



**Maine School Administrative District #51**

*Engage • Empower • Inspire*

# **Instructional Support Board Update**

**March 6, 2023**

**Julie Olsen**

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# Highlights and Gratitude

- Focus on this update is on the success of our new model of embedded staff in K-12 programs
  - Number of staff and locations
  - Vignettes from staff members
- **Thank you!**



# The Specifics

This year so far we have hired 9 new professional staff across K-12

- Five at MIW
  - One Special Educator
  - One Speech Pathologist in FLS
  - One Occupational Therapist in FLS
  - One Speech Pathologist in Behavior
  - One Social Worker in Behavior
- One at 4-5
  - One Social Worker in Behavior
- One at 6-8 (with one agreed open position pending)
  - One Social Worker in Behavior
- Two at 9-12
  - One Social Worker in Behavior
  - One Occupational Therapist in FLS



# Positive Stories and Observations



# Tracy Libby, Social Worker- MIW Behavior

There have been some fun moments since I started for sure! We have one student who hates to go out for recess b/c he doesn't play with anyone..so recently I have started to bring stuff out with us..and it's attracted other kids to play along...the other day 6 kids joined us! The next day at recess he didn't really want to go out again and I said "Hey, let's bring a ball out again"...he said "ok, I and I want the other kids to come too", I explained that sometimes kids might join us and sometimes they might not..but if we are having fun it will be contagious to the other kids (we processed that idea a lot), but it worked! We are getting more and more kids to join in ..not always 6 at a time..but 1 or 2 is better than none and socially is really making an impact for this kid! We are also brainstorming new ideas and activities that we can do together to make recess fun (as recess should be!). The smiles that I am beginning to see on this child's face are priceless! Having the opportunity to go outside and focus on play skills with this student is a great opportunity to grow his social capacity and confidence!



# Scott Keysor, Special Educator/RTI-B Teacher-GHS

It has been fantastic having Tiffany McPhetres, LCPC/LADC embedded in the Broad Cove Academy at Greely High School. Tiffany has been integral to both the social-emotional and academic learning of our students. As a veteran teacher, but one new to GHS, I am so proud that I can now be a part of a community that clearly values and prioritizes all of its students' growth and well being.



# Nicole Connolly, Occupational Therapist, MIW FLS

There is a student in the SCALES program at MIW who has historically had very challenging behaviors, and has engaged very little in traditional academics. In addition to working with skilled educational technicians and special education teacher, this student has received integrated OT and ST throughout her school week. With this new model, about half of her weekly support comes from professional staff. This student has recently demonstrated that she can read a handful of site words, and her IEP team plans to start a formal reading program with her! She has demonstrated significant growth with her communication and self-care skills, as well. The part of her story that is most heartwarming and elicits the most pride from her providers, though, is that her peers are starting to regard her as a valuable part of their community. Her team has worked hard to facilitate a sense of belonging and to develop comfort for those around her to connect with her. We have scripted conversation starters, interpreted her non-verbal behaviors for them, and modeled human connection in their presence. Two classmates from her regular ed classroom recently wrote excerpts about her. One of them wrote, "One day I wanted to sit with her I was scared She stole my firends chicken nuggets but once I saw how happy she was because not a lote of people sit whith her I wanteb to do it again. and she got happyer. and I liked it". Another student wrote, "when you look at [student] you mite see a bifrents [difference] but really she is the same and she is a frend to all. She mite hit but she is a loveing purson like all and to all." Professional staff have a fuller tool box to effectively seize teachable moments and to develop programming so that true potential in students can be discovered. With any new model, there are remaining kinks to work out, but the future is bright!



# Lindsay Allen, Speech Pathologist, MIW FLS

Being in the classrooms for extended periods of time has been invaluable in seeing the full academic picture. With the more functional life skills kids, getting blocks of time with them and being able to spend some planning time with support staff has been great for getting carryover, especially with device users.



# Steve Berry, Special Educator, FLS MIW

One of the benefits of this approach is the ease of communication. We see each others challenging moments and are their to support and process our thoughts. The best ideas come through collaboration and reflection, now we can do this in real time.

I'm so excited for the second half of this year and especially for the start of the next with my partners.



# Jessie Pearson, Social Worker, GMS Behavior

- Having myself embedded into the program and present for the majority of the students day has helped provide context to behaviors and allowed for deeper conversations with staff about diagnosis, behaviors associated with diagnosis such as ADHD, Autism, Anxiety etc. and appropriate language to use when working with students.
- I have had the ability to role model interventions as alternatives as well as build relationships with staff. I have noticed that by being able to listen, validate and debrief with staff we are providing another level of support.
- Being able to build relationships with students and connect with families on a regular basis helps bridge gaps around expectations, progress and areas of need. There have been many circumstances where I have been in the room to observe behaviors as well as IEP related goals, which allows me to support in the moment, assist in de escalating a student and revisit these topics in our 1:1 sessions or groups to provide more consistent praise and acknowledgment when progress is made.

