

May 13, 2022

Dear Staff, Communities and Families of RSU 16,

### BUDGET UPDATE

On April 11, the School Board approved the proposed 2022-2023 RSU 16 Budget. Next, the proposed budget moves to the District Budget Meeting for further discussion and a vote on May 17, 2022 at the PRHS auditorium. All residents are invited to attend the May 17 District Budget Meeting at 6:30PM. The District Budget Meeting is a wonderful opportunity to see how the budget process was completed and get any budget questions answered so registered voters can cast an informed school budget vote. From there, the proposed budget then goes to a budget validation referendum vote at each town office on June 14, 2022.

### WATER TESTING RESULTS

We have received water testing results for Minot Consolidated School and Elm Street School. Water was tested to ensure water quality is within the threshold of healthy and safe for our students, staff, and community. This process is a cycle and is planned in advance due to the size and quantity of water access points in our facilities.

Upon review of the water sample test(s) results that have come in, we have levels of lead that are too high in some areas. As a result, we have stopped access to those spots because levels exceeded state and/or federal thresholds. These locations require further review and mitigation. Until we know the cause and can remediate, to ensure the water quality is fit for consumption, we will not use it. At this time, this includes some spots at Minot Consolidated School and Elm Street School. In the meantime, all staff and students are instructed to utilize the bottle fill stations/fountains at all RSU 16 Schools. These stations dispense water that is free of lead.

Bottle fill station/fountains

Poland Community School has 5 bottle fill stations/fountains

Elm Street School has 4 bottle fill station/fountains

Minot Consolidated School has 3 bottle fill station/fountains

Poland Regional High School and Whittier Middle School have 7 bottle fill station/fountains.

There are multiple factors to consider as we mitigate the cause of samples not meeting the threshold.

Here is a shortlist of what we look for and what will happen next:

The sample comes back with levels outside the acceptable range. We stop access and begin to mitigate.

Since faucets, water fountains, or other fixtures manufactured prior to 2014 contain lead, we will be replacing most of the fixtures in the schools.

Once this work is completed, another round of water testing will be done.

We do not have any test results that prompt whole school mitigation. These test results are spot specific like a sink, a water fountain, shower, etc. This is not a whole school problem for any of our facilities.

Test results can be found on the RSU 16 webpage: click Departments, click Facilities Operations, click Public Announcements: Lead in Drinking Water

We will provide updates on the remediation effort and the water sample results at PCS, WMS & PRHS.

If you have any questions, please contact Director of Operations Craig Worth.

## DISTRICT HIGHLIGHTS

**Poland Regional High School:** Our two day Celebration of Learning went very well. After two years of missing this, it was great to see families in the building to watch their students share their work. All of our students did a great job with grading and view presentations as well as completing remote work when they were out of the building. One more sign of normal!

Our first full musical in two years, Zombie Prom was a hit! Congratulations to all of the students who participated and a special thank you to D'Arcy Robinson, Patrick Martin, Ben Poulin and Elaine Fryda for all of their hard work to make it happen.

**Whittier Middle School:** We are proud to announce that several Bruce M. Whittier Middle School students were recognized during last Thursday's Maine National History Day virtual awards ceremony.

- \* Jenna Caron won 1st place for Individual Exhibit.
- \* Caelea Theriault & Irelyn Smith won 2nd place for Group Website.
- \* Boden Jones & David Crump won 3rd place for Group Website.

Students earning first and second place have the opportunity to compete in the virtual national competition. Students earning third place may serve as alternates. Congratulations to all students who took the additional step in competing at the state level.

### **Elm Street School:**

\*Fifth and Sixth grade students have been working with our Gate teacher, Mrs. Welch to organize a "Caffeinated Wildcats" coffee business to provide educators with special drinks every Monday. The students have created business cards, flyers, a website and they use a digital form to collect orders each week. It's a special treat for our teachers!

\*Second graders celebrated their poetry writing skills by inviting 3rd graders to visit our classroom to read/hear poems we published using Book Creator! Each 2nd grade poet was proud to share their work as they have been working hard on many strategies that poets use such as: seeing ordinary things in new ways with their "poet's eyes;" choosing honest and precise words while paying attention to line breaks, patterns, and repetition of words; and choosing different structures to strengthen meaning. So much to celebrate!

\*Our Wildcats absolutely loved our special concert with the high school band and chorus that was organized by Senior, Anna Brettler as part of her Senior Celebration. The students sang, clapped, and were so engaged throughout the entire presentation.

\*Our third grade students hosted a living wax museum for our students and their families. The students have been learning about adults who have made an impact in our world through their non-fiction unit. The students were able to select a historical figure and they completed research on their accomplishments. During the wax museum, staff, students and families were able to interview the students to learn more about the individual they selected.

### **Minot Consolidated School:**

\*Staff and students at MCS were overjoyed to host the PRHS band and chorus students this past month! It was the first in person assembly in over 2 years! The high school students performed beautifully and the elementary students absolutely loved the show!

\*Our students have been busy in our school garden. A big thank you to all who have contributed to our garden. Special thank you to JM Morin for their soil donation and to Rosanna Goss for her leadership with this project!

\*Sixth grade student, Blake Brown, competed at the local level in the Optimist Oratorical speech contest in February. After placing 2nd, he had the opportunity to compete in the regional competition in New York last weekend. Congratulations to Blake who came in 2nd place at the regional competition, and won a \$1500 scholarship for college!

### **Poland Community School:**

Students in second grade participated in the educational program Weather At Your School. Meteorologist Ted McInerney broadcasted his morning report at PCS and then taught a morning lesson on the weather. PCS students and staff loved their fifteen minutes of fame!

In celebration of Earth Day, which took place on April 22 (over the break), students on the PCS Green Team, *Planet Green*, shared their goals as well as plans for a week-long PCS Earth Day celebration when students returned after the break. The team presented a slideshow at the Panther Pride assembly which highlighted the Earth-connected themes for each day of the final week of April.

PCS students and staff enjoyed their first concert since 2020. PRHS band and choral students performed. Thank you to Anna Brettler for coordinating the event as part of her Senior Celebration. I would like to express gratitude to Ms. Edwards, Mr. Williams, and the students who performed for their part in this joyous celebration!

### Monitoring Symptoms and Sickness

Monitor your/your student's health and stay home when you/they feel sick. Use the [pre-screening screening tool](#) every morning. Monitor for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 which can include: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, fatigue, muscle or body aches, headache, new loss of taste or smell, sore throat, congestion or runny nose, nausea or vomiting, diarrhea. Stay home if you are sick.

In the event that you/your student becomes symptomatic during the school day, to access free rapid antigen testing in their school nurse's office will require that they have a signed consent to test on file. If you/your child participated in our pooled testing program, we have that consent on file and it is good for the remainder of the school year. If you would like to give consent contact the school office to request the Consent to Test form.

### Reporting Positive Cases After Hours, Weekends, Vacations

When reporting a positive case after hours, weekends and vacations, please [use this form](#). The form will also be located on our website, [www.rsu16.org](http://www.rsu16.org)

### Free COVID test kits are available:

In any school office during school hours or at Central Office (open 7:30AM - 4:30PM daily).

If you are a Driveline family, test kits will be available curbside during **morning** Driveline on the following days: Minot Consolidated School May 16, Poland Community School May 19, Elm Street School May 20.

An evening curbside option is available on May 17 from 5:30 - 6:30 at PRHS. Please consider picking up your at-home kits then participating in the District Budget Meeting held at Poland Regional High School auditorium at 6:30PM on May 17.

Sincerely,

Ken and Amy