graduate degree in educational technology.

Following his college years, he embarked on his teaching career in Bucksport for three years. Outside of school, Mr. Seip's interests include designing items for 3D printing, engaging in woodworking, hiking, playing video games, watching TV and movies, and cherishing moments with his family.

Robyn Hernandez Special Education teacher

Robyn Hernandez has joined the McGraw School as a Special Education teacher. Robyn, happily married to Agustin, is a proud parent to two wonderful children. Her daughter, Jordan, currently attends Maine Law School, while Lucas, a freshman at Orono High School, plays on the basketball team.

While she has lived in Glenburn for the past 20 years, Robyn is originally from Jackman, Maine, where she attended Forest Hills High School.

Do you bring home lunch?

Did you know?



If you bring a lunch from home you can still take advantage of the free meals for all program to supplement your lunch box.

Select from 3 meal components
(one must be a fruit or veg).



Some Examples

Milk and salad bar with fruit

Milk, crackers, fruit or veg

Just ask our kitchen staff for help
on what would qualify

All School Share - Focus on Character

Each month, McGraw students gather together for an All School Share. Part of this time each month involves students sharing what they have learned about our Character Trait of the month. This year we have focused on Kindness, Respect, Responsibility and Gratitude. Students are chosen by their teacher for being leaders in showing this trait in the classroom and throughout McGraw.

Robyn has earned her bachelor's degree in Elementary Education from the University of Maine, a Master's degree in Education Leadership, and is currently working on a special education degree.



She served as a 2/3 Looping Teacher from 2003 to 2018 before stepping into the role of Assistant Principal from 2018 to 2023, Robyn brings a wealth of experience and dedication to her new role.

Robyn finds joy in reading, scrapbooking, and treasured moments with family and friends. A devoted New England sports fan, she passionately cheers for the Patriots, Celtics, Red Sox, and a touch of Bruins spirit. Robyn is thrilled to be part of McGraw School, expressing her gratitude for the warm welcome and appreciation she has received since joining the community.

Alexis Miller Grade 1

Alexis Miller has joined the Earl C. McGraw School as a member of the 1st grade team. This is her first year teaching. She started working with young children in high school and has loved helping children grow and learn new things. She grew up in Houlton, ME and graduated from Houlton High School in 2018. She received her Bachelors in Elementary Education from Husson University in 2023. She and her fiancé recently bought a house in Hermon and have enjoyed settling down in this area. She enjoys traveling and spending time with friends and family.



Mrs. Erickson leads a skit on responsibility at school and at home.

Curriculum Night with Community Partners

McGraw School held our annual Curriculum Showcase Night on October 12th. This night is an opportunity for our students to showcase and celebrate the great work they have done over the first six weeks of school with their families. This year we were excited to include several community partners in this event. Hampden Public Safety had representatives attend and share resources for Fire Prevention Month. The McGraw PTO had activities for families to complete in the gym. Ms. Carchedi and a few STEM leaders from Weatherbee demonstrate robotics skills. Finally, the Darling's Ice Cream Truck for a Cause attended to help raise money for our PTO. We were excited to expand on this event to include so many of our community partners.



Darling's Ice Cream Truck

McGraw Book Character Day

On October 31st, McGraw students and staff celebrated "Book Character Day." All were invited to dress as their favorite book characters and participate in a parade through the school. There were sightings of Harry Potter, Abraham Lincoln, and even a robot in our parade. We enjoyed celebrating a day focused on books.



Hampden Public Safety welcomes students and families to their tables



Activities led by the McGraw PTO



Virtual Summer School Celebration BAM Party

Our Virtual Summer School program for 3rd-5th graders was a great success. Mr. Rand and Mrs. Whitehouse offered a four week asynchronous program through Google Classroom. Weekly assignments were posted every Monday, starting in July. Each weeks' assignments were due by the following Sunday. Students earned points toward the Virtual Summer School Celebration at the Smith School on August 16th where they could earn a variety of prizes.

Each week four assignments were posted, one in each of the following categories: Reading, Writing, Math, and Science. While the time for assignments varied for each child, typically the entire week's assignments were completed in less than a few hours. The beauty of this program is that it could be done wherever and whatever time best fit each child or family's schedule.

Our top point getters won a trip to Books A Million on September 8th and earned a \$15 gift card toward a purchase. Thank you to the BAM staff for generously hosting our group for the second year and celebrating the students with prize bags from their summer reading program.



New Staff at Leroy H. Smith School

Brooke Trask Grade 2

Brooke Trask has been working in education for 20 years, teaching 4th and 5th grade at Monroe Elementary and 6th and 7th grade at Reeds Brook Middle School until joining Smith School this year to teach 2nd grade.

She lives with her family in Winterport and enjoys watching her kids play sports, baking, gardening, and walking her dogs.



Her favorite part about teaching 2nd grade is sharing in their excitement for learning new things!

Lisa Melendez Social Worker

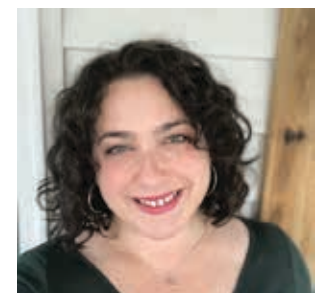
Lisa Melendez has been in the field of social work for about 25 years. A great deal of her time has been spent working with children and families. She loves teaching, advocating, learning, and growing in life, both personally and professionally.

What she enjoys most about working with children in elementary school is their kindness, innocence, and ability to freely play. She is reminded that life is meant to be enjoyed and that laughter is essential.



Cassandra Belka Music Teacher

Cassandra Belka has ten years of experience in education, including 3 previous years teaching music in Maine public schools. She is a singer and flute player and dabbles in lots of other instruments for fun. She sings soprano and alto and has been part of Bangor's community cappella choir, Divisi, for 11 years. She sometimes acts as an assistant conductor for the group. Besides music, she likes to read, write, spend time with her two kids and husband and enjoy outdoorsy activities!



(please turn to page 8)



LEROY H. SMITH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Dawn Moore, Principal, 223-4282

Third-Grade Students Fascinating Journey

At Leroy H. Smith School, third-grade students embarked on a fascinating journey into learning more about indigenous people, thanks to the dedicated efforts of their student teacher, Ms. Francis.

Ms. Francis shared insights into the traditions and history of Maine's four federally recognized tribes: Penobscot, Passamaquoddy, Maliseet, and MicMac. Highlighting the importance of hands-on learning, Ms. Francis arranged a special guest speaker, Mr. Neptune from the Penobscot Nation. A prominent community member and moose guide, Mr. Neptune brought an authentic touch to



a lifestyle that depended on the land's offerings for sustenance and daily needs.

One of the highlights was understanding how practices evolved over time. Ms. Francis and Mr. Neptune emphasized that, while wigwams and river travel may not be part of everyday life anymore, essential traditions persist. Hunting, singing, dancing, canoeing, basketmaking, and the wearing of regalia continue to be cherished aspects of the indigenous cultures in Maine.

The classroom became a living museum, allowing students to see, touch, and hear about the vibrant indigenous peoples. Through this immersive experience, Leroy H. Smith School has not only fostered a deeper understanding of cultural diversity but has also instilled in its students a profound respect for the resilience and evolution of these communities. Ms. Francis and Mr. Neptune have left an indelible mark, planting seeds of curiosity and understanding that will continue.



the classroom, sharing his deep knowledge about the history and practices of his people.

The discussion revolved around the resourcefulness of indigenous communities in the past, showcasing their use of birch and ash trees for crafting canoes, baskets, snowshoes, and bowls. Students were transported back in time, imagining

“Bee” Our Guest



Smith School hosted its first “Bee Our Guest” event in December. Parents/Guardians were invited into Kindergarten and 3rd grade classrooms to join in on a fun craft with their child. Kindergarten students had the opportunity to complete a holiday tree with their family members, while 3rd grade students worked to create a fun 3-D snow globe craft. This was a great opportunity for students to do an activity with a family member and have some fun in their classroom.

Throughout the year, different grade levels will be hosting similar events. Smith School is working toward one of its goals this year to increase family engagement. The “Bee Our Guest” days are just one of the many ways families can become more involved with the Smith School community. Families are also invited to attend All School Share which is held on the last “E” day of each month. Later this winter, Smith School will also be hosting a winter family night with fun outdoor activities that families can do together. Families can keep an eye for upcoming events in the Smith Spectacular Newsletter.



WINTERPORT & FRANKFORT KINDERGARTEN AND PRE-K

Kindergarten Registration
Tuesday, February 13
Noon - 4 p.m.
Leroy H. Smith School
319 S. Main Street
Winterport, ME
Contact Debbie at
223-4282 with any
questions.

REGISTRATION



2024-25 SCHOOL YEAR

Pre-K Registration
Tuesday, February 13
Noon - 4 p.m.
Leroy H. Smith School
319 S. Main Street
Winterport, ME
Contact Waldo CAP at
338-3827 with any
questions.

Due to limited spacing, children do not need to be present for registration.

Students must be five years old on or before October 15, 2024 and be a legal resident of Winterport or Frankfort in order to attend kindergarten at Leroy H. Smith School.

Students must be four years old on or before October 15, 2024 and be a legal resident of Winterport or Frankfort in order to attend Pre-K at Leroy H. Smith School.

At the time of registration, parents must provide the student’s certificate of vital record (hospital birth certificate is no longer acceptable), 2 proofs of residency, immunization records and a recent photograph.

Healthy Meals Incentives Grant Awarded to RSU 22

School Nutrition received a two year grant of \$148,000 for improving school meals nutritional quality. We are focusing on increasing our from scratch cooking and purchasing more locally grown ingredients. The funds will go to purchasing new equipment, staff training, additional staff hours, and a new greenhouse.



We have had group culinary training and production sessions. Chef Michele makes homemade chicken stock to go into our soups and gravy. She also made a batch of homemade marinara sauce from 200 lbs of tomatoes from our school garden and local farmers. Already this school year, the school nutrition staff have served 30 new from scratch lunch menu items and 10 breakfast items.

Chef Michele D'Amario produces homemade marinara for all schools in the fall.



New Staff at Leroy H. Smith School

(Continued from page 6)

Destiny Rand Occupational Therapist

Destiny Rand is a board certified occupational therapist. She graduated in 2008 with a Masters Degree in Occupational Therapy, and a Bachelor's degree in Psychology. She is currently working on her Masters in Psychology.



She has been a practitioner for almost 16 years, and her specialty is early intervention and sensory processing in the pediatric population. She has worked in a private pediatric clinic for the past several years, much of which was with early intervention pediatrics but also some adolescents and teens. She has also have worked in geriatrics for several years earning a specialty in orthopedics and joint replacement, and traumatic brain injury.

This is her first year as a school therapist, and she absolutely loves it. She is the district K-5 (McGraw, Smith, and Weatherbee) therapist for RSU22. She grew up in Bangor and now resides in Old Town with her husband and two daughters, ages 13 and 10. In her free time, she loves watching hockey, reading, arts and crafts, traveling, and spending time with her family and her goldendoodle.

Luke Krummel Special Education Teacher

Luke Krummel is a UMaine graduate from the Class of 2005. He has been a resident of Winterport since 2015 along with his wife, two daughters, and two dogs. He joined the staff at Smith School in February of 2017 as an Educational Technician, and began teaching Special Education in the resource room the fall of 2023.



He enjoys camping, the Boston Celtics, genealogy and watching his kids play sports. His favorite part of teaching are the 'a-ha' moments when the skill a student has been practicing really clicks and they begin to apply their knowledge.

WinterKids 2024

Leroy H. Smith School is participating in the annual WinterKids Winter Games. The WinterKids Winter Games is an annual 4-week outdoor physical activity, nutrition, family engagement, and winter carnival for elementary schools across Maine. Teachers receive an extensive toolkit with supplies and materials for every student to take education outdoors.



Pre-K for ME

RSU 22 Pre-K programs have adopted Maine's Department of Education preschool curriculum, Pre-K for ME. This research-based, whole-child curriculum provides students with a rich, play-based, intentional curriculum that is aligned to Maine's Early Learning and Development Standards.

Guiding Principles of Pre-K for ME:

- Young children are capable of complex, high-order thinking.
- Children are active agents in their learning, especially when it is relevant, hands-on, and developmentally appropriate.
- Instruction is impactful when teachers are researchers of their classrooms.
- Meaningful knowledge is constructed through robust interactions and high engagement.



Students are transporting food from the farm to the store at the big blocks center.



Dramatic play is a grocery store. Students are acting as the cashier and customer.



This student is exploring with big lines and little lines to build letters during Get Set for School.



This student is creating wind to propel his sailboat across the water at the discovery center after reading *Gilberto and the Wind*.

In addition to the Pre-K for ME curriculum, Get Set for School, a Kindergarten readiness program is integrated into the daily schedule.

A sample schedule

- Welcome Routine & Free Choice
- Class meeting
- SWPL (Songs, Word Play, and Letters)
- Story Time
- Centers
- Recess
- Lunch
- Rest Time
- Get Set for School
- Let's Find Out About It (provides children with additional information about specific concepts that are introduced during Read-Alouds through the use of non-fiction texts, realia, and technology.), small groups, or whole group math
- Snack
- Goodbye Routine



Students are using various sizes of containers and scoops to pour and transfer water in the discovery table.



Students are working at the art table to create paper collages like Ezra Jack Keats the author of one of the unit's mentor texts.

Academic Celebrations



Recently, Mrs. Adams and Mrs. Chandler's students traveled to Ms. Lorezo and Mrs. Sturdee's kindergarten classes at McGraw school. Small groups of 3rd graders and K students were created so that they could both present and then give feedback to each other as both groups of students have been researching about specific animals. This collaboration was a wonderful way to connect content and mentor.



GEORGE B. WEATHERBEE SCHOOL
Jennifer Cyr, Principal
862-3254



Book Character Day



Our school's theme is "You Belong Here". Our focus on belonging is a daily theme celebrated throughout the district. Recently, WB students from Mrs. Adams' class wore their belonging bracelets.



Weatherbee students showed their spirit during our Book Fair week by dressing up as their favorite book characters.



Looking for the menu?
 They can be found at the RSU 22 website
rsu22.us
 In the resources section under **School Nutrition**

Hampden Academy Student Mentors

We are fortunate to have some high school students mentor our 4th graders. Tucker Leland, a HA senior, has been coming to Weatherbee to help Team Harbor. The students love working with Tucker and welcome him every time he visits. We appreciate all of his help! Maia Johnson, another HA student, has also been a wonderful mentor for our team.



AI Dance Party: Weatherbee and McGraw Students Celebrate Computer Science Week Coding an Interactive Dance Party with AI

Weatherbee and McGraw students celebrated Computer Science Week by coding a dance party using AI. Students coded a variety of colorful characters to dance to upbeat music with AI generated backgrounds based on their selections.



Grace Daigle and Brigid Salib, Computer Science Ambassadors from Hampden Academy spent the day at Weatherbee and McGraw helping students in grades K-5 work on their hour of code in celebration of Computer Science Week.



University of Maine Trombone Quartet Visits Weatherbee School

The University of Maine Trombone Quartet performed at Weatherbee Elementary on December 8th. The group featured Max Carter (Former Weatherbee student teacher) and three University of Maine professors Steve Norris, Dan Barrett and David Stearn. They played music in many different styles and included a medley from the music of “Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory.”



Grade 4: Planetarium Visits



Jon Meader, from Northern Lights Planetarium visited our school in December. While in a portable planetarium the 4th graders learned how slaves used the stars to guide them to safety in the time of the Civil War. Did you know the Big Dipper used to be called “The Drinking Gourd”?



Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Team

Members of the Weatherbee PBIS Team attended the state conference to learn about multi-tiered system of supports in behavior. We are excited about this committee’s work supporting our comprehensive needs assessment.



PBIS Team at the State Conference

Therapy Dog Visits with Heidi Sharpe



We are blessed to have Mrs. Heidi Sharpe partner with fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Audrey Bracciodieta and her students. Mrs. Sharpe's therapy dog has been an exciting event to look forward to each month.

New Staff at George B. Weatherbee School

Genevieve Marier School Nurse

Genevieve Marier is originally from Montreal and completed her RN degree in Quebec. She has lived in Maine for 16 years. For the past 11 years, she has been living in Hampden with her husband and three children. She worked as a substitute school nurse for the district for seven years before accepting the position at Weatherbee. In addition, she works at the immunization clinic at Bangor Public Health and Community Services. She loves being a school nurse and is thrilled to be part of the Weatherbee/McGraw team. She enjoys traveling with her family and always looks forward to their next adventure.



Toni Hallett Literacy Interventionist

Toni Hallett is the new Literacy Interventionist at both the McGraw and Weatherbee schools. She attended the University of Maine and received her Bachelor's Degree in Elementary Education, along with her Master's Degree in Literacy. In the past, Mrs. Hallett has been a 4th grade teacher, a Reading Recovery teacher and most recently, Administrative Assistant at Weatherbee school!



She is happy to be back this year helping students love to read as much as she does! Formally from Enfield, Mrs. Hallett now resides in Hampden with her husband and 3 children.

Weatherbee Third Graders Take a Field Trip to the Challenger Learning Center

Weatherbee students arrived at the Challenger Learning Center and they had a short briefing to review their mission objectives. The group was then divided in two with one half taking their work stations in Mission Control and the other half "launching" to the Space Lab to work as astronauts. Each member was assigned to one of the teams that comprise the crew, such as: Medical, Life Support, Robotic, HazMat, Aeronautical Engineering, Navigation, and Communication. Halfway through the mission, the students exchange places so everyone has an opportunity to experience both Mission Control and the Space Lab. Our third graders loved the authentic learning experience and accomplished the mission!



Weatherbee Has Two New National Board Certified Teachers



Congratulations to Sara Hardy, grade 4 teacher and Christy Whitehouse, grade 4 teacher for earning National Board Teaching Certification. We are thrilled to celebrate this incredible achievement and deeply appreciate their commitment to their professional excellence and positive impact they make on our school community. Weatherbee is so proud of you!

Brian Lescord Grade 3

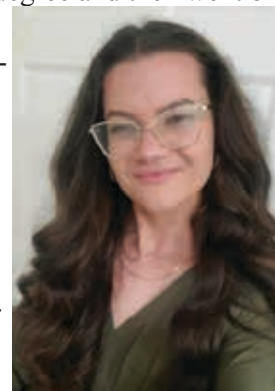
Brian Lescord is our new third grade teacher at George B. Weatherbee School. An alumnus of Hampden Academy and the University of Maine, he received a M. A. in Philosophy from the University of Hawaii at Manoa before becoming a MDOE certified K-8 elementary education teacher. This is his fourteenth year in education and has held past positions as a classroom teacher, K-8 special education teacher, high school special education teacher, and K-8 literacy & math interventionist. He recently joined the Maine PBIS Tier-1 Training of Trainers cohort and will be awarded credentials in December 2024 (anticipated) as a Maine PBIS Tier-1 Trainer & Coach. Currently, Mr. Lescord is serving on our school-based PBIS Leadership Team and the RSU 22 District PBIS



Leadership Team. He lives in Penobscot with his wife, a fellow educator, and their chocolate lab "Maple." He is thrilled to be here and loves the Weatherbee/RSU 22 community!

Rachel Silkmitter School Counselor

Mrs. Silkmitter graduated from the University of Maine with her Bachelors degree and then went on to Husson University for her Masters in school counseling. She is originally from Spruce Head, Maine on the midcoast and has lived in the greater Bangor area for the past 8 years. This is her first year as an elementary school counselor, and she is loving it! In her free time, you will find her out in nature, hanging out with her cat Luna, reading a book, or finding her new favorite coffee shop.





REEDS BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL
Susan Thibedeau, Principal
862-3540

Building Belonging at School

Submitted by: Susan Thibedeau

Reeds Brooks staff and students have been delving into district belonging work, based on the dignity framework as outlined in the book, *Belonging through a Culture of Dignity* by Floyd Cobb and John Krownapple. Research shows that a sense of belonging in school is one of the most important conditions for learning and a fundamental support for social and emotional well-being.

One example of building a sense of belonging happened during November’s extended homeroom when students completed welcoming activities arranged by the Civil Rights Team, as part of that group’s Welcome Day. Students brought in items that showed something about themselves and took a group photo showing how they all belong together. Students also created slogans about belonging which were entered in a contest for the slogan that best celebrates and communicates that RBMS school community is for everyone.

Slogans included:

A place to belong, a place to grow!

Never Back Down; Never Give Up!

RBMS Shines Bright Enough for Everyone!

Be KIND

A Smile A Day Keeps Sadness Away!

RBMS CARES!

We all belong at RBMS!

With the power of FRIENDSHIP, you can do ANYTHING!

We Belong!

Strive To Be Better!

And the winner is!!

When we make room for everyone, we feel...

Respected

Brave

Magnificent

Strong

Another way Reeds Brook has fostered belonging among students is through a response to the results of our PBIS student surveys. Staff and students reviewed the data from the survey and identified the area of “more recognition for positive behavior” as the indicator to focus on for the year. At December’s extended homeroom, students reviewed the results of the survey and discussed ways they would like to be recognized

for positive behavior, and then in January’s extended homeroom students took a survey to narrow down the list of possible recognitions. Future plans include meeting with groups of students to discuss ways of implementing ways to recognize positive behavior.

This belonging work with students dovetails with the district guidance curriculum, *Character Strong*. The lessons focus on developing skills and mindsets around building positive habits, understanding emotions, improving teamwork, and increasing empathy. One of the key parts is a *CharacterDare* that puts content into action. *CharacterDares* are part of Guidance class, and we are also including them in our family newsletter so families can share in these fun activities. A specific example from a recent *Rebel Report* is “Choose one adult in your life outside of school who has been helpful or kind to you. Find a meaningful way to thank them specifically for how they have been a positive influence.”

Staff have engaged in a number of professional development activities to learn about the dignity framework, focusing on topics such as greetings at the door, classroom belonging, positive language in classrooms, and equal student participation. Staff have appreciated the opportunities to examine the theory and practices and connect that to themselves and our school. Staff feedback comments reflect RBMS teachers’ commitment to supporting students.

“I will try to differentiate lessons that honor differences and uniqueness.”

“It provides me with a way to make all students feel like they belong and are a part of our school community.”

“This will help me be more mindful when interacting with students as well as my colleagues.”

“I will use our discussion to help shape my lessons and also to help guide my conversations with my colleagues.”

“My plan is to continue listening and modeling good listening skills with students.”

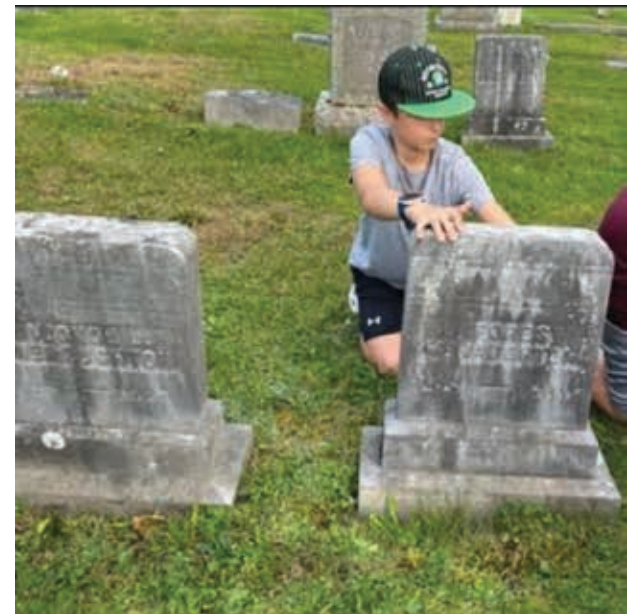
This belonging work reinforces Reeds Brook’s core values of compassion, honesty, respect, and responsibility, which drive our code of conduct and determine our behavior expectations. Students and staff at Reeds Brook work together to create an environment of positive support. Reeds Brook’s work connects with belonging activities at all RSU 22 schools, so ask your student what they have learned about belonging at school.

Tombstone Crew

While driving down the Main Road in Hampden, you might have wondered how the tombstones in Locust Grove Cemetery are getting cleaner and brighter. This clean up of the cemetery all started when Carol Gourmelon, a Reeds Brook Social Studies teacher, arranged for a walking field trip so that students could learn more about local history.

Students walked over to the cemetery, selected local residents’ names from the tombstones, and then researched their background and story using online primary documents. The Hampden Historical Society also offered research assistance on these past local residents. Future plans are to compile student research over the past few years into a book that will be available at the Historical Society and the Dyer Library.

Mrs Gourmelon explained what led her to start this



learning activity, “I have always been into family and local history and this project gives students practice in finding and using primary sources, while also learning about people who once lived in their town.” She described how students get excited when they find the person and their descendants on the primary source document sites. Mrs Gourmelon has provided students with a mini-lesson on how to read cursive writing because the documents are handwritten until the early 1900s. She says that students feel like historical detectives putting the clues together about the person’s life. This project makes history personal to them.

During these visits to the cemetery, students noticed that many of the stones needed care and wanted to help. This direct example of one of Reeds Brook’s core values, compassion, led to a new club! For the past three years, the after-school Tombstone Crew works on cleaning and clearing gravestones. Mrs Gourmelon has worked with the cemetery and town of Hampden to coordinate their efforts.

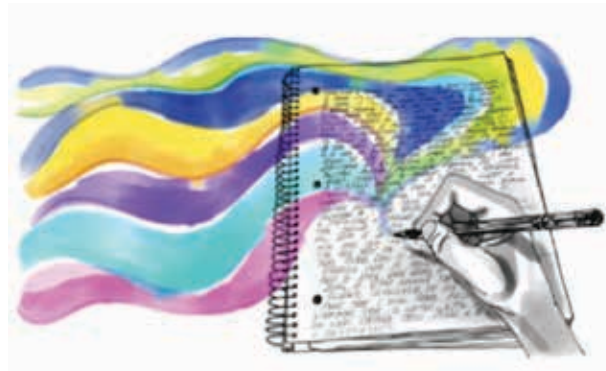
“I really like Tombstone Crew because it is really satisfying to see how all the dirt and moss come off the stones while you’re cleaning them.” -Kullen E, 6th grader

(please turn to page 13)



Reeds Brook Creative Writing Club

Last year some Reeds Brook students expressed the desire for a Creative Writing Club, which was started under the direction of 7th grade ELA teacher, Mrs. Tracy Cowan. Some of the reasons students decided to join the club are that they love to write, they wanted to try something new, and they really like Mrs. Cowan. This club meets once a week to allow students a place to write and share their writing.



Some of their favorite things they've written this year include "Platypus Girl - The Comic," a pre-quel to "A Christmas Carol" and "The Interview." This year the group has started a monthly magazine called L'écriture Mensuel. They are proudest of the Staff Spotlight, a feature in the magazine, and coming up with the name for the literary magazine. When asked what their favorite part of Creative Writing Club is, one student said, "My favorite part of Creative Writing Club is the magazine, because it's something we all can work on together and it brings us all together as a club instead of just working on something on our own." Students update the many sections of the magazine on the last Friday of every month. Please check out L'écriture Mensuel at this site: <https://sites.google.com/rsu22.us/creative-writing-club/home> to read.

RBMS Book Tree

Our school librarian, Jill Duplissis and our school counselor, Ann Moody came up with a creative way to promote reading over winter break. Community members donated gently used books to create a book tree. Before winter break, Mrs Duplissis visited each lunch and read "If You Give a Mouse a Cookie", a perennial favorite. Students then selected a book to take home over break. Students who read books during vacation had the opportunity to submit a slip to be a part of a drawing for a pizza party. Reeds Brook is a community of readers so students appreciated recognition for their independent reading, and the entire school appreciated all the donated books!



Reeds Brook Pollinator Gardens

Thanks to a grant from Maine Agriculture in the Classroom, Reeds Brook planted two pollinator gardens in the front of the school. During Garden Week of the middle school summer program, students planted the first round of plants. Under the direction of 6th grade teachers, Stacy LaBree and Danielle McKinley, the Reeds Brook Garden Club completed the planting in September.

Daniel S, 6th grader at RBMS said "Digging in the soil was relaxing and it was fun to work outside, too! Connor C was my partner in excavating, and he helped me dig and uproot small weeds. He was a really good teammate." Grace W showed leadership and initiative with her watering and garden care. She commented, "Growing and taking care of plants helps the Earth, animals, and wildlife. Doing this makes me feel really good that I contributed to our planet."



Using the UMaine Cooperative Extension guidelines, plants were purchased that were both native plants and will bloom at different times. Using early, mid, and late-blooming plants provides food for bees, butterflies, and other pollinators at different points in the season. Students are working on filling out the Certification Application. We plan to have our garden certified as a pollinator-friendly garden this spring. The students made plant markers to identify these native plants in the pollinator garden. In the future, students hope to fundraise for permanent plant identification placards.



Tombstone Crew

(continued from page 12)

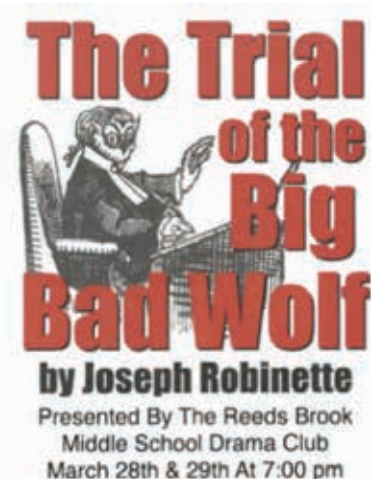
My older sister kept telling me about how much fun Tombstone Crew was so I decided to join. It's fun to uncover all the tombstones and discover what it says on them. And you can look up the names and learn about their lives. – Zoey D, 7th grader

I like Tombstone Crew because it is a chance to help the community while still having fun with friends. – Chloe H, 8th grader

This activity has inspired many students to give back to our community by ensuring that Locust Grove Cemetery reflects the respect and care these old graves deserve.

RBMS Drama Club Spring Performance

Students are very excited for the return of the Reeds Brook drama club. Under the direction of Mrs. Mallory, our production of The Trial of the Big Bad Wolf will be a great show!



SCHOOL NUTRITION DIRECTOR OPENING

The School Nutrition Director oversees all aspects of the School Nutrition Program operation in conformance with local, state, and federal regulations. Provides a safe environment that supports healthy food habits while maintaining program integrity and consumer satisfaction.

A detailed job description is available upon request.

To apply, please submit the School Nutrition Director Application to the Superintendent of Schools. Applications can be found on the district website www.rsu22.us under Careers.

Start date of July 1, 2024

New Staff at Reeds Brook Middle School

Melanie Perkins Language Arts

Melanie Perkins joined the RSU 22 faculty at Reeds Brook Middle School as an eighth grade Language Arts teacher. Melanie is a Maine native who grew up in Veazie, graduated from John Bapst Memorial High School and earned her Bachelor's Degree in Education from the University of Maine at Orono. She is beginning the process of earning her Master's Degree in Education this year. Melanie has over two decades of experience as a middle school English Language Arts teacher and brought with her a wealth of knowledge and dedication to the education field.



Having had the opportunity to teach in both public and private schools in the area, Melanie feels this emphasizes her adaptability and her dedication to middle school students. A little over two years ago, Melanie's blended family, which includes seven children, moved to Hampden. She and her husband, Derek Perkins, have enjoyed getting to know the people of this community. Her spouse also works in education as a superintendent of schools in the Blue Hill Peninsula area. She believes this reflects their shared commitment for fostering academic growth. Melanie is excited and happy to be a part of the RSU 22 staff at RBMS.

Nikki Goss Grade 6 and 7 Math

Nikki Goss joined the Reeds Brook Middle School team as a 6th and 7th grade math teacher. She graduated from the University of Maine, Orono in 2003 with a double bachelors in Education and Human Development. She began her teaching career in Hampden, student teaching and working as an ed tech.



She is excited to return to the RSU 22 community and to give back by sharing her passion and the expertise she has gained working with children for the last two decades. She resides in Bangor with her two children and enjoys gardening and collecting sea glass in her spare time.

Kate Walters Special Education

Kate Walters has joined Reeds Brook Middle School as an eighth-grade Special Education teacher. Ms. Walters earned her undergraduate degree at the University of New Hampshire and her Master's degree in Special Education from the University of Maine. Prior to this year, she was employed in the Bangor School District.



Ms. Walters lives in Dedham with her husband and two young sons. In her free time, she enjoys family time, hiking with her dog, and baking yummy treats. Ms. Walters grew up in a small town in Pennsylvania and loves discovering small town treasures in Maine.

8th Grade Career Event

In November, 8th grade teacher, Reed Farrar organized a career event in conjunction with the 8th grade field trip to United Technology Center (UTC). Many parents gave their time to share about their jobs with our students. When asked why she was willing to speak at the career event, 8th grade parent Sarah Hesseltine said, "I wanted to share my career path because my path was unexpected. I think it's important for students to know that it's ok to change paths, to experience and try different things, and to know that sometimes we stereotype or put a certain career in a specific box, if you will, and that career might actually live outside those expectations that are mainly set based of societal expectations." Some parents shared how responsive the 8th graders were to their presentations. Jason Stuart said, "The students surprised me with thoughtful and respectful questions." Scott Huntley shared that he "thought the event was great. The students listened and behaved very well. I thought they were very attentive, and I was speaking about insurance, so that is saying something."

Students had the opportunity to learn about a variety of careers, including facilities management, aviation, insurance, medical, massage therapy, arborist, IT, and many more. That day during lunch, 8th graders told Dr. Thibedeau about what they had learned: how to fold a fitted sheet, arborists use a giant slingshot, Mrs. Matthews enjoying being the massage test subject, and the Navy gives out the best swag.

Some 8th graders shared their thoughts about the event. Hannah H. said, "Listening to the orthopedic surgeon was interesting. I liked learning how they put in knee replacements because I never knew that's how you do it." Ben O. shared that he "learned that there are a lot of different elements to being in the banking industry." Jillian D. noted, "Something surprising I learned from the massage therapist was that they have different tools to help massage different parts of the body." Olivia D. showed her appreciation of the event, "These types of events are important to me because I like being able to have options and know a little bit about every career just in case I ever



change my mind about what I want to do." Sally B. echoed that appreciation, saying "Events like this help people have a more solid plan for life."

These sessions introduced students to careers in our area, setting them up for their afternoon field trip to United Technology Center (UTC). UTC offers many programs that foster career readiness. At the end of the day, several students told me why they wanted to go to UTC, so appreciation to David Haggan and the 8th grade team for orga-



nizing the successful field trip to UTC. Ben J. described his trip to UTC, "I really liked all the simulators they use and the hands-on things they do with electrical things and construction." Aiden B. said, "It was very cool. I was interested in the business class, the hospitality class, the coding/robotics class, and the video production program." This trip was so successful that nine Reeds Brook 8th graders signed up for a middle school program at UTC that starts in January.

Denise Williamson, LSW Social Worker

Denise Williamson, LSW has joined the Reeds Brook staff as a Social Worker. Before coming to RSU22, she worked for twelve years as a children's mental health case manager at Catholic Charities Maine and nine years as a juvenile probation officer with the Department of Corrections.

Mrs Williamson lives in Hermon with her husband Galan, two teenagers Lily and Logan, and a chocolate lab Tait. She loves doing anything outdoors and spending as much time with family and friends as she can. She also enjoys going for long walks while listening to true crime podcasts. Mrs Williamson spent her childhood years in Millinocket, Maine graduating from Schenck High School and earned her bachelor's degree in social work from the University of Southern Maine in 2001.



Judi Michalik Technology Integration Specialist

Judi Michalik joined the Reeds Brook Middle School team, serving as the Technology Integration Specialist this year.

Starting her teaching career in 1991, Mrs. Michalik initially worked in RSU 22 as a student teacher in the music department. She taught music in the Bangor School Department until recently completing her Master's in Instructional Technology from the University of Maine.



Mrs. Michalik is excited to facilitate students' understanding of how technology can support their learning and creativity.

Living in Bangor with her husband, Kevin, Mrs. Michalik cherishes family time. She has four children and two granddaughters whom she loves spending time with.

Outside the classroom, Mrs. Michalik is an avid local photographer often found on the sidelines of sporting events capturing the action. She also photographs weddings, senior portraits, and families. Mrs. Michalik is looking forward to the positive impact she will bring to technology integration and student learning in RSU 22.

Virtual Viking Visit

On December 14, Wagner 7th Graders took a virtual “Viking Visit” to York, England to learn about 11th century Vikings. Students met with a reenactor via video teleconference. The reenactor is an archaeologist who assumes the persona of “Granmar”, a jewelry maker with a Christian wife. Granmar showed artifacts such as animal pelts and shields used one thousand years ago in York, known to the Vikings as Jorvik (YOR-vick). He talked about things they did for fun including going to horse races and playing musical instruments. The reason for the virtual field trip was that 7th grade was learning about the movement and migration of large groups of people like the Vikings, who originated in Old Scandinavia, but were known to move from one place to another following food and trade.



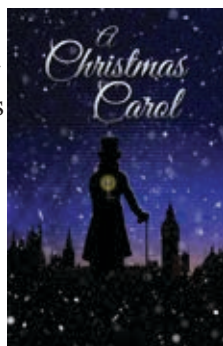
Students learned about daily life for Vikings including the kinds of clothes worn, what kind of currency they used, and their entertainment - similar to ours today with music and games. For example, Vikings’ clothes showed status based on color - red, blue, and purple dyes were made of rare materials so they were more expensive and could only be made or purchased by higher-class customers.

Students enjoyed the virtual field trip and wished that we could have visited in person but that would have meant not only going to England but also traveling back in time 1000 years.

Wagner Seventh and Eighth Graders’ Field Trip to the Penobscot Theatre Company

Submitted by: Erica Farrar & Samantha Poll

On Tuesday, December 12, seventh and eighth graders at Wagner Middle School took their annual field trip to the Penobscot Theatre Company to see the beloved classic “A Christmas Carol”, directed by Ethan Paulini, based on the novel by Charles Dickens and adapted by Lavina Jadhvani. Within the play, Ebenezer Scrooge is visited by four remarkable spirits who reveal his past, present, and future in the hopes of bringing him and those around him peace and joy. Students demonstrated their Wagner Pride as excellent audience members and had a wonderful time attending the show.



Many thanks to our two generous sponsors: Winterport Open Stage and Wagner Pride Pack who made this trip possible for our students. Of special note, Charles Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol” had many connections to Wagner’s own production of “The Quiz That Almost Killed Me” by M.G. Davidson. A story in which the ghosts of past, present and future try to convince J.J. to study for his test so he can someday achieve his career goals.



Samuel L. Wagner Middle School Fall Drama Performance

Submitted by: Sara Asay

SWMS Fall Drama Club Performance of “The Quiz That Almost Killed Me” by M.G. Davidson was held on on November 29, 2023.

The story follows a student’s journey through space, time, and a hilariously idiotic Dickensian theatrical landscape to discover the importance of studying for a quiz. Entertaining for students from the past, present, and future. School was never so terrifying. A slacker student meeting his past, present, and future selves after taking quizzes in school. The “Ghosts” of past, present, and future guide the slacker through time to learn a lesson about studying for quizzes and exams.

Students rehearsed from mid September to the end of November often juggling other activities and commitments. “It was such a joy to see students shine on the stage. Many students come out of their quiet shells to bring stories like this to life. Creative outlets like this are so important for middle schoolers’ development and growth. You never know what you are good at until you try!” - Erica Farrar

Thank you to the many parents and community members who came out to support students and cheer them on. We are beyond grateful for the donations made at the door for Wagner Drama Club’s Spring performance. Special thanks to Sarah Krummel and Connie Oliver for running concessions and to our custodial staff for helping set up for the show!



From left to right (outer circle): Charlotte Welch, Loire O’Roak, Madisyn Greenleaf, Jaxton Cole, Ellie Mae O’Roak, Riley Baron, Octavia Judkins, Aurelia Trombley, Finn Cottrell, Noah Quigley, Lucy Krummel, Evelyn Clark, Ryker-John Cole, Mason Worden, Gus Gustafson.
Center: Joshua Lane



From left to right (front): Joshua Lane, Charlotte Welch, Loire O’Roak, Madisyn Greenleaf, Riley Baron, Ryker-John Cole, Karter Richardson, Ellie Mae O’Roak, Aurelia Trombley, Astoria Weiskittel.
From left to right (back): Jaxton Cole, Lucy Krummel, Evelyn Clark

Grade 6 Students Create World Maps

Submitted by: Gregg Martin, Grade 6 Teacher

Wagner Middle School 6th grade students learned about the different elements of a map and the different types of maps during a social studies unit. Students used this knowledge to create a physical map of the world. This project allowed students to apply their knowledge of maps, as well as other major elements of geog-



raphy like latitude and longitude, etc. In their groups, students first created a map key or legend that would show the reader what everything means. Students then worked on tracing the outlines of the continents and col-



oring in their maps based on elevation. Once students finished up all of the continents, they glued them onto their “globe” and labeled major physical landforms throughout the world.

To finish their maps, they had to make sure they added the different elements of a map on their “globes”. The students really enjoyed the hands-on nature of the activity and being able to apply what they learned in class to the project.

8th Grade Tour of UTC

In November, Wagner Grade 8 students participated in the Open House at UTC. Students explored all the offerings and asked their questions along the way. Students were exposed to the varied job/career paths that do not always include a 4-year college. During this tour, they were exposed to automotive repair, diesel repair, culinary arts, nursing assistant, framing/house building, electrical, small engines and outdoor power, business management, etc. 19 in total. Wagner’s 8th graders represented our school very well!

New Staff at Samuel L. Wagner Middle School

Tom Leonard Special Education

Our newest special education teacher at Wagner Middle School is Tom Leonard. Tom returns to RSU 22 after working in the Bangor School Department for the past 5 years.

Tom brings to us a variety of experiences having held positions ranging from teaching English and Social Studies at the middle school level, serving as a principal at the K-8 level, and as a special education teacher at both the middle and high school levels, including two years at Hampden Academy.

Tom has seriously been a lifelong learner holding the following degrees: B.S. in Business Administration, M.A.T. in Education, C.A.S. in Literacy Education, C.A.S. in Educational Leadership, and M.S. in Special Education. Tom is currently working on a Master’s Degree in School Psychology at USM. Tom also hopes to earn a doctoral degree in the future.

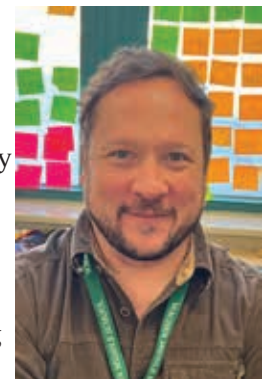


Tom grew up in the Rockland, Maine area. Tom is an advocate for people that struggle with substance abuse issues. Finally, while playing in a golf tournament with Matt Madore, Sam Manhart, and Chris Hink this past summer at Hermon Meadows golf course, he sank a hole-in-one on the 12th hole.

When discussing his return to RSU 22, he described it as feeling like he was coming home.

Michael King School Counselor

Michael King has worked with children in a variety of settings for almost two decades and has been a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) for the past 13 years. He has worked for multiple home and community based behavioral health companies as a direct care provider all the way up to a Clinical Director. Most recently he was the General Education Social Worker at Brewer High School before coming to Wagner Middle School to serve as the School Counselor. He also sees students in a clinical capacity on an as-needed basis for “in the moment” concerns around mental and behavioral health issues.



Michael graduated with his Bachelor’s Degree in Psychology and a Masters Degree in Clinical Social Work; both degrees are from the University of Maine, along with spending a year of graduate school at Hunter College in New York City. He lives in Brewer with his amazing two children; a boy and a girl ages 2 and 6 years. He enjoys playing music, cooking, and spending as much time as possible at his camp on Green Lake in Ellsworth.

Gifted and Talented Citizen Scientists

The group of middle schoolers, along with their teachers Mrs. Dawson and Mrs. Quigley, went to Camden State Park in search of invasive crabs. Mrs. Dawson reported that they found far, far many more green crabs than they did 12 months ago. The crabs were also larger than those found last year. At the same time, students found fewer and smaller native crabs. This told them that the green crabs are very successful in their invasion and shows how they are pushing out the native crabs.

The Wagner scientists also found many, tiny Asian shore crabs, a second invasive species which were not present last year. This told them that the Asian shore crabs are just beginning to reach this far north up the shore.

Students worked hard to collect the crabs and report their data.

The day required measured risk-taking, working collaboratively, attention to detail, problem-solving, self-reliance, planning, and TRUST. They were successful in all ways. Mrs. Dawson considered it an honor to be part of their journey in continuing to build these skills.



Winterport Wonderland Celebration



Samuel L. Wagner Middle School students working with Leroy H. Smith School students as they celebrate a longtime tradition called Winterport Wonderland. They worked together to make a penguin craft and enjoyed some great music by Wagner's choir. It was a wonderful time for sure!



HA Library Real World 2023

Submitted by: Reg Ruhlin

Connecting students in grade 9 with the world outside of school is the goal of a program in the Hampden Academy Library this winter. The program, called “HA Library Real World,” features a series of 30-minute presentations by HA students who are in the trades programs at United Technologies Center or in the Engineering program at Hampden Academy.



Librarian Leslie Rosenblatt designed the program to expose the younger students to high-interest, real-world careers and experiences. Students in study halls were invited to attend in the library.

While the 9th grade students benefit from these engaging presentations, the student presenters also gain from the experience of preparing for their sessions, learning to read the audience and make adjustments, and sharing their enthusiasm in front of a group. Instructors at UTC have been very supportive of the program by providing materials and advising the speakers. Hampden Academy teachers Todd Moore and Charlie Huff also provide assistance.

“Real World” presenters this winter were:

Olivia Chase, Medical Assisting. Olivia spoke with students about her studies and described her internship in a real doctors’ office. She taught the Grade 9 students how to take their blood pressures.

Lydia Hanish, Health Occupations. Lydia described her program and explained the certifications and credits she can earn - for free - at UTC. She then taught her audience how to take their own pulses.

Tristan Downer, Plumbing and Heating. Tristan spoke about his courses, passed around examples of piping and had the audience learn to strip wiring.

Anthony Parks, Automotive. Anthony presented a slideshow and talked about how much he is learning about electric vehicles which is a growing field.

Garrett Newey, Engineering at HA. Garrett did his presentation in the Engineering classroom, displaying his work with 3D printers to make remote control vehicles. A demonstration of a small working hovercraft really impressed the audience.

Garrett McLeod and Felicia Marin, Law Enforcement. Garrett and Felicia talked about their experiences in the UTC program. They demonstrated



fingerprinting and the use of handcuffs.



Keith Brooks, Trevor Marden, and Harrison Shain, Electrical. Keith, Trevor, and Harrison had the Grade 9 students practice wiring outlets. These are hands on real world skills!

The HA Library “Real World” series will continue in the spring semester.



Hampden Academy Performs “Addams Family: The Musical”



HA’s performance of The Addams Family Musical took place in November. More than 40 students participated in the cast and crew. The performances received rave reviews from three packed houses.

HA Senior Ryan Hafener Selected for the United States Senate Youth Program



L to R: Beth Lambert, Maine DOE; Ryan Hafener; Edie Smith, Sen Angus King's office

Senior Ryan Hafener, son of Eric and Trish Hafener of Hampden, was selected for the United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP). He will be attending USSYP's Washington Week in Washington, D.C. during the first week of March where he will meet with the Senate leaders and the Senate parliamentarian and historian; a justice of the Supreme Court, the President, officials from the Departments

of State and Defense and other executive agencies, a foreign ambassador to the U.S. and senior members of the media. He was also awarded a \$10,000 scholarship to any undergraduate institution of his choosing.

The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) provides a yearly opportunity for two students from each state, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity, to gain an in-depth view of the United States Senate and the federal government as well as a deeper understanding of the interrelationship of the legislative, judicial, and executive branches. The overall mission of the program is to help instill within each class of USSYP student delegates more profound knowledge of the American political process and a lifelong commitment to public service.

The selection process for this prestigious award is rigorous and competitive and began when teachers and principals nominated qualified students this past fall. Once nominated, students had to complete an application and write an essay on a significant issue they would like the U.S. Congress to consider.

Based on the quality of their essay, ten students were selected as finalists. Those 10 students came to The Margaret Chase Smith library in

Skowhegan where they were interviewed by a distinguished panel of judges including Chuck Mahaleris, Constituent Services Representative for Senator Susan Collins, and Ben Tucker, Regional Representative for Senator Angus S. King, Jr. Additionally, they were asked to write and deliver a four-minute senate simulation speech. At the end of the day, Ryan rose to the top and was selected as one of Maine's two delegates.

Growing Young Readers with a New Literacy Approach

(continued from page 3)

Comprehensive Training for Educators

These materials were purchased with ESSER-II funds (K-2) and professional development has been supported by Title IIA funds. Staff first met with BAR staff in June to get an overview of the new program and have continued to meet with literacy specialists from Being a Reader each month. They also have access to free online training through the program's Learning Portal. This allows them to further develop their expertise in implementing the curriculum.

The Path Ahead

In the Fall of 2024, Being a Reader will scale to reach all K-5 students in RSU 22 schools. Our educators are excited to nurture young readers through this holistic, research-backed approach. We look forward to seeing flourishing literacy skills in classrooms district-wide!





4 Ways Riverside Adult Education can help you achieve your goals!

Searching for the next step?
Our website is a great place to start.
www.orono-hampden-oldtown.maineadulted.org

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|  <p>Chat with an academic advisor</p> <p>We can help you find your next career move, make an education plan, or apply for college (and explore ways to fund it!)</p> |  <p>Finish high school for free</p> <p>We offer flexible pathways to a high school diploma, through individualized education plans, classes, tutoring, and the HiSET.</p> |  <p>Train for a new career</p> <p>Become a CNA (Certified Nurse Assistant), add on a CNA-M credential, or become a BHP (Behavioral Health Professional).</p> |  <p>Enrich your life</p> <p>Learn to paint, dance, do yoga, use technology, and more! We offer a robust catalog of community enrichment classes.</p> |
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For more information, please email Rebecca Cross at rcross@rsu26.org or call (207) 862-6422



2024 Best Public High Schools in Maine

Hampden Academy Ranked #11 Public High School in State of Maine

Niche.com recently released their 2024 rankings of K-12 schools across the country, and Hampden Academy is listed as the #11 best public high school in Maine and #2 in Penobscot County! Check out the complete rankings at www.niche.com/k12/search/best-public-high-schools/s/maine/

Hampden Academy Has Two New National Board Certified Teachers



Two HA teachers recently earned National Board Certification: Emily Albee, Social Studies; and Bryan Campbell, Special Education.

National Board Certification is a rigorous, multi-year process and one of the most highly respected accomplishments in teaching. The process requires successful completion of four components of teaching that demonstrate mastery in: Content knowledge (computer-based assessment); Differentiation in instruction (portfolio); Teaching practice and learning environment (portfolio); Effective and reflective practitioner (portfolio).

Congratulations Emily and Bryan!



New Staff at Hampden Academy

Brooke Bolduc Math Teacher

Brooke Bolduc is in her first year teaching mathematics and has spent the majority of her life devoted to education. She graduated from the Maine School of Science and Mathematics in 2018, the University of Maine Orono in 2023 and has taught STEM camps with Maine Robotics over the past two summers.



Her favorite part about teaching high school mathematics is learning from her students and showing them that learning math is like becoming fluent in a fun language!

Nancy Desjardin Health Teacher

Nancy DesJardin brings a world of experience to her students at Hampden Academy. Having served in the U.S. Army, she is a veteran of the Desert Storm conflict and has successfully owned and operated her own business in the local community for a number of years.

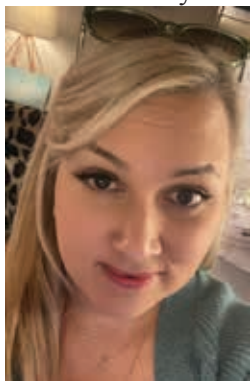


She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Anthropology and Peace & Reconciliation studies from the University of Maine while also earning the Outstanding Graduating Student award for her department in 2022, and she continues to pursue higher education. Nancy resides with her husband David and their puppy Brady in Winterport.

Nancy teaches Health and Food Sciences at Hampden Academy and loves getting to know her students and watching them succeed.

Michelle Ksuniak Alternative Education Teacher

Michelle Ksuniak has over 15 years experience working in Social Services through Community Health and Counseling Services and has newly transitioned into education as Hampden Academy's Alternative Education Teacher.



She is currently enrolled in the B.S. in Secondary Education program through the University of Maine and lives with her teenage son in Old Town. In her spare time she enjoys spending time with her children, reading, making crafts, and baking.

She is excited to create a classroom community where your child feels welcomed, safe and excited to learn!

Charla Lowell School Counselor

Charla Lowell brings with her over 20 years of experience as a school counselor with over 15 years at the high school level. She comes to Hampden Academy after working at Wagner Middle School within RSU 22.

She is very excited to return to the high school level and even more excited to be reunited with her stu-

dents from Wagner. She has a passion for career development and post secondary exploration.



Charla lives in Hampden with her husband, daughter, and their dog Tug. She enjoys watching sports, traveling, and reading.

Molly Priest Choral Teacher

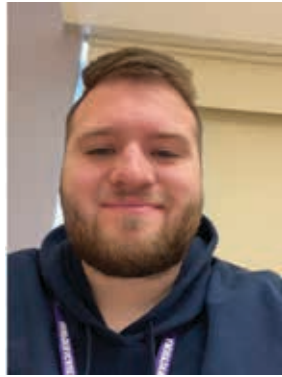
Molly Priest is our new Choral teacher at Hampden Academy where she teaches Concert Choir, Treble Choir, Chamber Singers, Beginning Guitar, and Music Theory. Molly directed the last fall musical and directs HA's show choir Voices Unlimited. She is also an advisor to the Tri-M Music Honor Society.



Prior to this year, Molly worked in RSU22 and SAD1. When she isn't at school or in a rehearsal, she enjoys spending her time with her family including her 2.5 year old daughter and 7 month old son.

CJ Upham Naval NNDCC Instructor/Guided Study Hall Teacher

CJ Upham is entering his first year of teaching at Hampden Academy as the Naval NNDCC instructor as well as an assistant coach for the football team.



Last May, he graduated from the University of Maine with a Bachelor's Degree in kinesiology with a focus in teaching and coaching. As a former student here at Hampden Academy, he is excited to return and give back to his community.

Richard Dudley Special Education Teacher

Richard Dudley has been a Special Education Teacher for the last twenty-two years and the last twenty years have been spent within RSU 22. This is the first year within special education that he has been at the high school level. He enjoys working at Hampden Academy as the STAR Program Case-Manager and previously had been a special education teacher at Wagner.



Richard lives with his wife in Winterport and enjoys gardening, cutting wood, and hanging out with and walking his dog tremendously!

Jarrett Bean Science Teacher

Jarrett Bean teaches Earth Science and Chemistry and graduated from Husson University with a B.S. in Secondary Education (Physical Science).



School Oral Health Program in RSU 22

(continued from page 1)

Wagner. We are so happy to be working with community partners in providing needed oral health care.



Genevieve Marier, RN (Weatherbee School Nurse) and Dana-Jo Smith (Weatherbee Health Aide)

Safety Protocols

By: Brittany Layman
Director of Wellness

Safety continues to be a top priority in RSU 22. Our dedicated staff work hard to provide a very safe learning environment for our students. We do this with a variety of initiatives but most importantly, we are working to create a culture of belonging where all students can grow and thrive. We also use a variety of safety procedures including the use of a standard response protocol. If you have any questions regarding safety measures in our schools please reach out to your child's building principal.

IN AN EMERGENCY TAKE ACTION

| | |
|---|--|
| | HOLD! In your room or area. Clear the halls. |
| OCCUPANTS Clear the hallways and remain in room or area until the "All Clear" is announced. Do business as usual. | STAFF Close and lock door. Account for occupants and staff. Do business as usual. |
| | SECURE! Get inside. Lock outside doors. |
| OCCUPANTS Return inside. Do business as usual. | STAFF Bring everyone indoors. Lock outside doors. Increase situational awareness. Account for occupants and staff. Do business as usual. |
| | LOCKDOWN! Locks, lights, out of sight. |
| OCCUPANTS Move away from sight. Maintain silence. Do not open the door. Prepare to evade or defend. | STAFF Lock interior doors. Turn out the lights. Move away from sight. Do not open the door. Maintain silence. Account for occupants and staff. Prepare to evade or defend. |
| | EVACUATE! (A location may be specified) |
| OCCUPANTS Evacuate to specified location. Bring your phone. Instructions may be provided about returning or leaving belongings. | STAFF Lead evacuation to specified location. Account for occupants and staff. Notify if missing, sick or injured people. |
| | SHELTER! Hazard and safety strategy. |
| OCCUPANTS Use appropriate safety strategy for the hazard. | STAFF Lead safety strategy. Account for occupants and staff. Notify if missing, sick or injured people. |
| Hazard Tornado Hurricane Earthquake Tsunami | Safety Strategy Evacuate to shelter area Seal the room Drop, cover and hold Get to high ground |

He lives in the greater Bangor area and enjoys the outdoors, coaching, and refereeing basketball.

His favorite part about teaching at Hampden Academy is the school spirit and working with teenagers.