

**RSU #16 School Board
Administrative Report
Shawn Vincent
Principal, Bruce M. Whittier Middle School
February 1, 2021**

Staff

- Middle School Dean Sam Chatto is doing an excellent job leading the VL5 program at Whittier. He provides regular communication with families, students, and teachers and has been a very creative problem-solver. This week, he is scheduling meetings with each of the VL5 students to get feedback on the first semester and to help students prepare for the second semester.

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

- The students' work on their National History Day Projects is well underway. Students have selected topics and their research notes are due this week. Students will be assessed on their notes before starting to put their projects together. All projects are due on March 12th. The plan is for projects to be displayed virtually on March 15th. We are still seeking judges to help with our virtual Whittier History Day. If you are interested or know someone who may want to help, please email Logan Landry (llandry@rsu16.org).
- We currently have 52 students on our attendance tracker for attending less than 90% of school days. The attendance includes in-person days and remote learning days. We use the tracker to document interventions such as meetings with the students, meetings and phone calls with parents, days in quarantine, and truancy letters. Students can be marked present on remote days by logging into a morning Zoom with their Roundtable teacher or signing into a Google form. Overall, daily attendance remains just over 90%. This is about 6% less than last year.
- All middle school students are participating in the Suicide Prevention Program Middle School Lesson. This developmentally appropriate lesson focuses on the importance of having strong mental and emotional health. Students will:
 - understand depression and the effects of trauma on the brain
 - understand the importance of having good mental health for overall wellness
 - learn how to help a friend they may be worried about

We will encourage the children to discuss the lesson with their parents and share insights and coping devices that work for both adults and students or youth. School Counselor Bonnie Robbins and Wellness Teacher Kim Yorkey provide the instruction. Both have been trained in the curriculum.

Events

- Whittier Middle School Spelling Bee Results: Eighth grader Niko Theriault went the distance without making any spelling errors, and Connor Neal survived a very talented group of challengers to finish as runner-up. Both will have the opportunity to represent Whittier at the Androscoggin County Bee, likely on Zoom in February.
- Whittier students, led by the Student Council, raised over \$700 for the Cancer Resource Center of Western Maine. Executive Director Diane Madden did a video interview for the students to explain that funds will be used to take care of the needs of people struggling with cancer in areas nearby.