

*The Washington County Consortium*

# NEWSLETTER

Brought to you by Sarah Woog, Executive Director of the Washington County Consortium (WCC)

October 2, 2019

Happy Fall! I hope you are happy about the start of your school years and are excited to come together for Harvest of Ideas.

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*If you have not already registered for Harvest of Ideas, please use [this](#) link to access the HOI 2019 website and find a link to registration as well as a summary of offerings and other information about the day. Registration closes at 4:00 PM on October 8.*

*There has been a little confusion about the structure of Harvest of Ideas this year, so I am going to take this opportunity to provide some clarity.*

*There will be a couple of people featured as keynotes during the “large group session,” including Pender Makin, long time educator and Maine’s Commissioner of Education and Geo Neptune, a celebrated speaker, educator and basketmaker, and member of the Passamaquoddy tribe from Indian Township.*

*While everyone will be attending the large group session, everyone will not be attending it at the same time. The session will happen once in the morning and once in the afternoon. The time you are attending the large group session will be determined once the small group sessions are established, on October 10. For example, if you are in “Guided Reading- morning session,” you will attend the large group session in the afternoon. If you are in “Guided Reading- afternoon session,” you will attend the large group session in the morning.*

*Lunch is provided and will be in the Reynolds Center, and coffee and refreshments are available in the Reynolds Center in the morning as well. You are not required to go to the Reynolds Center in the morning to check in and are welcome to go straight to your first session, if this is what you prefer.*

*Please remember that parking is always a challenge, so carpool if you are able to. Looking forward to seeing all of you on October 15.*



## *The Washington County Consortium:* Washington County Educator Profile Meet Lewis Collins, Superintendent of Moosabec CSD and Union 103

Moosabec CSD and Union 103 is a school district in Washington County nestled in the coastal communities of Jonesport and Beal Island. It includes Jonesport-Beals High School, Jonesport Elementary School, and Beals Elementary School. The district is a relatively small district, one familiar to many of us, with generations of pride in its schools, combined classrooms, contract disputes, packed gyms for basketball games, and a part time superintendent. These characteristics represent significant strengths and challenges, and Lewis (Lew) Collins is excited to leverage the strengths of the district to meet the challenges of a small rural district in Maine.

Lew started as Superintendent of Moosabec CSD and Union 103 in July of this year, and shortly began listening to the staff at the schools and community members he signed on to serve. He sees listening as one of the most important things he can do this year, and recognizes that the voice and values of the people in the district will help him determine how to best support them and increase student outcomes. Lew plans to spend much of his time this year “going into schools, getting diverse perspectives, listening to staff and teachers.” So far, he likes what he’s hearing and said the district’s greatest strengths are “first, its kids; and next, its staff, who are completely dedicated to student success.”

Complete dedication to student success has been a hallmark of Lew’s long career in education. He began his career in Camden, NJ, where he was a teacher at an alternative education school for adjudicated youth. He’s proud of the on-the-job training the school provided, and the work-study with pay opportunities the students were able to take advantage of. The school, and Lew’s work within it, supported students in discovering, defining, and pursuing their own paths to success, paths that took them off the troubled roads they had already traversed, and supported them on a journey toward meaningful and fulfilling lives.

This theme of supporting students in finding fulfillment and success determined by their own passions and values is one with which many educators in Washington County can relate. This theme is evident in the current work being done to expand Career and Technical Education opportunities, and is pervasive in all of our schools. We all know the lobsterman’s daughter who takes a half day work-study her senior year to work on the boat, or the third-grader who designs a four-wheeler for his lego-engineering project. In fact, in Lew’s own district, students at Beals Elementary learn science by posing hypotheses and designing experiments in their own backyards, working with the Downeast Institute (DEI) to address the green crab problem, or to determine the best conditions under which mussels may thrive.

Lew is continuing his listening tour of his district. It’s important work. He is excited to see how his “understanding of the needs of his district translates into success for kids.” I have a sneaking suspicion he’ll find the needs and values that surface are already familiar to him, are harmonious with his own values and experiences, and provide a rich foundation for inspiring and supporting student success. And Lew, as you listen to the folks in Washington County you are here to support and serve, I hope one message is loud and clear: Welcome. It’s good to have you.