

December 3, 2021

# MMUUSD

## District Happenings

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### Message from the Superintendent

Dear MMUUSD Families and Community,

As 2021 comes to a close and we look ahead to 2022, there are several bright spots that are allowing us to incrementally move into a recovery mindset and environment. Some of these positive developments, initiatives and resources include COVID-19 vaccinations for individuals ages 5 and up, extensive availability of COVID-19 vaccines, the Test to Stay program (has enabled over 250 students to stay in school), comprehensive COVID-19 mitigation strategies, a committed and effective health and nurse team, dedicated staff members, kind and supportive families and caregivers, full in-person instruction for all grade levels, a continuum of co-curricular activities for students, outdoor learning opportunities, lunch and breakfast at no cost for all students and caring and consistent in-person connections between students and educational staff. Leveraging these measures and assets offers us a path to a strong recovery from the effects of the pandemic. This will take time, effort, patience, cooperation and persistence, but I am confident that we will get there.

Thank you for your support and efforts to keep our learning community healthy and your willingness to work with us as we continue to navigate the challenges that have emerged in the pandemic. I wish you all a safe, healthy and relaxing school break. The next District Happenings will go out on January 7.

Take care,  
John R. Alberghini, Superintendent MMUUSD

# Supporting Children and Teens with the Ongoing Impact of COVID-19

Information from Joelle van Lent, Psy.D.

Joelle is a psychologist that works in many schools across northern and central Vermont. She has supported our District's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and advises on how we can foster the resilience of our students and promote healthy development. Below are some ideas and considerations from Joelle for parents and caregivers. For a full list, click [HERE](#).

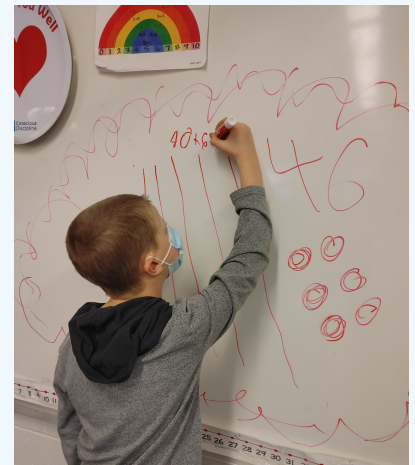
## What have we noticed so far this year?

- In general, our students continue to be very happy to be in school, joyful in the activities and eager to participate in all aspects of our school routine and community.
- The start to the school year was more challenging than anticipated due to:
  - **Stress induced regression** - People show a less mature version of themselves when stressed.
    - Children are starting to settle in and this aspect of the situation is improving.
  - **Lagging skills**- The impact of reduced healthy face-to-face social interaction for a prolonged time has resulted in our students being immature in social-emotional skills and in need of the kinds of supports and structures typically offered to younger students.
    - Schools have adapted and are offering supports and structure that meets the students where they are developmentally. The schools are prioritizing the types of experiences and activities that teach the skills that are lagging.
  - **Collective Grief**- Adults and students wanted to move from the pandemic this fall and return to normalcy. The Delta variant has resulted in our continuing to be in a phase of coping with COVID rather than recovering from it.

## What can we do for the children and teens?

1. Build skills through play! Find games as a family that build the skills you see your child needs to improve.
2. When your child returns home stressed, resist the temptation to dive in with them! Validate, distract, and move into the routine of home.
3. Stress explains but does not excuse misbehavior. Watch this [video!](#)
4. Children and teens feel unsettled, startled, and scared when their adult appears to be in conflict. When you are worried, stressed, or confused, please reach out to your school. When you reach out, pay attention to the language, tone, and emotion that you access. Our children feel calm, secure, and curious when they see their adults collaborating on their behalf even and especially when we don't agree or don't immediately know the solution.

*Thank you for all that you are doing!*



# Health Update

## **Test to Stay (TTS) Program - How is it going?**

We have fully implemented Test to Stay (TTS) for our K - 8 students.

TTS allows students who are in quarantine because of a school exposure to take an antigen test at school at least through day 7 of their exposure. With a negative test result, students are allowed to attend school for the day. Please see this link for additional information - [MMUUSD TTS](#)

- TTS is for students grades K - 8 who are not fully vaccinated.
- TTS is for close contacts from school.
- TTS is for students who do not have any symptoms.
- TTS requires that students quarantine when not at school. That means students involved in TTS should not be leaving home or having guests to the home.

Students in school days saved because of TTS (as of 12/1/21): **220**

## **Continued Vigilance**

We are asking families to remain vigilant. Please keep sick students home regardless of vaccination status. Anyone with symptoms should get a PCR test. Please work with your school nurse about a return to school plan after illness. Please see this link from the Vermont Department of Health: [Information for Families: Return to School Following Illness](#)

## **Athletics**

MMUUSD and the Champlain Valley Superintendents Association strongly recommend that all eligible student-athletes get vaccinated. Unvaccinated student athletes and any athlete participating in activities where masks cannot be consistently worn (i.e., wrestling, dance) should participate in weekly testing. We anticipate testing these athletes at MMU starting next week.

## **District COVID Count** - (Updated 12/1 and reflects numbers from the start of school)

District Total - 45

MMU - 5

BRMS - 5

CHMS - 6

BPMS - 3

JES - 4

RES - 8

SMS - 2

UCS - 9

District - 3

## **Vaccine appointments are available for everyone five years old and older!!!**

Please send in a copy of your child's vaccination card to their school nurse after their second dose of the vaccine.

Vaccine appointments are widely available at pharmacies and through the state website:

<https://www.healthvermont.gov/covid-19/vaccine/getting-covid-19-vaccine>. You can also call for a vaccine appointment - 855-722-7878. Please contact your school nurse if you are having difficulty getting a vaccine appointment for your child. We want to help!!

Please read this letter from Dr. Mark Levine and Dan French about the [COVID Vaccine for those 5 and older](#).



# Curriculum and Innovation

## **Anti-Bias/Anti-Racism (ABAR) Updates**

We are continuing with our district-wide work towards creating more diverse, equitable, and inclusive learning environments for all of our students. School-based ABAR committees are focused on remedying context specific issues within their buildings, while the district-level ABAR council is focused on discussing broader issues and topics. Thus far, the district ABAR council has met once (in October), with our next meeting occurring on December 15th. This year we have partnered with Dr. Luvelle Brown to facilitate these meetings, in addition to leading professional learning sessions with our teachers, administrators, and school board. Looking to the future, we hope to develop a process to audit our curriculum, in particular our social studies curriculum, to ensure that what we teach is inclusive and culturally responsive.

## **Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) Updates**

Our efforts at building a robust multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), aligned with Act 173 (2018), is going well despite the many distractions and constraints of the ongoing COVID pandemic. As a reminder, MTSS (also known as Response to Intervention or RTI) is a system to ensure that all students receive timely and targeted support for academic, behavioral, and/or social-emotional needs. This system is predicated on leveraging data (from formative assessments & universal screeners) to make sure students do not "fall through the cracks" and are provided "just in time" assistance.

Pam Arnold, our district MTSS consultant, is working closely with our school principals to build a solid foundation towards current and future implementation efforts around MTSS. Specifically, she is supporting principals with building school-based leadership teams and with crafting a shared understanding of what MTSS looks like. This year, we are trying to focus on firming up our educational systems and structures at each of our schools. One project that we are nearing completion of is developing a consistent Educational Support Team (EST) process, with common documentation across our schools. Additionally, we are aligning the EST process with other elements of our multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) for greater coherence between all aspects of our teaching and learning systems. Implementation of MTSS is a multi-year endeavor. We will continue to provide periodic updates as we move forward.

## Other Important Notes

### **Transportation:**

Mount Mansfield Unified Union School District was one of two school districts and communities selected to participate in a feasibility study of the **Future of Rural Transit Project**. The Future of Rural Transit is a coalition of VTrans and other partners seeking to expand transportation options by combining school and public bus service (adding options beyond the existing, exclusive pupil transportation). This survey [HERE](#) will help the project team gather valuable feedback on potential routes. Responses will be anonymous.

### **Important Date Reminders:**

- **December 8 - Early Release (2 hours prior to normal dismissal)**
- **December 23-31 - School Recess**





# Winter Sports Are Here!

Highlights for the beginning of the season!

- **Varsity Boys Basketball**
  - 12/20- HOME vs. Hartford - 5:30/7:30 PM
  - 12/22- HOME vs. Rice - 5:30/ 7:30 PM
- **Varsity Girls Basketball**
  - 12/10- HOME vs. Colchester - 5:30/7:30 PM
  - 12/16- AWAY vs. Rutland
- **Boys Hockey**
  - 12/11 - HOME vs. CVU - 6:30 PM
  - 12/15 - HOME vs. Northfield - 6:15 PM
  - 12/18 - HOME vs. U32 - 6:30 PM
- **Girls Hockey (HOME games are played @ Cairns)**
  - 12/11 - HOME vs. Stowe
  - 12/15 - AWAY vs. No Country/ Lyndon
  - 12/18 - HOME vs. BFA St. Albans
- **Nordic Skiing**
  - 12/15 - Rikert Nordic Center - Skate
- **Indoor Track**
  - 12/18 - Open Meet @ UVM
- **Alpine Skiing**
  - 1/6 - Smugglers Notch - 10:00 AM
- **Dance Team**
  - 1/8, 1/15, 1, 22- Virtual Competitions
  - 1/29 - SBHS - 1:00 PM



## Exciting News From Around the District!

### Name a Snow Plow! - Vermont Agency of Transportation

Several of our schools submitted name suggestions to the “Name a Snow Plow” Program put on by the Agency of Transportation! Students had so much fun with their suggestions and were rewarded when their snow plows came to visit schools late last month. Keep an out for these plows this winter as they work hard to make sure our roads are clear and safe for travel:

- **Camels Hump Middle School-** Plower Power
- **Jericho Elementary School-** Snow Day Stopper
- **Brewster-Pierce Memorial School-** YOGI
- **Underhill Central School-** The White Fox

If you haven't seen it, WCAX also did a short feature story on it as well! You can watch that [HERE](#).





## Camels Hump Middle School

Camels Hump hosted its first Vaccination Clinic in conjunction with the Vermont Department of Health on November 24 for students ages 5-11 years old. The next clinic will be on December 15th.





## Jericho Elementary School

Digital learning is so important in today's world. Shaun Langevin, our Technology Integration Specialist, led Mr. Brezic's 3rd grade class in a lesson where they learned about the three rings of responsibility when being a good digital citizen: responsibility to yourself, your community, and the world.



## Brewster Pierce Memorial School

Students at BPMS have been busy making delicious treats. Here they are making bread in the new Town Forest fire pit and processing corn to pop for snack!





## Underhill Central School

Students ventured out on their cross-country skis at Underhill Central School!



## Richmond Elementary School

Students at Richmond Elementary slid into December with a visit from a dog sledding team on December 1st!



## Richmond PreK

A Student Teacher in Ms. Self's class made cranberry garland for the forest animals, while working on patterns and counting! Check out this adorable [video](#) they made!

## Smilie Memorial School

Ms. Cole's class made some new friends when they visited Shelburne Farms last month!



And, back at school, students collected 40+ food items to create "crates of cheer" for seniors and families in need in our community.



## IMPORTANT DATES:

### Important Date Reminders:

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## We want to hear from you!

An open line of communication is what we are striving for here at MMUUSD! If you have any ideas, feedback, or just something you'd like to share with us, please email: **Jenna Stewart** at [jenna.stewart@mmuusd.org](mailto:jenna.stewart@mmuusd.org)

## COVID-19 Resources:

- [CDC Requirements for Public Transportation](#)
- [Instructional Reopening for Fall 2021](#)
- [Vermont Department of Health Guidance](#)
- [Child Care and Out of School Programs](#)
- [CDC Recommendations for Reopening Schools](#)
- [American Academy of Pediatrics](#)
- [Proper Handwashing Video](#)

## WE'RE HIRING!

- Long Term Sub- Math- MMUHS
- Kitchen Support- MMUHS
- Accountant - District
- Long Term Sub- Speech and Language - District
- Long Term Sub- Early Childhood Special Educator- District
- Full Time Mechanic - District

For all open positions, click [HERE](#).

## Important School Links

- [School Opening Plan](#)
- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [Lunch Menus](#)
- [Transportation](#)



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