

RSU5 COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

To inspire and support every learner by challenging minds, building character, sparking creativity, and nurturing passions.

Happenings in RSU5

By Dr. Becky Foley, Superintendent

Happy end of the year to each of you. Spring has been late arriving, but that is helpful in keeping our students focused on learning. As the end of the year approaches, we have so much to celebrate from this year. Here are a few of the highlights:

- The Strategic Planning Advisory Committee has met regularly throughout the year. We will be presenting our draft goals to the Board on June 12. The major areas of focus for our newly adopted mission and vision will be climate/culture, teaching and learning, school/community relations, and finance and operations. The more detailed plan will be written once the Board has a chance to provide feedback. We invite you to come to the Board meeting to hear more about this important work that will guide us for the next five years!
- Our Sustainability Advisory Committee is up and running and has met twice. We have lots of ideas of how to strengthen sustainability practices throughout the District, while providing opportunities for more environmental learning. We're excited to have two student reps on the committee, providing lots of ideas and enthusiasm to the group!
- Our turf and field is pretty much complete with this year's additions of the snack shack and a newly installed PA system in the press box. This fall we saw record numbers in attendance at our games, strengthening the sense of community throughout RSU 5. A big thank you to Zachau Construction who donated the materials and labor for the snack shack!

2018-2019 Board Goals

CONTINUED IMPLEMENTATION OF PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING PREK-12

IMPROVED TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR EFFECTIVENESS

CREATION OF A LONG TERM DISTRICT STRATEGIC PLAN

INCORPORATE ENGAGEMENT WITH STAKEHOLDERS



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Wellness Committee We Need You!

The Wellness Committee is tasked with updating and evaluating the effectiveness of [RSU5's Wellness Policy](#), and it needs your help this fall. The committee seeks input from parents, students, staff and community members in its effort to outline the ways the district is excelling in its wellness initiatives and identify areas that need attention. If you are interested in being involved in this important work during the coming school year, please contact committee co-chair Erin Dow at dowe@rsu5.org.

- The Drop Out Prevention Committee is working diligently to reduce the number of students not completing high school in four years. This has included creating a mentor program facilitated by Dede Bennell and Peter Wagner that links community members with students who would benefit from a connection with an adult mentor. If you are interested in being a mentor, please contact Dede Bennell @ bennelld@rsu5.org

What I celebrate the most this year is the continued high level of teaching and learning that I see throughout the District from staff and students. As I visit classrooms throughout the District, I see programming at all levels that are evidence of student engagement, student discourse, and experiential learning. I have been to concerts and plays that show we have many budding musicians and thespians. This occurs because of the dedicated staff and community members supporting our students on a daily basis.

Thanks for all that you have done to support your children and RSU 5 this year. When parents, community, and District come together toward a common goal, we strengthen the education that we provide to all students in RSU 5.

Reminder to Vote on June 11, 2019!!

Please take a few minutes on June 11 to vote on the 2019-2020 school budget. Voting will take place in each town.

Durham - Durham Community School 8am-8pm

Freeport - Freeport High School 7am-8pm

Pownal - Pownal Town Hall 8am-8pm

Business Office Updates

By Michelle Lickteig, Director of Finance and Human Resources

Our Board approved budget passed at the Annual Budget Meeting on May 22, 2019 at Freeport High School.

Included in this budget are the following:

- To maintain class size: a sixth grade teacher will be added to Durham Community School, a first grade and a Pre- K teacher will be added to Morse Street School, and a half time language teacher and a part time science teacher will be added at Freeport High School.
- To increase student support for behavioral issues: a full time Educational Technician will be added at both Mast Landing and Morse Street Schools and a part time Educational Technician will be added at Pownal Elementary School.
- To increase nursing services: a .3 nursing position will be added to Freeport Middle School, ensuring equity across the District.
- To provide alternative pathways for our high school students: a full time Endeavor teacher will be added at Freeport High School.

- To ensure adequate transportation: an additional van, van driver and bus aide will be added to the transportation budget.

These changes increase our budget over last year by \$1,134,271 or 3.43%. Our state subsidy increased from last year by \$285,743. The referendum vote will be June 11, 2019, and we encourage all of our community members to vote.

Curriculum Updates

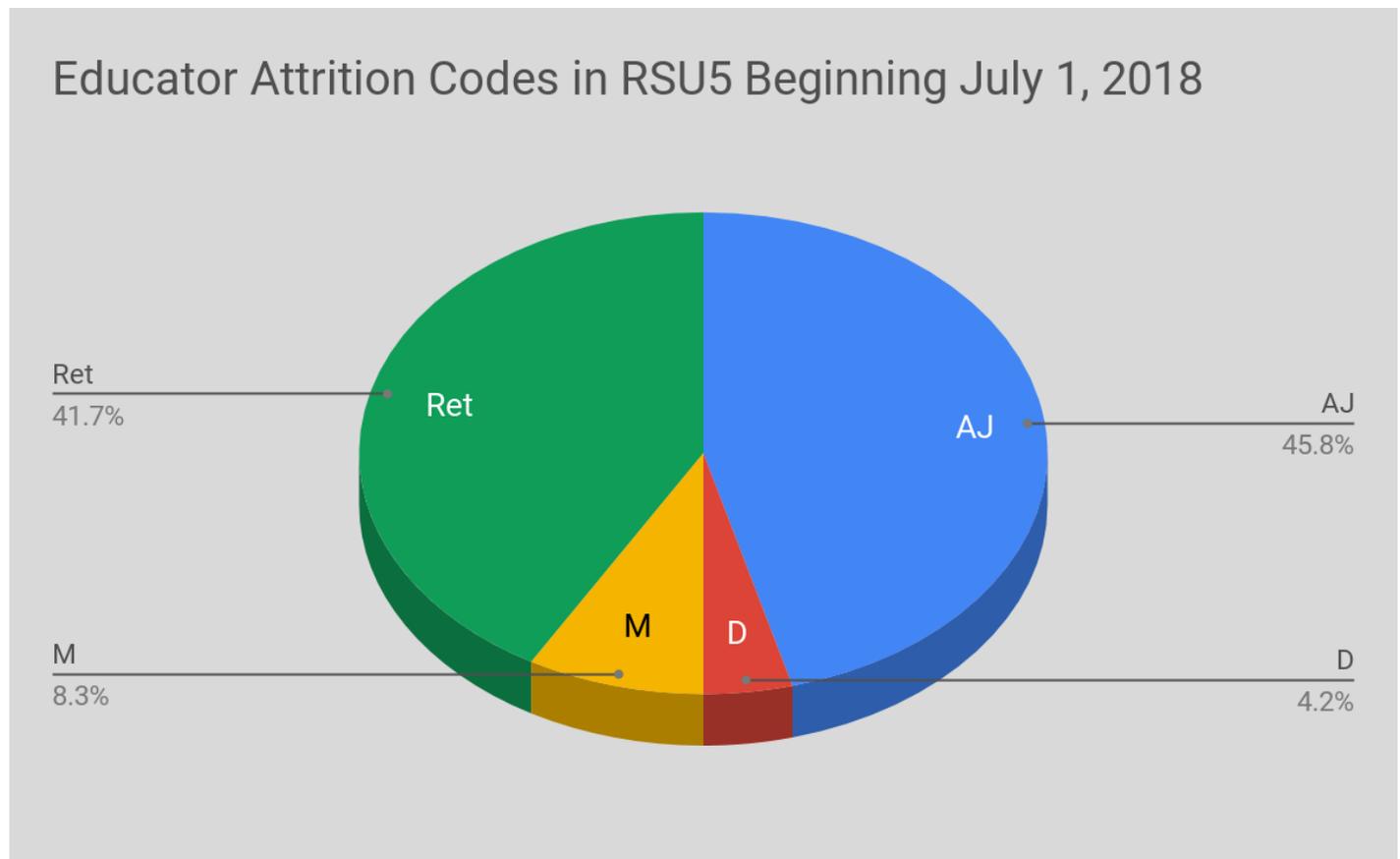
By Cynthia Alexander, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment

Staff Retention

In February I reported that one of the Board’s strategic objectives is to improve teacher and administrator effectiveness. In addition to developing a mentor program, another action step identified was to begin collecting and analyzing the attrition data. Our baseline data with attrition began July 1, 2018. We created reason codes for the attrition. All educators who left fell under the following codes:

Reason Codes for Attrition

AJ=Alternate Job
 D=Deceased
 M=Moved out of the area
 Ret=Retired



The chart above includes all educators who have left RSU5 since July 1, 2018.

Tracking the reasons for educator turnover will help us create strategic steps to enhance the learning environment for all. According to data from the Learning Policy Institute analysis of National Center for Education Statistics School and Staffing Survey, completed from 2011-2014, Maine ranks 38th in the nation for teacher turnover.

The state with the lowest attrition rate is Utah with slightly over 8%. The highest state, Arizona, comes in at over 24%, and Maine's attrition rate is 11%. Nationally, the overall attrition rate is 16% which includes teachers who move on to other districts. RSU5 employs 215 educators. Since July 1, 2018, 24 educators have left the district. Of the 11% who left the district this year, 42% retired.

Strategic steps being taken to increase retention include implementing the newly adopted mentor program, fostering strong leadership, expanding opportunities for collaboration, increasing salaries, and providing ongoing professional development. These steps are all supported by research for attracting and retaining quality educators. As we strive to reduce our rate of attrition, we hope that all educators are proud to be making a difference in the lives of the students of RSU5!

Special Education Updates

By Bonnie Violette, Director of Instructional Support

Summer in Maine is about to begin! It is a delightful time of year to get involved in fun and exciting activities with children.

*Explore the outdoors. Ride bikes together, hike together, fly kites together. Explore a local farm, our ocean beaches, or go strawberry picking. Some fun places to explore include Bradbury Mountain, Wolfe's Neck Farm, Winslow Park, the Audobon Society, Mackworth Island, Pineland Farms, and Scarborough Marsh.

*Read together. Do they have a favorite book? Have them read it to you. If it is a chapter book, you can take turns reading a chapter and discussing the story. Find a comfortable couch or sit under a shady tree and enjoy the adventure.

*Learn about your town history. Visit your town office or historical society together or visit their websites to learn about your town.

Freeport Historical Society, 45 Main Street, Freeport
Pownal Scenic & Historical Society, 584 Poland Range Road, Pownal
Durham Historical Society, 744 Royalsborough Road, Durham

*Ask your child to show you a math app or other computer program they use at school. Try it out and see how many questions you answer correctly.

*Unplug for a few hours. Set technology aside and just enjoy time together drawing, painting, playing a board game, exploring the yard, or going for a walk.

*Grocery shop together. Keep technology in your purse or pocket and work on math skills. Your child could write down prices of each item. Let your child purchase a small item with cash and figure out how much change you should get back.

*Mix & chat together. Pour a small box of instant vanilla pudding mix and ½ cup of milk into a ziploc baggie and seal it up, removing the air. Your child and you could each have one. Chat, practice reciting the alphabet, or sing a song while you each squish and rotate the bag. Soon, once it is thick, you will have a yummy pretend “ice cream” you can pour into a cone.

*Take a class together. You could learn a craft, a dance, or a new hobby such as wood-working.

*Let them teach you. Does your child have a favorite game or hobby? Ask about it and have your child teach you.

*Backyard TV: Find a quiet place to sit outside together and watch the birds, squirrels and chipmunks from a distance. Learn about their habits and where their homes are as you watch them. In the evening, try to see fireflies lighting up your yard and talk about the constellations in the sky.

*Write a letter to a friend or relative who lives far away. If you receive a reply in your mailbox, this could start a nice pen-pal adventure.

*Get two copies of a USA map. Post one on a wall and cut out all the individual states from the other copy and place them in a jar. Each day, randomly select a state. Learn the name of the capital, state bird and other fun facts. Put that state on the map at the end of the day. Before summer is over, the whole map will be complete.

*Discover the joy of old-fashioned toys. Hula hoops, slinkys, jump rope and hopscotch are great fun.

These are a few suggestions of fun ways to enjoy the summer. Summers in Maine are short so enjoy it while we have it.

Did You Know???

Through a partnership between the Maine Department of Education and the University of Maine System, tuition is waived for all qualified high school students in Maine to cover full tuition for up to 12 college credits per year. Registration is open for summer at <https://umaine.edu/earlycollege/>.

Classes are taught by UMaine faculty and meet general education requirements of the University of Maine System, as well as the majority of colleges nationwide. Students across the state will benefit from the flexibility and variety of live (in Belfast and Orono) and online early college courses offered this summer. Over 50 courses are available to qualified high school students in a variety of formats.

Interested students and parents are encouraged to contact Allison Small, Early College Programs coordinator, 581-8004 or allison.small@maine.edu, to learn more about the application process.