



# 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

June 2, 2022

Dear Board Members,

As we all process the devastating situation in Texas there are no words to express the sadness the world is feeling this week. For our community, I want to share that I have learned there was a Deaf Education program in this school, which brings a unique connection to this tragedy for us. Please keep our colleagues in this program and all the families and educators impacted by this tragedy in your thoughts. I continue to be in awe of the way our community rallies around each other to provide comfort and steps to moving forward towards healing.

May is always an extremely busy month for every department in our organization. The number of transition meetings, annual meetings, and preparations for summer and fall planning, are amazing. Our staff are busy supporting families, children, agencies and schools statewide in ways that are stronger than I ever remember. The gratitude I have for the collaborative nature of our programs and the staff's supportive manner is endless.

Thank you for your continued support and guidance.

Warmly,

Karen Hopkins, *Executive Director*



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## Human Resources

Lori Levesque, *Director*

Same as with May, the main focus in HR/Payroll right now is creating, sending, and gathering back teacher contracts for the 2022-2023 school year. Along with current contracts, I have been busy posting vacancies, managing applicants, and onboarding newly hired staff. Some processes have been fine-tuned: applicant tracking spreadsheets in Google to help supervisors and their administrative assistants manage information and the interview process, the hiring process in general, and onboarding.

We are still working on job descriptions so those are current on the website. We are contractually obligated to provide a current job description with each staff member's evaluation and the majority of our staff have annual evaluations coming up in July and August.

Other tasks that are coming up and require some prep work are stipend approvals/payouts, fiscal year rollover, and the annual audit. A busy time for the office.

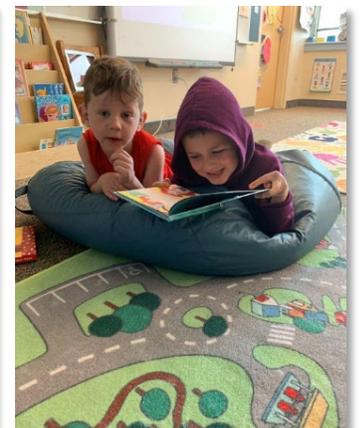
## Mackworth Island Preschool

Cathy Lushman, *Coordinator*

At the Preschool this month we've been learning about fairy tales and music! We had special guests the other day – Dio and Andy from the maintenance team! We sang and played our instruments with them. If only every day could be music day with Dio and Andy! We also opened our classrooms for open door centers – students love choosing to play in the ASL room or the spoken language room.



We are looking forward to graduation on June 14th and we hope to see you there!





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## East End Community School (Elementary)

Melanie Bowlus, *Lead Teacher*



Rehearsals have begun for the Baxter Classroom at EECS dramatic presentation of *Charlotte's Web*! Our year-end culmination of our Charlotte's Web unit will be held on Friday, June 3rd at 1:00 at the MECDDHH/GBSD gymnasium. Students have been busy memorizing their lines, designing costumes, and preparing background decorations. The production of *Charlotte's Web* will be an exciting, memorable event for students and their families!



This month the kindergarten and first grade who enjoyed an animal presentation by Spark's Ark, an animal rehabilitation program. Students were enthralled with the variety of animals, including an owl, sugar glider, snake, bearded dragon, and chinchilla.



As the school year winds down, opportunities have increased for students to demonstrate different character qualities that have been reviewed all year. Students continue to earn marbles to add to the marble jar and were excited to realize they had enough for their next reward – a class basketball game.



Emily Blachly, *ASL Specialist*, is continuing her weekly story time. With only four weeks left in school, students are enjoying these last few weeks of imaginative stories presented by Emily in her beautiful ASL storytelling style.

In Foundations for Literacy, students have been learning new vocabulary then practicing reading short stories (including the new vocabulary words) at home. There have been several hands-on activities to supplement the literacy

curriculum, including practicing spinning tops, toy car races, and baking a cake!

## Lyman Moore Middle School

Megan Garrity, *Lead Teacher*

It is obvious that spring is in the air and summer is on the horizon. As we near the end of the school year, students continue to be actively involved with extracurricular activities. We have students participating in baseball, track, lacrosse, anime and art clubs.





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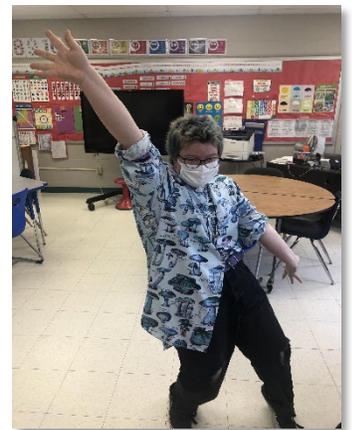
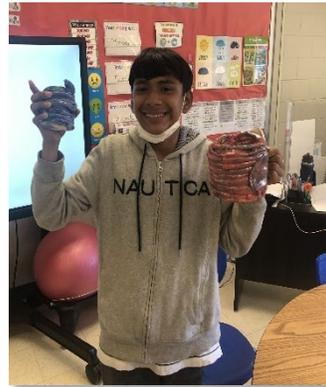
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This past month, students have worked hard in taking part in the state-wide testing NWEAs. Many put their best effort forward! The learning continues on even in this last stretch including learning about exponents, PEDMAS (Please Excuse My Dear Aunt Sally with order of operations), understanding DNA, family genetics, plant life cycles, exploring the history of food, and radioactivity.



On May 6th, three of our middle school students participated alongside the high school students for the Special Olympics event at Bonny Eagle. It was a big hit for the group and a memorable experience for all! Thank you to all who supported this event!



Our 8th grade students will be graduating

on Monday, June 13th. They have endured and persevered plenty these past few years as learners through a pandemic. We see incredible opportunities ahead of them as they begin their high school career! Truly, it does not suffice to say that “we will miss them.” I have no doubt that they will make BIG impressions on their future teachers and classmates.

## Portland High School

Kevin Bohlin, *Lead Teacher*

May was an exciting month for our students but we can see they are anxious to be done with the school year. We cannot believe how fast the year has gone by and having many different events is truly making this year to be a special one!

Three of our students were involved with the Special Olympics on May 6th and each of them placed within the top 5 of the races that they participated in. MECDHH/GBSD was well represented on that day as we had some middle school students involved too!

As we mentioned last month, one of our students has been selected for Youth Leadership Camp. We received an additional donation and would like to acknowledge Kathie Marquis-Girard (former assistant principal at PHS) She collaborated with LL Bean to provide camping clothes for the student.

Last month we also mentioned that a student has been working on the school’s “clothes closet”. Due to their hard work of organizing and categorizing the clothes, they developed a “catalog” so two of Portland’s High School sites could browse to find outfits for the prom. This is an exciting way to recognize our student’s hard work and he was able to see other students’ self-confidence booming as they picked up their dresses.

We are looking forward to our “Island Day” on June 1st. The students will be meet on the island for a day full of activities. Some of those activities are: high school students doing a literacy-related activity with the preschool, exploring the island, reflecting on the year and discussing what to look forward to next year. Then students will make lunch for themselves and the Leadership Team.

As always, we want to express deep gratitude for the School Board, Leadership Team, interpreters, colleagues and staff at PHS for an incredibly supportive year we are looking forward to 2022-2023 year where we will have so many seniors graduating!!



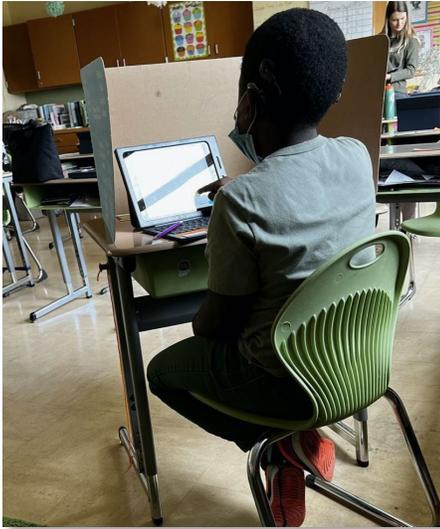
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## Brewer Community School Site-based Program

Linda Koehler, *Lead Teacher*



In Brewer, in addition to working on the Bilingual Grammar Curriculum, our younger students made a book together about opposites.

Our third grader was struggling with math at the beginning of the year but is now doing really well. He's increased the amount of independence he's experiencing in his day as well. This week, his class is doing NWEAs and he is learning to persist through the tough parts to get through it all.

Our seventh grader has been making more cool things in his tech class. He has a hovercraft and an electric motor powered boat. He's been doing some coding to run a robot. In his science class, they've been working with Lego Robotics.



## Public School Outreach, North

Donna Casavant, *North Coordinator*



By now, I am sure you have all heard about or seen the new offices in Bangor. The recent move has brought us to a new, gorgeous space, though we are still working on making it ours. Each office reflects the personalities of the teams in them.

Though we each have a unique space we have not given up our desire to work collaboratively in the beautiful new conference room. The EIFS team hosted an all-day conference here. You can find Part B staff working together on projects in a variety of spaces. I am grateful for this new space and the opportunities it is bringing to us. We have come into the modern world by moving here.

I want to extend my thanks to Donna. She has worked so hard at making sure we are all comfortable. She has made herself available for everything from moving furniture and contacting professionals to making equipment work, all the while, she is doing her work. I wonder how she does it all. I am sure that must be difficult considering there are so many of us.

I would also like to thank Karen for responding to our sometimes hourly changing needs related to this new space. These included public restrooms, trash, parking, door signage, storage, and many other issues I am sure I am unaware of. Responses to our requests made our work life physically more comfortable.



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Finally, I'd like to thank Rich and the maintenance team, because without them, we would not have our furniture, electronics, and the resources needed to serve the needs of our students and families.

Thank you all for making this new space possible. It is a pleasure to come to our new offices where we all fit easily and can come together as a team.

