**RSU #16 School Board**

**Administrative Report**

**Shawn Vincent**

**Principal, Bruce M. Whittier Middle School**

**December 4, 2023**

**Staff**

* We are pleased to add ed tech Zoe Covert to the Whittier staff. When teacher Kim Caron moved to Central Office, we had to shift the roles of a couple of staff members, and we were left short-handed. Zoe showed strong initiative and positive collaboration skills during her first week with us.

**Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment**

* Families were invited in for Student Led Conferences during the week of November 13th. Participation was about 85%. Families were offered Zoom conferences if they were not able to attend in person. Trimester 1 ended on November 22nd, and report cards went home on Friday, December 1st. With the end of the trimester, students rotated unified arts classes.
* Daily attendance continues to be strong. In grade 7, 96.2% of students are attending daily. In grade 8, we are at 94.52%. Cumulatively, our students are at 95.31%. We continue to work with families of students who are struggling with chronic absenteeism (about 13% of our student population).
* Our Excel program is up and running on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Thursdays. Excel is an after school program for students to complete their work and get extra help from teachers. We have two staff members scheduled for each day.
* Grade 8 Wellness students will soon begin a unit called “Best Practices in STD/HIV and Pregnancy Prevention”, with the main emphasis on abstinence. The curriculum was co-authored by Maine Family Planning and the Maine Department of Education. This curriculum has been used in hundreds of classes across Maine to teach teens about healthy sexuality. This unit contains a variety of interactive methods that give teens the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to make sexually responsible decisions. The unit will focus on helping each student gain the knowledge and communication skills to prevent pregnancy and the transmission of STIs and HIV/AIDS. Abstinence will be given as the safest and 100% most effective choice for the student, but accurate information about other protection methods will also be provided. There will also be lessons on “red flags” of unhealthy relationships, as well as the importance of consent in sexual situations. Parents have been notified through our newsletter and may opt their children out of the lessons.

**Events**

* Our first band and chorus concert of the year will take place Wednesday, December 13th at 7:00pm. All are welcome. The students have been working hard, and we expect another great show.
* The school spelling bee will take place on December 14th. Our champion and runner-up will represent Whittier at the Androscoggin County Bee.