



Friday, March 11, 2022

Dear Lamoille North Families and Staff,

It is actually beginning to feel like spring and we are seeing later sunsets and mostly warmer temperatures! Please remember to turn your clocks ahead by one hour this weekend as it is daylight savings time.



In exciting school news, Hyde Park Elementary School (HPES) raised funds to support the Lamoille Area Cancer Network, as they have been doing for the past five years, and this year's Read-A-Thon proceeds will go directly to Lamoille County Cancer Network. HPES raised \$4,424.00 and read 26,497 minutes, which translates to 442 hours or 19 days! Students will celebrate their reading efforts with a Mud Run later in May and we thank all of the students and staff at HPES for giving to our community.

Also in school news, as you are aware, The Drum Daddies came to LNSU schools on March 9th and 10th and our youth were able to participate in free hand-drumming and percussion workshops with the band. The band makes "community magic by infusing the children (and adults) with a message of hope and love through music". Here is the link to a quick video from a workshop session at Cambridge Elementary School, <https://youtu.be/yrCT3qFXJXs>.

Tim Messier, Athletic Director for Lamoille Union, shares an exciting winter sports wrap-up with the following:



"Congratulations to all of our Nordic Skiers, Alpine Skiers, Dancers and Basketball players here at Lamoille Union (LU) as well as our Indoor Track athletes. Additionally, I would like to offer my kudos to a gymnast, Boys' Hockey skater and a wrestler, who superbly represented LU as independents at CVU, MMU and MMU respectively. We are patiently awaiting additional post-season recognition for our basketball players as well. I am also proud to share that LU athletes earned State Championships in Gymnastics and Indoor Track. Additionally, our student athletes gained State Runner's Up status in both Nordic Skiing and Dance. Student athletes also qualified for participation in New England Championships in Indoor Track, Alpine Skiing, Nordic Skiing and Dance.

As the High School Athletic Director, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the student athletes and coaches for their collective efforts during the recently completed Winter Sports season. I would also like to share my utmost appreciation for the incredible community support for LU's co-curricular activities. Despite the ever-changing landscape of the pandemic and the occasional weather impacts, the Blue and Gold faithful were on full display at all of our events, both home and away".

As promised, the Community Advisory Group has compiled information from the family survey that was sent to all several weeks ago. We received 273 responses districtwide and have organized information from the surveys into patterns of things that are seen as special about our schools; patterns of things that are seen as areas/opportunities for growth or improvement; and ideas that could address the opportunities for improvement.

Many of these opportunities for improvement have relatively easy “fixes”. As a result of the survey, one thing we are doing is creating a district Facebook page that incorporates district happenings and school happenings. It could also be an easy way to announce weather delays, emergencies, and exciting community events. We could also publish more information about curriculum, show educational videos, aspirational videos, etc. This would serve to reach more of our non-school community members, satisfy the request for different kinds of communication and in a different venue. Stay tuned for other suggestions from the survey we are putting forth to our schools.

 FAMILY SURVEY RESULTS	
WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT OUR SCHOOLS?	OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
Strong Relationships	Using Varied Communication Methods (Social Media, Front Porch Forum)
Amazing Educators	Adding Additional Family Engagement Opportunities
Pride in Schools and Communities	Communicating about Positive Happenings in Our School Communities
Welcoming Facilities and Staff	Creating Additional Academic Offerings
Good Overall Communication	Sharing Information in a Timely Manner
Availability and Responsiveness of Staff	Creating Community Service Opportunities/Requirements for Students
Feelings of Safety in Schools	Providing Information and Opportunities for Discussion around Grading and Curriculum

On a completely different topic, we are awaiting new guidance from the Vermont Department of Health (VTDOH) on the school’s role in contact tracing as we move forward. As we are already aware, recent announcements at the Federal and State level have identified how lower COVID-19 case counts and trends, and a lower level of strain on the healthcare system, have put Vermont schools in a position to transition to an endemic approach regarding management and mitigation of COVID-19. Last week, Vermont Secretary of Education, Dan French, announced that as of Monday, March 14, 2022, guidance on COVID-19 specific to schools will be lifted, with schools operating under the same general guidance offered to all through the VTDOH. With this change, all school-specific COVID-19 guidance, which included everything from masking to processes for schools, will be removed. We have not yet received written guidance around the school’s responsibility to notify families of potential COVID-19 exposure, so we will continue to notify families by email until such time that we are given different guidance.

COVID-19 TESTING THROUGH SCHOOLS

- We will continue to provide antigen home test kits to students/staff who may need them for testing post-exposure or for symptomatic students/staff, as long as the State continues to provide these supplies.
- We will continue to make available for staff (one test kit/staff weekly) home antigen tests kits in accordance with the staff assurance testing program while supplies continue to come from the State.
- The Vermont Agency of Education (VTAOE) has indicated that COVID-19 testing programs (response testing and staff assurance testing) will be phased out at some point in favor of students and staff accessing the same testing programs provided to all Vermonters. We will apprise you as we learn of any new developments.

OTHER SAFETY PROTOCOLS

- With the removal of all school-specific COVID-19 guidance, there are no longer any specific restrictions upon activities such as singing, playing instruments, physical education instruction, etc.
- We expect all staff and students to continue to stay home with any COVID-19 related symptoms.

Lamoille North will continue to work with community partners, including those in the medical community, to monitor any new public health concerns that may require us to change our current COVID-19 management. We will continue to collect data regarding COVID-19 cases infectious while in school, as well as how student and staff attendance is impacted by COVID-19. Lamoille North administrators and school nurses are here to support everyone through any changes. Please reach out if you have any questions or particular concerns you would like to discuss.

As always, thank you for your collaboration and communication. Have a wonderful weekend!

My best to you,

Catherine Gallagher, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
Lamoille North Supervisory Union