Annual Report
Merrimack Middle School
2021-2022

The 2021-2022 school year goals at Merrimack Middle School (MMS) were to support our students both academically and socially as they adjusted to a more normal school day and activities that hadn't been offered during the previous school year. While we still experienced some of the different effects of the pandemic, such as masking and absences, the important social and academic components of a middle school educational experience returned. Providing more academic, extra-curricular, and social events in-person, not just through technology, allowed students to connect more to each other, their teachers, and their interests.

One of the benefits of returning to full time in-person learning was the ability to reinstate our FLEX block which allowed us to provide intervention and extension activities as well as a substantial amount of time for band and chorus to meet at the middle school. During the FLEX block, thirty minutes at the beginning of the day, three times per week, students were able to choose to participate in Concert Band, Chorus, Chess, Embroidery, Kindness Rocks, Lovin' the Library, International Travel, Spanish Games, Trail Walking, Nature Journaling, Current Events, Dodgeball, MMS TV, MMS Bloggers, and other on team support activities. These different activities allowed students to explore areas of interest, practice written and oral communication and manage their physical health in a manner that fit their different areas of interest.

There was much excitement for opportunities to return to in-person events that celebrated the talent throughout the building. Our drama club was able to restart in-person performances which included "*The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"* as the fall play and "*Peter Pan*" as the spring musical. Concert events were held throughout the school year providing a great opportunity for the Merrimack community to come together and celebrate as our MMS Concert Band, MMS Jazz Band, and the MMS Chorus performed before the live audiences. Each of these were amazing, "packed house" events, celebrating Merrimack Middle School students' dedication and hard work through these performances during the school year.

Students at Merrimack Middle School also had the opportunity to participate in number of co-curricular activities. Art Club, Dance Club, Quiz Bowl, Printmaking, Hiking Club, Yoga Club, and Photography Club were among the different opportunities in which students could participate. There were also opportunities organized by the MMS Student Council to donate items for animals through the New Hampshire Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals as well as Toys for Tots which helped our students to develop an understand the importance of being part of the larger community.

The 2021-2022 school year also saw the return of the 8th Grade Culminating Educational Experience. In May of 2022 many of our 8th grade students traveled to Washington DC while others chose to stay in New Hampshire and participate in a variety of events including a trip to Boston. The end of the year was highlighted by the return of the middle school dance.

The 2021-2022 school year has had a variety of different trials as we returned from pandemic challenges. Many of these events and activities, as we get back to a consistent school experience, have begun to help us meet the needs of our students in both the social emotional and academic realms. There have been many things that we can be grateful for this school year. Among the most important of these is the continued community support of our students, staff, families, and community this school year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Adam Caragher, Principal