

ORCSD

Superintendent's Newsletter

November 2022

Volume: 3 Issue: 2



As we approach inclement weather season, please refer to your school's instructions for information regarding inclement remote learning days.

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Upcoming Events

High School Play: Clue

November 17 & 18: 7pm

November 19: 2pm and 7pm

Moharimet Liberty House Food Drive

November 17 & 18

High School: Debate Team Home Meet

November 19

Coding & Cocoa

December 7: 9:00am - 12:00pm

ORMS Vex Robotics Tournament

December 10

Message from the Superintendent

Dr. James C. Morse, Sr.

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff, and Students,

Hard as it is to believe, our first quarter is already behind us. This is a time when teachers share the progress of their students, and the students wonder where and how to improve and grow. We are fortunate to work and live in the Oyster River Cooperative School District where the success of every child matters. We also know that sometimes, in some subjects, children struggle. The good news is there are multiple ways students can seek out support from their teachers, counselors, and administrators. I want to share some avenues available of support for our students.

Attendance K - 12

The most important tool a student has at their disposal is to be present and attend every class. Although assignments can be provided for students who miss class, the discussion and the interaction with their peers cannot be duplicated. Attendance is foundational to success.

Relearning, Recovery K – 12 & FLEX 5 - 12

Our teachers provide opportunities for relearning and recovery. This tool is built into FLEX time and into the student's academic day. If a student needs extra help, their advisor can schedule for them to receive it inside their daily schedule.

Message from the Superintendent (continued)

Teacher Expectations

Every teacher wants their students to be successful. Expectations are the same for all grade levels; attend class, complete assignments and homework, participate in class discussions, and be engaged. Most teachers also require self-directed projects which include multiple competencies and standards.

At the high school level, we want students to self-advocate and take responsibility. We also understand this is easier said than done for many teens, as they face the pressures of burgeoning adulthood.

It's a busy world for young people. Between the responsibility of their academic workload, participation in athletics and co-curricular activities, the influence of social media, and the burden of employment, the pressure can feel insurmountable.

Our teachers and counselors are always there to support them.

The first and easiest way for a student to seek academic support is directly with their classroom teacher. If their issues rise beyond academics, our counselors are there for them.

The Counseling Offices K - 12

The ORHS Counselors are there for their advisees, not just for college counseling, but also to assist when pressures mount beyond academics. They care immensely about the students they serve and can open opportunities beyond academic assistance.

Special Education Services K - 12

Beyond the supports listed above, students who have a handicapping condition that interferes with their learning can be provided special education services.

Social Emotional Learning K – 8

Open Circle (K-5), Caring School Communities (6-8), and One Trusted Adult (9-12) are programs the district adopted to support social emotional learning (SEL). SEL is designed to assist in relationship building and social skills, executive functioning, resilience, and empathy. It also helps build a safe and caring school environment.

Tutors K – 8

We now have tutors to assist students who need extra help in our elementary schools and the middle school. Classroom teachers can assign students to tutors for extra help in math and reading.

Literacy Specialists K – 8

Children who need specialized help in literacy skills are assigned to our literacy specialists. Our specialists also work with our teachers and paraeducators to provide staff training.

Teacher Math / Science Specialists K - 4

Both Moharimet and Mast Way have their own math/science specials who work with teachers to provide quality professional development in Math and Science as well as assist students who need small group help.

The Math Lab 9 - 12

The Math Lab also is available every day for students needing extra assistance. Students find their way there on their own or can be assigned if their teacher or administrator deems it necessary.



Message from the Superintendent (continued)

The Writing Lab 9 - 12

Writing is an intense and personal subject, often requiring a specialized space to execute. The Writing Lab is available every day for any student with a writing assignment from across the curriculum, not just English students. It is a popular location for students to concentrate on writing assignments or even college applications.



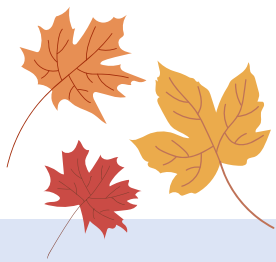
Advisory 9 - 12

Our advisory program exists to guide students who have needs. Every student is paired with an advisor who can open the door to support by assigning an advisee to their teacher for extra help. Your child's advisor has access to Adaptive Scheduler which provides the advisor to your child's schedule who then can literally schedule them for extra help.

In closure

Oyster River's parents and teachers have high expectations. The district continues to be one of the highest performing in New Hampshire.

With high expectations come stressors, both academic and social. It is my hope that, knowing these resources exist, both parents and students can feel comfortable reaching out when the need arises.



Assistant Superintendent's Report

Suzanne Filippone

I consider myself fortunate to work with our inspiring Oyster River community. I truly enjoy visiting classrooms, seeing our students develop, and working with leadership and staff to provide learning opportunities for educators throughout the district.

Since our return from the pandemic, we have experienced an increased interest in professional development, and we have received many requests for more time to develop and adjust curriculum to meet our students' needs.

We therefore entered the 2022-2023 school year with a firm commitment to ensure and support the professional growth of our educators. We want to make certain our faculty and staff have the resources they need, and this includes professional learning.

Our faculty has been engaged in a variety of district sponsored K-12 professional learning in areas such as: suicide prevention, restorative practices, science of reading, social emotional learning, de-escalation strategies, bullying/cyberbullying training, Title IX and harassment, and emergency and crisis response.

Groups of educators are also engaging in professional learning in cohorts. One cohort of 25 faculty members is currently working with Chris Hall (ORMS Teacher) on self-directed action research projects while others are engaging with the International Institute for Restorative Practices to support the creation of positive and inclusive learning environments. Teachers from different grade levels have also embraced collaboration and experienced Lexia LETRS training together.

Assistant Superintendent Report (continued)

Lexia LETRS training focuses on building the skills required to master the foundational and fundamentals of reading and writing instruction – phonological awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, and written language (NH DOE).

These examples only scratch the surface of the ongoing training offered to ORCSD adult learners. Our staff model is one of learning and growth, and I am incredibly fortunate to work with our professionals. I consider it a privilege to be able to support their quest for knowledge and understanding so that we, together, can better serve our students.

DEIJ Update

Rachael Blansett

Hello, Bobcats! As with all new positions, we are still determining the different ways the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Coordinator role can be used to its fullest capacity. As this position develops, aspects of the role may be solidified or shifted depending on the changing needs and climate of the district. With this in mind, I wanted to let you know how much I appreciate being able to continue these meaningful conversations and efforts across our community and share with you my key priorities for this year:

- Introducing myself and building relationships with all stakeholders in the district. This may look like being invited to a teachers' advisory, visiting each school building, partnering with a teacher on a classroom lesson, and community events.

- Meeting with students and student groups who need additional support and resources. This applies to students and groups across all identities and demographics. This position will function as a support role to all students in the district.
- Serving as a thought partner with administrators and teachers to address issues of DEIJ in their schools. This will be a collaborative partnership where I can be used as a tool of insight and education regarding inclusion challenges impacting school climate and provide additional guidance for how to respond.
- Designing and implementing DEIJ professional development plan for teachers. This plan is meant to provide teachers with support for classroom curriculum, facilitation, and instruction on topics and concepts related to diversity, equity, and inclusion. This plan will be designed and implemented starting January 2023.
- Driving forward DEIJ goals outlined in the district's strategic plan. This includes developing DEIJ competencies for teachers and embedding restorative justice practices.

General News & Announcements

STEM Enrichment: Robotics Teams

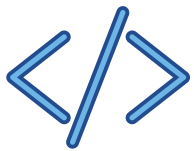
After school robotics programs complement classroom learning by giving students opportunities for hands-on learning of engineering. The competitive aspect of robotics also motivates students to excel. The program at the middle school consistently sends teams to world championships, and the high school team quadrupled its roster in the past 3 years.

General News & Announcements (continued)

If you know of engineering or technology firms that would benefit from a partnership with local robotics team, please let them know about the Oyster River team's website: <https://www.orhsrobotics8410.org>

Coding and Cocoa

The program invites students to explore the world of computer science in conjunction with Hour of Code, a global movement focused on sparking an interest in STEM. This coming December 7th, students across the district will work together in online coding or in-person computer science activities.



Emergency Notification System

On November 1st, we performed a district-wide test of our emergency notification system. Parents, guardians, staff, and faculty should have received a phone call, email, and text. If you have not received these notifications and would like to receive them in the future, please contact your child(ren)'s school(s) to have your contact information updated.

End 68 Hours of Hunger

With the increased cost of utilities and inflation, the district is experiencing a 20% increase of requests for nutrition support from local families.

Should you be able to donate food, please make sure it's not expired as we are unable to donate expired items to families. Because our bags are sometimes brought home by students, we are unable to accept glass jars. Normal sized items are also more helpful than larger "family size". This way, we can fit a variety of items in each individual bag being donated.

Monetary and food donations are accepted year-round at 33 Coe Drive, Durham, NH 03824.

Thank you for your support!



Firearm Safety Awareness

Friendly seasonal reminder to firearm owners and hunters to safely store their firearms between uses. For more resources, please visit: BeSMARTforKids.org

Dates to Remember

- November 23 - 25: Thanksgiving Recess (no school)
- December 7: School Board Meeting
- December 21: School Board Meeting
- December 26 - January 2: Holiday Recess (no school)
- January 4: School Board Meeting
- January 10: Bond & Budget Hearing
(snow date January 11)
- January 16: Martin Luther King Day (no school)
- January 18: School Board Meeting
- January 23: Teacher Workshop Day (all schools)

Elementary Schools

Mast Way

GLOBE Project

Sarah Farwell, math/science specialist, hosted the Globe Project international scientific research program through UNH's Leitzel Center. 4th graders worked on testing soil samples.



Helping Hands

First Grade has kicked off their yearlong community service project known as Helping Hands. The November focus is a food drive to support a local organization. The food drive will run from Monday, November 14th to Tuesday, November 22nd and collection boxes will be placed near the school entrance.

If you can help, please send your child in with a nonperishable donation. Any little bit helps! First Grade thanks you in advance!

PTO Fundraisers

Deadline to place your order for Holiday Greenery from Wentworth Greenhouse is November 24th. Orders to be picked-up Friday, December 2nd, after school. Thank you for your support!

Order online:

www.mwpto.org/store/c13/Winter_Sale.html

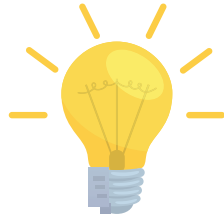
Also, on December 7th, the PTO is hosting a fundraiser at Clark's American Bistro in downtown Durham. 10% of proceeds will support our kiddos!

Moharimet

GLOBE Project

Last spring, Moharimet partnered with the Globe Project an international scientific research program through the Leitzel Center at UNH and is continuing this impactful work this academic year.

3rd grade students are participating in the Green Down project working as citizen scientists to collect data on the timing of leaf changes and leaf drops on the trees located outside of their classrooms. The data will be entered on GLOBE's website and help improve satellite data interpretation by NASA scientists.



All About Electricity

4th grade students recently examined electricity, reviewing both renewable and non-renewable resources. Through discussions, they determined which ones may have a negative impact on the environment. Students worked with model wind turbines, hydro generators, and solar panels to find ways to maximize the amount of electricity generated. In addition, students worked in the Library Learning Commons to conduct short research projects that built knowledge through investigation of different aspects of renewable energy sources.

Lego Robotics

Sarah Curtin, the school's digital learning specialist, worked in close collaboration with 4th grade students and the Energy Unit. Students met with her in small groups as each built windmills to demonstrate how energy is created, stored, distributed, and consumed using LEGO robotics parts and learned about how energy is used in our communities.

Middle School

Congratulations!

Alida Carter was named NH PE Teacher of the Year for 2022-23 and Val Wolfson recent NH Social Studies Teacher of the Year.

Celebrating Veteran's Day

On November 10th, ORMS invited the community to join their breakfast celebration in honor of veterans and public servants from Lee, Madbury, and Durham. Thank you to all who supported the event!

Top Robotics Program

ORMS is proud to host the top robotics program in NH and they will be hosting two state tournaments this winter. Last year ORMS sent three VEX IQ teams to the world championships in Dallas, Texas, and last week 31 students qualified to represent the school at an event in Candia on November 19th. Stay tuned for more information about their big tournament this coming December 10th!



NH Kid Governor

On November 10th, 5th grade students walked to Durham Town Hall and cast their ballot for one of seven NH Kid Governor candidates. Students presented their voter card to election supervisors who checked them in and handed them a ballot. Students voted in actual voting booths and placed their filled-in ballot in Durham's wooden ballot box, which dates to 1916.

The previous week, students held primary elections and virtually met with First Spouse Valerie Sununu and 2021 NH Kid Governor Charlotte Cotti.

Counseling Department

As we move through fall some children might experience bumps along the way. The middle school counseling team can help support their mental health. Please reach out to your grade counselor at any time during the school year.

5th grade Ms. Cote: rcote@orcsd.org

6th grade Ms. Felch: kfelch@orcsd.org

7th grade Ms. Gahm: sgahm@orcsd.org

8th grade Ms. Kadden: skadden@orcsd.org



High School

Congratulations!

Erica Cooke, math teacher, was recognized as Teacher of the Year from the Dover Chamber of Commerce.

Cathi Stetson, business teacher, was recognized as a semi-finalist for NH Teacher of the Year.

Sean Peschel was recognized as the ELO (Extended Learning Opportunities) Coordinator of the Year and was honored through a celebration at the NH Eddies ceremony in Manchester, NH.

ORHS celebrated 2021 state championships for their Division II Golf, Girls Cross Country, and their Unified Soccer teams.

Celebrating Veteran's Day

The library invited students to provide the picture of a veteran family member to add to their Veteran's Day display case for the month of November. Thank you for your service and to all who provided a photograph!

High School (continued)

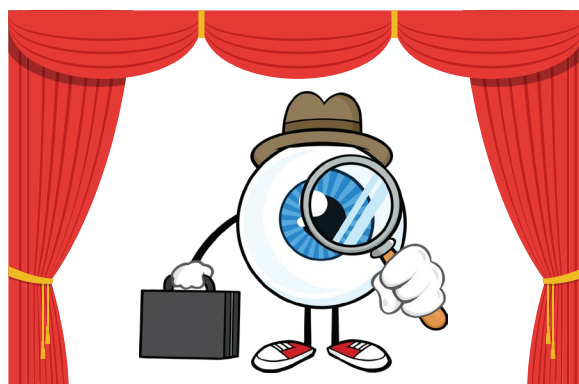
Fall Theatre Play: Clue

The high school's fall play, Clue, is coming up!

November 17th and 18th at 7:00 pm

November 19th at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm

It's a great performance, and the actors have been working hard to impress you. If you can, please consider supporting them. Tickets are \$5 per person.



Buy your tickets at:

<https://www.showtix4u.com/event-details/68795>

Or scan the QR code:



SAU Email Contact Information

Superintendent: Dr. Jim Morse | jmorse@orcscd.org

Assistant Superintendent: Suzanne Filippone | sfilippone@orcscd.org

Executive Assistant: Wendy DiFruscio | wdfruscio@orcscd.org

Director of Student Services: Catherine Plourde | cplourde@orcscd.org

Administrative Assistant: Pamela Purser | ppurser@orcscd.org

Business Administrator: Susan Caswell | scaswell@orcscd.org

HR Coordinator: Theresa Proia | tproia@orcscd.org

DEIJ Coordinator: Rachael Blansett | rblansett@orcscd.org

Communication Specialist: Genevieve Brown | gebrown@orcscd.org