



THE MAINE EDUCATIONAL CENTER FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

GOVERNOR BAXTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

One Mackworth Island, Falmouth, ME 04105

Executive Director's Report October 20, 2022

As I write this month's message to you all we are in the middle of a wind/rain storm on Mackworth Island. Power is out and we are on generator. Safety is of utmost importance so we made the decision to send island students and staff home. Working on our beautiful island brings wonderful moments and also some challenges!

The island has been full of activities the past couple of months and I couldn't be happier! It has been phenomenal to see the number of people coming to the island and being together! Our board monthly and committee meetings have been filled with vibrant discussion. On island we have our Deaf Seniors every other Tuesday, had an amazing Deaf Culture week that was FULL of people, and activities including our Deaf Tea, a sold-out Paint Night, and activities coming up with DRM to support building knowledge on the voting process, and finally MeAD and Hands & Voices for Halloween. This is how we should be using this island!

Our HRSA grant team had a working retreat this month to focus on our collaboration with the CDC and The Maine Newborn Hearing Program. This day-long retreat brought forth discussion and many next steps to increasing access to screening, diagnosis, and early intervention services for deaf and hard of hearing children. This team has developed a new website, a new app for families and providers, tip sheets and videos, all focused on early interactions with children and providers for families. We are seeing the positive results of this work in our child outcome data!

We have been working on Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access (DEIA) under Djenne Morris's guidance. Djenne is a parent of a child who is Deaf/Blind and is a person of color. She is certified in Diversity, Equity and Inclusion consultation. We are learning so much from her expertise. Djenne worked with our staff at our opening professional development day and then met with the various teams at MECDDH/GBSD. She is coming back this month to support family engagement. We are so fortunate to have her support!

Our coordinators have been meeting every two weeks and this team is strong! This new structure is providing support to staff and is able to offer more direct communication on a regular basis. The team is skilled and has so much experience and they are working together to share and learn from each other. I am thrilled to have more perspectives to our discussions and next steps in our organization.

Thank you to Donna Casavant and Katie Duncan for working so hard on our new professional supervision and evaluation process. They have put in countless hours developing a new system that has staff input and follows the Maine Department of Education requirements. We will be having focus group meetings with staff to collect feedback and data on the process, and the rubric, as the year continues.

We are so fortunate. Our staff and Deaf Community are skilled, passionate and dedicated to the education of Maine's Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and their families. Thank you to our Board for your continued support!

Warmly

Karen Hopkins, *Executive Director*



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Early Intervention and Family Services

Amy Spencer, *Coordinator*

EIFS is thrilled to welcome Ellie Gettman to our team. She has been working for Child Development Services for ten years. After her daughter referred on the NHS and was identified as having a hearing difference, Elie and her husband went through MECDHH/EIFS early process for families; focusing on early interactions/foundations for language, exploring language and communication opportunities, meeting other parents with D/HH children and getting to know D/HH adults. They regularly attended Family Playgroups on island and through this Ellie's desire to support other parents grew. Her experience with her own daughter expanded her interest in pursuing her Teacher of the D/HH certification. We are ecstatic to not only have her special education background but to have her parent perspective as part of our team. She has already brought so much depth of knowledge and expertise to our team in the last few weeks. Additionally, our fantastic crew of interventionists have welcomed Ellie with open arms each offering their time to implement a variety of training areas. Ellie has shadowed most of our staff in sessions and will continue to spend time with both the North staff and South staff to ensure she has a variety of perspectives and well-rounded training. WELCOME ELLIE!!

We are now looking for two more EIFS providers and hope they can fill in some needs to best support the families we serve. For now, staff, contracted providers, and CDS have been more than accommodating stretching themselves and coming up with ways to be the most efficient to get families what they need. Staff from other departments are lending help when and where they can. Contracted providers have been so integral in our ability to support families. Thanks to everyone's willingness to bend and flex, we are able to meet most of the needs of families with Deaf or hard of hearing infants and toddlers in Maine!

Mackworth Island Preschool

Cathy Lushman, *Coordinator*

This month in preschool we have enjoyed our first unit of our new curriculum – All About Family. We are using the PreK for ME curriculum and the children are really enjoying the hands-on activities provided. A few of our favorite stories include, *Corduroy*, *Sometimes I'm Bombaloo*, *Peter's Chair*, and *Cry Baby*. Every Wednesday we enjoy a story read only in ASL by one of our ASL specialists.





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East End Community School (Elementary)

Melanie Bowlus, *Coordinator*

Our first month of school at EECS was focused on establishing routines, schedules, and expectations in the Baxter classrooms and mainstream classrooms. Students were excited to reconnect with their classmates and teachers. Teachers of the Deaf are providing services and educational technicians are providing support where needed.



We launched our year-long unit on the book “The Wonderful Wizard of Oz” and began the Baxter Classroom’s “Reader’s Theater,” with teachers and ed techs becoming the story’s characters. Students worked together on a collaborative project for the Deaf Culture Festival on Mackworth Island. In the Baxter classroom, K-2nd grade is learning year one Bedrock vocabulary, working on handwriting skills, identifying the letters in their name, and learning how to recognize feelings. 3rd-5th grade is memorizing Bilingual Grammar Curriculum vocabulary, studying adjectives and crafting sentences with subjects and predicates.

Our students at Brewer Community School are off to a great start! They have been busy giving name signs to their new friends in their classes. Our classroom teachers are wonderful, kind, and working hard to create an inclusive environment. Our team of staff is cohesive and running smoothly. The focus in our school for the first two weeks is on building relationships, getting to know each other, and teaching expected behaviors. Now that we’ve started doing more academics, we see that summer school did what it was designed to do in that the students are starting the year at the same levels or above where they left off last spring. Yay!



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Outreach, Part B

Donna Casavant, *Coordinator*

Our twelve outreach itinerant TODs have started their year off in a blur! With improved data systems in place, we are striving to connect with and serve the **727** outreach students and their educational teams. (Yes, that is right: $727/12 = 60+$ students per TOD. We are a busy department!) Here are some highlights:

This is a picture of one itinerant TOD's travel for the month of September. Red dots indicate the **17 cities she visited in 20 school days!**

Your September places		
1	17	38
Country/Region	Cities	Places
	1 new	7 new

This is a graphic for one week of contacts prepared through the use of Google Calendar. It shows how much time one TOD spends on **direct service (SDI) and travel (Commute)** in a particular week. As you can see, these two activities take up **70% of her work week**, leaving less time for record keeping, consultation, new students, team communications. As a comparison, CDS strives for a 55% goal for direct service and travel.

Activity	Time Spent
commute	13.3 hr
possible appt	0.5 hr
consult	0 hr
SDI	14.7 hr
Default	4.8 hr



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<p>08-B-O-28 Teacher of the Deaf/HH Teacher: Vincent, Tani (Falmouth-TOD)</p> <p>Grading By Student Roster Setup Roster Batch Ec</p> <p>Section Staff History Roster Attendance</p> <p> Print Options</p> <hr/> <p>Active Students: 93 Males:45 Grade KG: 4 Females:48 Grade PK3y: 5 Other:0 Grade PK4y: 2 Grade 01: 6 Grade 02: 3 Grade 03: 9 Grade 04: 9 Grade 05: 7 Grade 06: 6 Grade 07: 3 Grade 08: 8 Grade 09: 4 Grade 10: 9 Grade 11: 10 Grade 12: 8</p>	<p>With the roll out of the new and improved Infinite Campus system, we have the ability to follow-up with outreach students whose school teams may have lost contact with us. The TOD in one particular geographic area has a total of 93 potential students. This is the highest total caseload in outreach. These students include direct service, consult, and those living in this TOD's geographic area.</p>															
<p>Aroostook County Caseload Cleanup September 1 through October 13, 2022 activity Beginning Caseload: 58</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unknown status (2): Not in IC, but on my spreadsheet with no info yet; awaiting IEP information from CDS or school • Archived (4): Determined hearing issue has resolved or child has moved out of state or out of contact. • Direct contact (8): Observation visits, IEP meetings, direct service, consultation. • Initial contacts made (17): Releases updated and awaiting school communication • Initial contacts attempted (22): No response • No contact yet made (9) 	<p>Our newest TOD in Aroostook County comes to the profession from her role as a classroom teacher. She has taken this early time to learn about the job, but she is also reaching out to Aroostook County families on our general roster to re-establish contact and rebuild our relationships, especially after reduced contacts for the year that the TOD position was vacant. With her work, our Aroostook County database is being rebuilt, records are slowly being digitized and uploaded to our Baxter Drive, and students are being served again.</p>															
<table border="1"> <tr> <td>AUDIOLOGY</td> <td>CDS INFO</td> <td>MODE of COMMUNICATION</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SERVICE LOG</td> <td>MNH PROG GUIDES</td> <td>COMMUNICATION LOG</td> </tr> <tr> <td>IFSP IEP 504 PLANNED SERVICES</td> <td colspan="2">ODDACE</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HEARING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY</td> <td colspan="2">PUBLIC SCHOOL INFO</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Summary</td> <td>Profile</td> <td>Enrollments Schedule Flags</td> </tr> </table>	AUDIOLOGY	CDS INFO	MODE of COMMUNICATION	SERVICE LOG	MNH PROG GUIDES	COMMUNICATION LOG	IFSP IEP 504 PLANNED SERVICES	ODDACE		HEARING ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY	PUBLIC SCHOOL INFO		Summary	Profile	Enrollments Schedule Flags	<p>Outreach TODs are the first department to be trained on using Infinite Campus to collect data on our students. Other departments will be trained to input this data as well. This image shows the various kinds of information we can document, collect and access.</p>
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Middle/High School, North/South

Erin Bunce, *Coordinator*

The site-based programs at Lyman Moore Middle School and Portland High School are off to a running start! The teachers at each site worked hard to make their classrooms open and welcoming using student centered classroom designs. The beginning of the school year is always exciting with new routines and so forth; but the teachers have also made a conscious effort to connect with each and every student.

As the new site-based coordinator for the middle and high school programs, it has been a privilege to watch the teachers start of the year in such a positive and welcoming way. It is also a privilege for me to meet all the students as well. At the PHS site-based program, Alicia Pieper (teacher) and Morgan Gavaletz (educational technician) started a new relationship with STRIVE TOPS (Transition Outcomes Program for Students) by supporting a student transitioning between the site-based classroom and TOPS. It has been a productive time with the new partnership!

The site-based program is thankful to Betsy Morrison and Kelly Frey, as well as Del Peavy (Cape Elizabeth Schools), for collaborating with us. Meanwhile, Megan Garrity (teacher) at LMMS has been a huge advocate for students to get involved with after school activities because she believes that students should be involved with all aspects of the school day. This fall we have students involved with soccer, Anime Club, and Robotics Club! Both PHS and LMMS students contributed to the Deaf Culture Festival by baking lots of goodies with help from Alicia Pieper, Emily Blachly, Matt Welch, Matt Webster, and Christine Boucher -- thank you all! In closing, it has been a wonderful experience getting to know everyone at LMMS and PHS!

Maintenance

Steve Kimball, *Supervisor*

Since the last school board meeting on September 1st, the Maintenance Department has been busy.

- Involved in Deaf Culture Festival setup
- Clean up quad area
- Installed a new fence in the quad area
- Trimmed branches in all areas making it safer when mowing
- Regraded the hill leading behind gym
- Clearing and cleanup of soccer field area
- Prepared for several outside organization events held on campus
- Set up vendor to replace spill bucket (part of fuel tank system), spill bucket did not pass State inspection done yearly
- Bangor office: assembled new desks and put-up shelving
- Touched up paint throughout school
- Removed trees that posed a safety issue to students, staff, and buildings
- Removed AC units for the winter
- Repaired toilets and faucets that were not working properly
- Setup vendor dates for vehicles to be cleared and ready for winter
- Day-to-day routine tasks