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Blended learning reviewed, Walder urges in-person learning

At the first board of education meeting since the new school year got in to full swing, Hoopeston Area administrators on Thursday discussed how teachers, students and parents are adjusting to school in the age of the novel coronavirus.

Calling 2020 a "year to remember forever and hope it never happens again," Supt. Robert Richardson said all segments involved in educating children have been shown flexibility and are stepping up to do what needs to be done - especially students.

Richardson said early on, concerns were expressed about how younger students would deal with having to wear masks. "Occasionally, you'll hear someone say, 'Your mask needs to be over your nose,'" he said, adding overall, students are coping well. "I'm proud of our kids

for doing what needs to be done," he said.

Principal Suzi Root said Maple School staff and students "are thrilled to be back." Because of COVID-19 restrictions, the district's youngest students eat lunch at their desks. The upsides of that have staff thinking the cafeteria may not need to be used again. The downside is that students spend more time sitting. "Five-year-olds don't sit very much," she said, adding teachers have become creative in having children move while still observing social distancing. "They've been phenomenal," she said.

Curriculum Director Emily Brown talked about some glitches in the remote learning process but said she is "still confident in our remote program and if we have to

See **LEARNING** on other side

Briefly

Meetings

Rossville Village Board, 7 p.m. Monday, village office. Business will include: approving engineering proposals for the Attica St. water main replacement, next step for 106 E. Attica and announcing election packets for the April 2021 election will be available September 22.

Birthday card shower

Larry Coon, formerly of Hoopeston, will celebrate his 85th birthday on September 27 and would enjoy hearing from friends. Cards and notes may be sent to: Accolade of Paxton on Pells, Larry Coon, 1001 E. Pells St., Paxton IL 60957.

Vendors wanted

Looking for vendors for the Rossville Fall Festival to be held October 3 and October 4th Booth fees are \$25. Contact Sherry Decker at 217-433-9056.

Blood drive

American Red Cross will hold a blood drive Friday, Oct. 9, from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 915 E. Orange, Hoopeston. American Red Cross' Covid-19 antibody testing is still underway, so all donations

made that day will be tested. Donors can schedule an appointment at www.redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED-CROSS.

Sesquicentennial meeting

A Hoopeston Sesquicentennial Celebration planning meeting at 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 24th at Hoopeston Council Chambers. Businesses, organizations and community members are invited to attend.

Many volunteers will be needed to carry off the planned celebrations June 27-July 3, 2021.

Grave decorations

Spring/summer grave sprays and decorations need to be cleaned up and removed from Floral Hill Cemetery by Thursday, Oct. 1. Decorations not cleaned up by that date will be removed by cemetery employees.

Alley cleanup scheduled

Alley cleanup will begin Monday, Oct. 19, weather permitting, for yard waste ONLY. This includes bush, leaves, and grass. NO concrete, brick, lumber, or landscape materials. If any of those items are in the pile, the pile will not be picked up.


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Learning continued from other side

go full remote, we have everything in place.”

Remote learning is directed at middle and high school students, who have in-person learning Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, while Wednesday is an all-remote learning day. Additionally, since their school day is four hours long, students are expected to do an hour each day of independent study, which includes remote learning lessons.

Families of students in all buildings were also allowed to choose all-remote learning for their students.

Dan Walder, John Greer principal, took a different tack with his report, compiling data on how remote learners fared during the first two weeks of school.

Walder is tracking the school's 65 remote learnings in areas of work completion, Google meetings and assessment completion for English, math and science.

In English, work completion percentages are 68, 64, and 82, for grades three, four, and five, respectively. In Google Meetings, which is how students and teachers communicate in the remote program, the percentages are 50, 72 and 62. Assessment comple-

tion rates were 59, 88 and 78, by grade.

In math and science, completion rates were 85, 45 and 77, Google Meetings 32, 62 and 69, and assessment completion, 50, 95 and 92.

To be successful remote learners, Walder said students need four things: parents who care, some organizational skills, some technical skills and some self-motivation.

Teachers send reminders to students to complete their work and families were made aware of expectations upfront, but some students are falling behind. Walder has made home visits but does not know if that will help.

“For most kids - not all kids - if you don't do the work, you won't do well on the assessment,” he said. Some parents will be receiving letters telling them that based on work so far, retention may be a likely outcome.

The solution? “Return remote learners to in-person learning as soon as possible,” he said. “In person learning helps the students, the family, the community and society, in the long run.”

For those concerned about the safety of returning to full time in-person learning, Walder said, “With the safety measures Hoopeston Area Schools are taking, our students are as safe as they can be in a public place. With mask wearing, social distancing protocols as possible, and daily sanitization, Hoopeston Schools have placed student/staff safety as a top priority. From the inside, what's being done in all our buildings, at this time, I am very comfortable with my own children attending our public schools.”

Another area of concern for some remote learners is the lack of access to their mentors.

Whitley Klaber, curriculum secretary, discussed the district's mentoring program, which pairs students with adults from the district and the community

Students are referred to the program by a parent, teacher or administrator. Last year, 26 students were paired: three at Maple, seven at John Greer, 11 at HAMS and five at HAHS. Mentors included 19 community members and seven staff members, who met with mentees weekly for 40 minutes, usually during lunch.

Remote learning makes mentor-mentee meetings

Weather

Sunny today. High 75. Tonight, mostly clear. Low 49. Tomorrow, mostly sunny. High 76, low 51.

For real time Hoopeston weather, visit justthefacts.net/weather/.

difficult, especially at the middle/high school. While meetings during school would be best, student transportation might be required for after-school meetings, and with COVID-19, “it gets complicated when you bring in mentors from the outside,” said high school Principal John Klaber.

While during school hours would be best, continuing the program may depend on using time after school for remote get-togethers between mentors and mentees.

Transportation was problematic at the start of the year, Richardson said. “We had some difficulty mov-

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United Prairie-Hoopeston has openings for Fall help for the following: CDL Drivers and Non-CDL. Please pick up applications at 18978 E 3850 North Rd, Hoopeston, IL 60942. For more information, please call the office, 217-888-0164 or Jordan Reese, manager, 217-918-2876.

Mechanic wanted. Experience with heavy truck, construction, and agricultural machinery preferred. Call 217-474-8349.

Cade's Heating and Air HVAC installer/ service tech. must have valid IL drivers license and EPA freon license. Please send resume to ramcade@frontier.com or 101 E Penn St., Hoopeston IL 60942.

Private in home caregiver 5 days/week from 7 to 11 for female with dementia. Hoopeston area. Must be able to use lift equipment for transfers. Call Tracey at 765 490 9642. May text for contact.

East Lynn Fertilizer is seeking full time and seasonal help. Requirements include at least a Class B CDL and ability to pass a drug test. Call 217-375-4225 or stop by 41284 S Main St., East Lynn, IL for more details.

ing kids from Point A to Point B,” he said. “Principals were very honest and said, ‘No, that's not working.’” Changes were made and now things are running smoothly. “Our people are really stepping up. I appreciate that,” he said.

In unrelated business, the board:

- Approved resignations from Amy Linares, district community liaison, Mason Layden, transportation director, and Karen Romig, middle school Scholastic Bowl coach, effective August 21.

- Hired Amanda Conover as bus monitor.

Obituaries

GERMAN - Dorothy M. (Hill) German, 87, of Milford, died Thursday, Sept. 17, 2020, at Carle Foundation Hospital, Urbana. Visitation was noon until the 2 p.m. funeral Sunday at Knapp Funeral Home, Milford. Burial was in Maple Grove Cemetery, Milford. Memorials are suggested to Milford Park and Pool Foundation, Milford Ambulance or Milford United Methodist Church. Condolences may be left at www.knappfuneralhomes.com.

JESSE - Betty Jane “BJ” (Etherton) Jesse, 73, of Cissna Park, died Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2020, at Iroquois Memorial Hospital, Watseka. Visitation will be 4-8 p.m. Monday at Knapp Funeral Home, Cissna Park. Graveside service will be at 1 p.m. Tuesday at Woodlawn (IOOF) Moweaqua Township Cemetery. Memorials are suggested to Cissna Park Fire Department or donor's choice. Condolences may be left at www.knappfuneralhomes.com.

MARGREY - Betty J. (Trumble) Margrey, 93, of Danville, formerly of Cissna Park, died Wednesday, Sept. 16, 2020, at Colonial Manor, Danville. She was cremated and graveside service will be at 1 p.m. Monday at Onarga Cemetery. Memorials are suggested to American Diabetes Association or donor's choice. Knapp Funeral Home, Cissna Park, is handling arrangements. Condolences may be left at www.knappfuneralhomes.com.

Teasdale Latin Foods has immediate openings on 2nd shift in both Distribution and Manufacturing. Pay to be determined based on experience level. Stop by the Human Resources office at 215 W. Washington Street, Hoopeston, for more detail. Please no phone calls.

Aquality Solutions is looking for full-time delivery drivers skilled in efficiency, organization, and flexibility. Delivery Drivers will deliver bottled water and bagged salt to commercial and residential customers and must have knowledge or be willing to learn maintenance operations when not driving. Apply in person at 102 N 1st Street in Hoopeston or call us at 855-692-7824.

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