

F E B R U A R Y 2 , 2 0 1 8

Highlights

Athol-Royalston Regional School District

Food Service Department Receives State Recognition

Once again the food service department is being recognized for their outstanding work. Next week they have been invited to the state house to be honored for their efforts in increasing the overall number of students eating breakfast in the district. Athol Community Elementary School is leading the way with 80% of the students participating!

Kindergarten Registration has Begun!

Any family in Athol or Royalston who has a student who is ready to enter kindergarten may now register their child by stopping by the Athol Community Elementary School, Royalston Community School or the superintendent's office to fill out the registration paperwork. Once all paperwork has been filled out and turned in a, 1-hour meeting will be scheduled to have your child tested to see what their educational needs will be when entering kindergarten.

Remember, your student must be 5 before September 1 to enter kindergarten.



Selected Athol High School Band/Chorus Students Compete

Athol High School/Athol-Royalston Middle School selected band and chorus students performed at the Quabbin Valley Music Festival on Saturday, February 3rd in Palmer, MA. Students were lead by a special guest conductor. The students had three rehearsals prior to the event. The districts' music director stated that the students' performance was outstanding!

Superintendents Schedule

2/5/2018

- ACES Walkthrough
- School Committee agenda development

2/6/2018

- AHS Visit
- RCS Visit
- DSAC Meeting

2/7/2018

- New Superintendents Induction program

2/8/2018

- DESE Meeting
- Superintendents Breakfast meeting

2/9/2018

- Directors meetings
- Transportation Meeting
- Principals Meeting

Picture of The Week

Students at the Athol-Royalston Middle School use fraction bars to understand part and whole.



Entry Plan Next Steps

As many of you are aware the district has completed the Entry Plan and it was sent to all teachers and staff and reported on at the all boards meeting for the district. The purpose of the Entry Plan was to assess where the district is in completing each of the goals in the strategic plan. The next step is for the district to review the areas of concern identified in the report and do a root cause analysis to determine the cause of the problem. The way this will work is through the District Instructional Leadership Team (DILT), which consists of administrators and teachers from each school represented. The DILT will go through five steps.

1. Identify the problems that impact student learning.
2. Generate potential hypothesis that have brought about the problem.
3. Collect further data to check hypothesis
4. Vet the data to confirm if this is the root cause
5. Generate potential solutions to improve the situation.

Literacy Planning Team

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the district is putting together a Literacy Planning Team. The team will be responsible for the following:

1. Develop committee members' backgrounds in understanding the elements of literacy planning and why it is important.
2. Determine the current state of literacy in each of the following areas:
 - Tiered system in place
 - Assessments used to determine students literacy abilities
 - Assess core literacy program
 - Assess interventions currently in place to support students in reading and writing
 - Assess professional development for the last 5 years
 - Assess resources available in the district to support literacy programming
3. Set goals based on assessments for improvement
4. Set action steps for improvements

The first meeting of the team will take place **February 15, 2018 during the school day**. If you are interested in taking part please email Molly Superchi (msuperchi@arrsd.org). We are looking for 13 members for the team, which will include, Title 1 teachers, elementary and secondary ELA teachers, and a special education teacher. We are hopeful that you will consider applying.

DESE UPDATE

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is seeking input from school districts on how their supports are currently working to help low performing school districts become successful. This Thursday, I will be attending a meeting with DESE to discuss the current supports the state has given us and to make recommendation for further supports they may be able to add. Currently three of our schools in the district receive support from DESE, the middle school, high school, and ACES.

This year, DESE will also require districts seeking Title 1 and Title 2A funds to have an equity plan for the district. This is to ensure the most needy students are receiving the appropriate services. This Thursday afternoon the district will take part in a webinar to discuss the development of the plan.



Elementary Science

Last week the district had the vendors who produce “Inspire Science” in the district to begin piloting the program at grade 4. The program has an alignment with the current Wonders Reading program and is purchased with lab kits for the teacher to do hands-on labs with the students. Also present at the presentation was a grade 5 teacher from ARMS. The vendor will return soon to connect with the remaining middle school science teachers in the district to see if the program is of value to purchase at the middle school level as well.

As we all know many of the 21st century job market openings will be coming out of the science and engineering fields. It is for this reason that the district is beginning to investigate programming that will help our students to better understand the science standards. Over the summer the hope is that the district will put together a curriculum-working group to review our K-12 science programming and make recommendations for changes based on their findings. In addition, the ART Department will begin examining how they can integrate these concepts into their classes through training in STEAM that will begin in the fall.



Department Highlights

Guidance

- The department will be posting soon to fill a retirement slot at the middle school.
- High School students have begun selecting classes online.
- Starrett's interns began working and received their first pay check.
- CARE coordinator has been hired at the high school to help support students with emotional needs to outside counseling



Athletics

- Budget has been approved to fix the concession stand
- Summerfest has been reviewed to ensure fields will remain in good shape for start of fall season
- Athletics, as well as writing class, will begin researching and writing articles about Alumni accomplishments

ELL

- ELL students will attend a Social Justice conference in Easthampton in March
- ELL students are in the process of taking the ACCESS testing across the district
- New students are arriving in the district from Puerto Rico.
- District will hire a part time interpreter for next year to support Spanish speaking families



Unified ART

- Fire Department visits to explain how art work can be displayed in buildings.
- Department chair working with WPI to set up STEAM PD for next year.
- Looking at ways to increase student participation in band.
- Developing professional development that aligns with the department