

A Message to Whitefield Residents about Whitefield School

The “Educational Forum.” In mid-November, scores of Whitefield residents gathered at the school to widely discuss education for children in the town; a big thanks to all who participated. At the meeting’s conclusion, the “Education Forum” recorded a number of outcomes describing much that’s good and not-so-good at Whitefield School including oral testimony from parents. All the material has been saved, is being carefully reviewed by the district, and will form the basis for a plan to move forward.

First Steps Forward. Almost immediately afterward, the Sheepscot Valley Regional School Unit Board of Directors met in late November to hear about the event and hold a frank, unfettered, and wide-ranging discussion of alternatives to move forward. There was general agreement that the resources of the entire district would be brought to bear in support of planned changes at the school.

First, steps will be immediately taken to **assure the safety of students** at the school and when riding busses. Some changes are already in place and more will happen shortly.

Next, the district plans to review the **practices dealing with student conduct** and efforts at encouraging positive behavior. Needed changes will be incorporated into existing programs and new initiatives started if these are judged to be helpful.

A series of **small group meetings** are planned with faculty, staff, and students to examine the “culture” in the building with an eye at introducing changes to make any needed improvements.

Looking to the future, RSU 12 will create a **“Community Advisory Committee”** to discuss and recommend changes in programs as well as incorporating volunteer resources from both the town and the district. Such efforts would permit wider introduction of enriched activities for small groups of students as well as the school as a whole.

Finally, the district plans to **improve communications** with the community as we move forward. This short report to the Whitefield community is a first step on that path. Some changes can be made quickly while others require more consideration for these to be effective. We plan to make folks both in town and the district aware of modifications in existing practices as well as introduction of new initiatives as soon as these happen.

The district joins with the town in a commitment for an improved environment at the school and safe, nurturing, and positive educational setting for students, faculty and staff.

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