

December 16, 2011

Dear Capers,

If you've given up on the idea of snow, you're not alone. I realize that winter has yet to officially begin, but it has been a treat to have 50 and 60 degree days in December. It sounds like things may pick up a bit for us in the snow department at the end of next week. Stay tuned!

This week's school board meeting featured some incredible students and a variety of programs including Mock Trial, Robotics, and athletics. Press releases on our district website provide further details about some of these incredible accomplishments including state championships and qualification for national and world tournaments. Congratulations to the many students involved with these activities and to the coaches, volunteers, and parents who have supported them along their journeys.

Another piece of the meeting was a presentation by some teachers from Pond Cove about the Daily 5 structure they are utilizing in their classrooms to organize literacy instruction and the CAFÉ menu. The combination of these structures helps teachers to focus on the necessary instructional components (vocabulary, phonics instruction, reading fluency, for example) while accommodating the unique needs and strengths of the students in their classrooms. Again, a more thorough explanation of this work is incorporated into the video of the [school board meeting](#).

On the professional development front, new staff from across the district met in late November to talk about the start to their year and to explore how we as a district can better support them in their work. Additionally, teacher leaders (from grade levels, teams, and departments) from across the district met at the fire station on December 1st for dinner and conversation regarding their work in professional learning communities (PLC's). Our guest was a Massachusetts principal and author, Ms. Catherine Glaude, who has written about the work of PLC's and their schools in supporting student achievement.

The Maine Department of Education is preparing to submit a waiver for No Child Left Behind to Washington in February. The department is currently seeking feedback on their waiver via an on-line survey and conversations being held in various regions of the state. If you are interested in learning more about this process, please visit: <http://www.maine.gov/education/nclb/flexibility.html>.

Attached to this letter is a brief explanation of the upcoming work to [revisit the vision, mission, and values](#) of the Cape Elizabeth School District. Community input is an important part of this process and details about how to participate will be coming out in January. In the interim, if you are interested in supporting this project, I am looking for volunteers with expertise in the areas of publicity and

public relations, soliciting donations (for expenses such as refreshments), compiling data, and editing/word-smithing. If you are interested in volunteering to help in any of these areas, please contact the Superintendent's office at 799-2217.

My next "coffee chat" will be held on January 21 in the community room at the community services building. Please join me and bring a friend or neighbor if you are interested. Students are welcome, too.

Best wishes to each of you in the coming year. I hope you find time during this upcoming vacation to relax and enjoy the company of friends and loved ones.

Sincerely,

Meredith Nadeau