

## January 2021 Superintendent Report

Highlight of the Month: We returned to in-person instruction on January 4. It is important that I acknowledge all of the efforts of our teaching staff that makes it possible for the majority of our students to have the continued opportunity to participate in high quality in-person instruction while also providing for the needs of students who are participating in a remote learning model. This is not an easy task— Thank you for your unwavering dedication to our students.

### News and Notes

#### Educational Leadership

The year may have changed but the challenges to provide for a safe, high quality educational experience for all Eastford students continues. The administration, together with our school nurse, remain current with the updated information regarding the pandemic. It was in response to this ongoing, diligent review of relevant data, that with an abundance of caution, EES provided a remote learning model of instruction for all students on December 22 and 23. December 21, which was utilized to make this transition, will be added as a half day to the end of the school calendar.

In addition to meeting the educational challenges of the pandemic, important work in the area of curriculum development continues to be supported as evidenced by the detailed presentation of the draft science curriculum that was presented to the District Curriculum Committee by our science teacher, Candice Mead. The existence of this document is the result of over a year of dedicated and intensive research by Mrs. Mead, a leader in the area of science education. This final draft of this curriculum document will be brought forward to the BOE for review and approval at a later date.

Our contract with Savvas, our current source for our K-6 math curriculum materials, expires at the end of this year. We have entered into an agreement with Savvas to be an official pilot site for their updated K-6 Envisions program materials during the 2021-22 school year. For a cost of slightly more than \$1000, this will provide us with the opportunity to use all of these instructional materials for a full year before deciding whether or not to make an investment into a long-term purchase. This will also provide the staff with needed time to review other products that might be available. This program received positive reviews on EdReports.org, an independent nonprofit designed to improve education by providing reviews of K-12 instructional materials.

#### Facilities

Our EMCOR representative and the chair of the Town Building Committee did an onsite review of the operation of our newly installed heating system and addressed specific concerns related to the new hot water system that were expressed by the staff. At this point in time all mechanical components of the system appear to be in good working condition.

#### Collaboration and Communication

Although opportunities for in-person collaboration and extracurricular activities are still limited, the administration continues to outreach to other organizations to provide awareness and access to virtual enhanced educational programming and field trips to the staff for use with/by our students.

#### Finance

Monitoring the status of the current 2020-21 budget and the development of the 2021-22 budget has been the focus of the administration with the ongoing support of Kymberli Gaylor, my remarkable financial assistant. Although we are happy to have received the Coronavirus funds, the work on obtaining these “by reimbursement only” dollars have required Kymberli to spend many hours monitoring, documenting and adhering to the ever-changing procedures related to this grant.

## Comments on the BOE Agenda Items

X. A-E. Approval of Policies: There are several policies recommended by the Policy Committee for approval by the Board. Lauren Skiff, Chair of the BOE Policy subcommittee, is prepared to answer any questions you may have regarding these recommended policies. This set of policies brings us up to date on most of the important policy revisions that were done in 2019-20. There are some older policies that will need to be reviewed by the policy committee that include a series of smaller updates that Shipman and Goodwin recently did on their current policies.

XI. A. Capital Plan Discussion: There will be a joint meeting of the Town Building Committee and the BOE Facilities Committee at 6:00 PM the night of the BOE meeting. The long-term capital plan will be reviewed at this meeting. Rob Ellsworth, Chair of the BOE Facilities subcommittee, will provide an update of this meeting. The BOE Capital Plan will be brought forward for approval at the special meeting of the BOE on February 9.

B. Budget 2021-2022 Discussion: The administration will present the proposed 2021-22 budget to the BOE. The BOE will begin its review of the budget proposal and make recommendations to the administration for continued discussion and review at the budget meeting on January 21. The budget documents will be sent in a separate packet to the BOE members prior to the BOE meeting.

XIII. C. Budget Transfers: We are still waiting for reimbursements from the Coronavirus grant that will offset some of the negative balances in our current 2020-21 budget. We will make recommendations regarding transfers related to those reimbursements at a later meeting. As you are aware, we have negative balances in public and private school accounts due to unanticipated high school tuitions and outplacements. We are recommending that the BOE approve the following budget transfers to begin to address these negative balances:

\$20,000 from 100.1200.3.112.00.5 (Salary, SE, Para) to 100.1200.3.561.00.5 (Tuition, SE, Public)

\$12,729.40 from 100.1200.3.122.02.5 (Summer School, SE Para) to 100.1200.3.591.00.5 (High School SE Services)

\$6,310.72 from 100.1200.3.569.00.5 (Tuition, SE Summer Camp) to 100.1200.3.563.00.5 (Tuition, SE, Private)

\$4,889.28 from 100.1200.3.569.00.5 (Tuition, SE Summer Camp) to 100.1200.3.561.00.5 (Tuition, SE, Public)