

Poland Regional High School
School Board Report
February 2021

Staff Updates

Allison Curtsinger, an ed tech 3 in our learning center and part-time science teacher, has resigned to take a teaching position. The Learning Center is an essential component to our Plus 1 program that brings some students back into the building for an additional day of school. The staffing shortage that Allison's resignation brings will make our intervention system challenging. We will post to replace her, but will also be making other changes in our schedule to make sure that the students who need extra help get it.

Teaching and Learning

We are beginning to think about next year and what it might look like. While we certainly can't predict the future these days, we have to make some scheduling decisions in the coming month to be able to build a master schedule to meet student needs. One essential question we need to answer is whether or not to continue with the 4x4 schedule we implemented this year in response to all of the challenges we faced on opening school under COVID restrictions. To review, we typically have an 8-block schedule over two days, one day designated "Blue" for blocks 1-4 and on designated "Silver" for blocks 5-8. This year, to reduce the workload for students and teachers and to make it easier to keep track of academic work, we only ran 4 blocks of classes each semester, with blocks 1-4 in our fall "Blue Semester," and blocks 5-8 in our spring "Silver Semester." It has not been a seamless shift, because we forced a schedule built around Blue/Silver parameters into an entirely different structure. An example: some students had all of their electives (phys ed, art, music) in one semester and all of the core academic classes in the other (math, science, ELA, social studies). The question before us is whether or not to continue with the 4x4, especially with all of the unknowns about what the fall will look like for schools. All of the high schools in Androscoggin county implemented the 4x4 schedule to ensure that all of our students could participate in LRTC. We have begun meeting again as a group to determine our path forward. Faculty and students have been surveyed, and the guidance department has developed a list of issues to consider. After considering all of the feedback and discussing this with other principals in the county, we will likely make a decision by the beginning of March.

Facilities & Safety

Our new lights are fantastic!

Events/Activities

We have begun preliminary discussions about graduation and what options may be available. A senior class meeting was held this week, and I will meet with the Project Graduation Committee next week. We have invited PRHS Class of 2003 graduate Lindsay Lehr to be the graduation speaker.

We are planning a COVID style Winter Carnival for March to keep some of our traditions alive for the students. This is one that is very important to students, and faculty feel an obligation to make it happen in some form or another.