

MSAD #53 Board Report: Warsaw Middle School

May 2, 2011 Board Meeting

Sandy Nevens, Principal

Students of the Month for March and April:

<u>Team</u>	<u>February</u>	<u>March</u>
<i>Hutt, Bolduc:</i>	Alexis LaMarre	Courtney Barker
<i>Campbell, Newhouse, Jacques:</i>	Brandon McKenna	Kevin Belgard
<i>Littlefield, Ulrickson, Graham:</i>	Leah Carron	Katie George
<i>Longstreet, Saucier:</i>	Jacob Baker	Hunter Wintle
<i>Dorman, Woodbury:</i>	Riley McGinnis	Alyssa Watrous
<i>Brown, Rollins:</i>	Sidney Morton	Hannah Switzer
<i>Cianchette, Hammond:</i>	Caroline Vigue	Lindsey Eldridge

The Student of the Month Lunch for both February and March SOM will be held on April 26, 2011. Congratulations to all our February and March Students of the Month!

Earth Day Focus and Celebration:

*The Allied Arts Team has traditionally created and organized a special Activity for the whole school each year, and this year's focus was on **Earth Day**. The Allied Arts Team worked long and hard to plan the day, and the preparation paid off. The whole school was involved in the day, and students from MCI were invited to participate as well.*

Although it was an Earth Day celebration, two days were devoted to Earth Day. On April 11 the entire school visited Pittsfield's Transfer Station (an impressive reuse and recycle center), traveling by bus to learn how Pittsfield has committed to reducing waste materials by reusing, recycling, and producing energy from waste. Students and staff made the visit, and all accounts about the visit were positive.

On April 14, many Warsaw classrooms and spaces outdoors were utilized for activities that focused on recycling and reusing materials. Twelve activity sites were set up throughout the building and each student was scheduled to participate in four of the twelve activities in the course of the day. There was an also electric car on display on loan from our neighboring Chevy dealer!

I was fortunate as I was handed a digital camera with which to record the events, and I did my best to get to every activity, and at least came close to documenting all twelve! The students were well behaved, active, and interested in the events that included a visiting artist creating an art piece using discarded pieces of china to create a piece of art, possibly for the Pittsfield Transfer Station, mobiles constructed from reused and recycled materials,

In Mrs. Lancaster's art room, recycled materials used to make musical instruments in Ms. Weinstein's room, a PE activity that utilized cardboard to create "vehicles" for students to race, and more!

Whatever It Takes.... Revisited

I realize I have used *Whatever It Takes...* as a focus often in Board Reports and conversation, but I do so when I believe it has validity in what we are doing at Warsaw Middle School.

Richard Dufour, an educational guru known internationally for his educational reform wrote a book in which he focused on the phrase Whatever It Takes as a rallying cry for teachers to meet their students' needs... NO MATTER WHAT...I have read Dufour's books and heard him speak at the National Middle School Association's Annual Conference four years ago, and the phrase and all it entails define where I think Warsaw Middle School is: We will strive to do whatever it takes to make sure that all students learn. In the past few years we have done the following:

- Examined our math curriculum from head to toe in terms of which concepts and practices are taught when and why! We have made changes as needed
- Hired two consultants over three years to work directly with teachers on a long-term basis in math
- Adopted Saxon Math for grade 5
- Focused on assessing and improving the use of CMP for all grades
- Provided staff development in math in a variety of ways
- Focused on middle school best practices that help the student learn, behave, and belong
- Hired a Math Interventionist to teach Algebra to students who are ready for it
- Worked on Math Curriculum in a variety of ways
- Invited outside consultants to visit classrooms and provide feedback to teachers about the teaching and learning observed
- Encouraged staff in working with one another to define what their students need
- Focused on summer math and reading for all students
- Used MEA and NECAP Released Items to help us better prepare for the state test.
- Provided Staff Development to focus on specific needs in curriculum and best practices
- Reinforced our commitment to Middle School Best Practices while recognizing the need for those practices to be adapted to student needs that may
- And more...

Warsaw teachers have done and will do *Whatever It Takes ...* and we have shown this commitment when we became a CIPS School, when we studied and then implemented Skills Blocks (that added more to our plates)... when we created after school Math and Best Practices staff development opportunities... when we committed to focusing on using released items to help our NECAP preparation, when we revamped our summer math

packets to be more focused on student needs and state testing curriculum, when we added algebra this year to a group of grades 7 and 8 students who were ready for it!

MAMLE: The Maine Association for Middle Level Education (aka MAMLE) is an organization that provides workshops, a Summer Course, and a Fall Conference to all schools that teach students who are in the 5-8 grade strand that we call middle level. I am a member of MAMLE and have been for some time. We have been asked to meet with the Department of Education in May to discuss *Bright Futures* and Middle Schools in Maine. The meeting will include MAMLE members; Steve Bowen, Maine's Commissioner of Education; and Don Siviski who has been tapped as an advisor on Maine education issues by the LePage Administration. As the MAMLE President I will be among those in the Augusta meeting, and if the Board would like, I would be happy to provide a summary report of the meeting when I return, if the Board would like.

I am assuming that most if not all of the Board Members receive our Newsletters... If not we have been posting them on the Web Site. The last few items in this Board Report are from the newsletter we sent out last week:

- At the State Jazz Festival our Warsaw Jazz Bands (5/6 and 7/8) both received a 1 rating that gave both bands a Gold Award. Kevin Belgard also received an Outstanding Musician Solo Award (Only five of these awards were given out.)

Key Dates Coming Up:

May 6: Mid 4th Quarter
May 6: Grades 5/6 Spring Fling (7-8:30 PM)
May 13: Grades 7/8 Spring Fling (7-9 PM)
May 23-24: (Tentative): 8th Grade Move - Up Day
May 27: Early Dismissal (12:35 PM)
May 30: Band Marching Practice (6:30 – 8:00)
June 1: Spring Concert (7 PM)
June 3: Fine Arts Fiesta (7 PM)
June 20: 8th Grade Promotion Ceremony
(Last Day: Dismissal at 12:35 PM)

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