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'In the Loop' with the Lewiston-Porter Board of Education

Lew-Port taking further steps to address COVID-19

BY JODEE RIORDAN Board of Education President

This has been a very difficult week, as the Lewiston-Porter School District continues to deal with positive COVID-19 cases and the resulting contact tracing and quarantine protocols set in motion by the Niagara County Department of Health. In response, Lewiston-Porter High School, on Monday, moved all hybrid students to full virtual model through next Monday, Nov. 16.

"From the outset of this school year, we have maintained our No. 1 goal and priority to provide a safe learning environment for the Lew-Port family. This closure is just another example of that priority," High School Principal Brad Rowles said.

This shutdown will allow for further contact tracing by the NCDOH and for COVID-19 testing results to come back so that Lewiston-Porter administration can have a clearer understanding of the recently identified positive cases. It is the district's intention to have the high school reopened for hybrid students on Tuesday, Nov. 17, unless otherwise directed by the NCDOH or NYSDOH. Please watch for notifications from the high school and/or Superintendent Paul Casseri for full instructions on reopening, and continue to closely follow all COVID-19 safety precautions.

Students attending the Orleans Niagara BOCES Career and Technical Education Center moved

to full virtual for the remainder of the week. O/N BOCES vocational students will return to their regular in-person schedule on Monday, Nov. 16, unless otherwise directed.

The district continues to provide meals at no cost to all students. Students on campus receive regular breakfast and lunch on the days they are in school. Students not on campus may pick up grab-and-go meals at the Lewiston-Porter High School main entrance. The grab-and-go bags include two meals (breakfast and lunch). Meal pick-up is available on Monday, Tuesday (for Tuesday and Wednesday) and Thursday (for Thursday and Friday) from 8:30-9:15 a.m. (last names A-L) and 9:15-10 a.m. (M-Z).

With the closure of the building, lunch pickup will shift to Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30-10:30 a.m. When the closure is over, the lunch pickups will return to normal. Families who are eligible for free and reduced lunch or do not have transportation should email pgrupka@lew-port.com to make other arrangements.

The Board of Education moved its Monday work session to a virtual format, meeting remotely for the first time since June. The agenda included the monthly policy review, led by Policy Review Committee Chair Anne Orr, and the quarterly claims audit review as submitted by Dr. Patti Grupka. The BOE shifted its NYSSBA convention study session to the

December work session. Join us as we collaborate and share all we learned through the educational sessions, presentations and networking of the virtual convention at 6 p.m. Monday, Dec. 14.

Dr. Heather Lyon, assistant superintendent of curriculum, instruction and technology, presented on assessments, interventions, and data. The presentation focused on the use of aimswebPlus for independent assessments of students K-9.

What is aimswebPlus? It is a web-based tool for universal screening, progress monitoring, and data management utilized by Lew-Port teachers and administrators to assess student progress and identify the need for intervention. Lyon provided both background information on all assessment strategies and response to intervention (RTI). RTI is a districtwide process that ensures students are making academic progress in reading and math instruction. When a student is not making academic progress, additional support services are provided to the student.

Academic assessment is very important right now, as Lewiston-Porter identifies just where its students are and what they may need in these unprecedented times. While New York state standards remain in place – as of now – for educators across the state and nation the stress of trying to meet "normal" metrics in extraordinary times is being acutely realized and

addressed. As both Lyon's presentation and the following discussion illustrate, Lewiston-Porter recognizes the need for support – academic, social and emotional, across the board – is vital. Following the emergency shift to virtual learning in the spring of 2019-20, and the multiple learning models currently running in 2020-21, Lew-Port is constantly assessing and adjusting how to best meet all the needs of its students, families, faculty and staff.

The entire Lew-Port community (teachers, administrators, staff and parents) is working hard to serve the students of Lew-Port. As a district, we are always looking to improve. A new family reopening feedback survey was launched this week. The purpose of this survey is to evaluate the overall student and family learning experience from September through now. We encourage you to take the survey in collaboration with your child, to help us improve our educational processes. This survey can be accessed at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1faipqlsed4tg9stw6hyaheukjpvpyg mrm60-sdmsizadjj-vbdi_rwnw/viewform?gxids=7757.

Please complete the survey by Monday, Nov. 16. We value the feedback, input and suggestions of our families. Thank you for your time! Parents are asked to complete one survey for each child.

Stay tuned for survey results in an upcoming "In the Loop" column.

Thankfulness comes in many forms

As I grow older, it is at this time of the year that I reflect on all those things I am truly thankful for.

I am thankful for my health. These past few years, I've had some challenges but was given the strength to face each one.

I am thankful for my husband; on the day we married he told me he would take care of me and he has for over 40 years.

I am thankful for my family; through them I am given love and support.

I am thankful for my friends; they are always there with a kind word of support.

I am thankful for new challenges, because they give me knowledge.

I am thankful for difficult times, because through them I see the glass as being half-full rather than

half-empty.

I am thankful for my mistakes; because of them I have learned valuable lessons.

I am thankful for my limitations, because they have given me the opportunity to improve my character.

I am thankful when I grow tired and weary, because it gives me time to sit down and reflect.

And I am truly thankful for what

God has given me even though, sometimes, I forget to thank him.

Thankfulness comes in many forms. It turns a negative into a positive, and it turns your troubles into blessings.

It is at this time of the year we all should count our blessings and be truly thankful.

Paulette Glasgow Lewiston

Lauds Wheatfield Planning Board

Recently, I have had reason to attend the Town of Wheatfield Planning Board sessions. I commend these volunteers for their thought-

fulness and the time they invest in reviewing plans, reports and citizen letters, as well as opening the meetings to public comment. It is

clear to me that these gatekeepers of the community take the safety, well being, and quality of life of the citizens of Wheatfield seriously as

they are planning the character and prosperity of our town.

Dawn Cody Wheatfield

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