

RSU 54/MSAD 54
Educational Policy/Program Committee
MINUTES
June 1, 2021
6:00 PM
Skowhegan Area Middle School –Cafeteria

Committee: Amy Rouse – Vice Chair, Goff French, Christy Johnson, Desiree Libby, Lynda Quinn

Also Present: Mark Hatch, Jon Moody, Jean Pillsbury, Bruce Mochamer, Antoine Morin

1. Presentation by Jean Pillsbury/Bloomfield Elementary Principal

Mrs. Pillsbury shared an overview of PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports) implementation at Bloomfield Elementary School. This program is an approach to addressing student behavior that focuses on prevention and aligns with the trauma informed practices the district has been using. PBIS uses school data to track the types of behavior that students are having and what the situation was when the behavior occurred. At BES the use of the program has helped the staff and students develop a common language around appropriate behavior in different areas of the school and how to reinforce positive behaviors and address any issues. Through a collaboration with the University of Southern Maine, BES has worked with a coach to support their work and the school has seen a decrease in problematic behaviors by students.

2. Presentation by Bruce Mochamer & Antoine Morin Skowhegan Area High School

Mr. Morin shared an overview of Esports, which has been piloted at Skowhegan Area High School this year. In their presentation, Mr. Morin and Mr. Mochamer share that Esports is a new option for students and had been approved by the Maine Principals Association (MPA) for high schools across the state. The MPA Esports program is a non-violent online gaming platform that allows students to compete collaboratively against teams from other schools. This new opportunity for students is available across the country and is an option at many colleges and universities. The data that is coming out of the state is

showing that this option is engaging students who have not been involved in extracurricular activities before. The initial startup costs will be funded as part of the federal COVID-19 funds to engage students in school including co-curricular activities like this.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board support the adoption of Esports club at Skowhegan Area High School, to be funded by ESSERF Federal funds.

3. Update by Mark Hatch, Assistant Superintendent

Mark Hatch updated the committee on state testing. This year the Maine State Assessments are new: NWEA Test for Mathematics and Language Arts, and the New Meridien test for Science. Both tests use a digital platform. The change in test along with the situation with COVID-19 have led the state to apply for a waiver for accountability procedures from the federal government. This is expected to be approved.

The district is working with our local mental health partners to expand the social emotional and mental health support in our schools as a result of COVID-19. The federal funds will support this expansion of services to our students.

The district has continued its work to ensure that all students come to school feeling safe, welcome and respected for who they are in MSAD 54. Schools have continued with activities to support this effort including the district's expanded focus on trauma informed practices PreK through grade 12. Mr. Hatch shared that the advisors of our civil rights teams have worked to on a plan for developing a curriculum/common focus on diversity and inclusion. A group of staff representing grade levels and schools will work next year to develop themes and topics for students based on best practice recommendations from the State.