

**RSU #16 School Board
Administrative Report
Shawn Vincent
Principal, Bruce M. Whittier Middle School
February 5, 2024**

Staff

- February 5th-9th is National School Counselor Week, and I would like to take this opportunity to recognize Whittier Middle School's counselors Julie Martin and Martha Stone and social workers Kathryn Jones and Michelle Pittman. We are very fortunate to have such a talented and collaborative group to support our students.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

- Students are deep into their National History Day projects. They were able to select the topic of their choice based on the theme *Turning Points in History*. As you may expect, we have projects ranging from Eminem to the Berlin Wall. Students are working to develop key research skills that will benefit them in high school and beyond. Projects will be on display at our Open House event on Monday, February 12th. All students will be interviewed about their research and projects on Tuesday, February 13th. Last year, two Whittier students took their project to National History Day in Washington, D.C.
- Daily attendance has taken a hit with the illnesses going around. In grade 7, 94.65% of students are attending daily (down nearly 2% from the December report). In grade 8, we are at 93.04% (down nearly 1.5%). Cumulatively, our students are at 93.89%. Dean of Students Kelly Adams is in regular communication with our counselors and students' families in an effort to support attendance.
- We received our 2023 Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey results report, and there were a number of interesting and positive pieces of data. For the question, "Have you ever used an electronic vapor product?" Maine students self-reported "yes" at 11.4%. Whittier students reported "yes" at 3%. For the question, "Have you ever had a drink of alcohol, other than a few sips?" Maine students self-reported "yes" at 15.6%. Whittier students reported "yes" at 6.9%. While we would like to see 0% for these questions, the responses seem in line with our observations and experience. The report included 49 questions, and 214 Whittier students participated in the survey. In reviewing the survey, we discussed plans for Roundtable conversations, sharing with staff, and areas where we feel we can have an impact such as helping students feel safe at school. Maine students reported 79.2% feel safe at school. Whittier students reported 84.5% feel safe, but we believe we can do more to improve that number.

Events

- Middle school basketball has come to a close. We are grateful to our coaches for providing a positive experience for our players. Indoor track starts next week; we are very pleased to have Dan Roy serving as head coach.
- Whittier Middle School is hosting the Androscoggin County Spelling Bee again this year. The event takes place February 7 at 6:00pm.