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Hazen Union Prep for Returning Students

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – Just over a month from today, Hazen Union will open for in-person learning with adjustments, according to Orleans Southwest Supervisor Union (OSSU) Superintendent Adam Rosenberg.

In an email, Rosenberg described those adjustments as including “enhanced physical distancing measures,” and said the OSSU is taking a lead from the Vermont Agency of Education’s (AOE) “Strong and Healthy Start” guidelines: “all staff and students will be required to wear facial coverings, take part in health screenings at their first point of contact (bus or school) each day, and stay with a specific cohort of classmates throughout the day.”

The school is still sorting out the specifics. A community forum for Hazen Union that took place last night, Rosenberg noted that per the AOE guidelines, accommodations will be made for students with household members belonging to a



photo by Doug McClure

Hazen Union School was forced to close in mid-March due to COVID-19. Administrators are now weighing their options to safely re-open schools as normally as possible this fall.

group at high risk from COVID-19, including remote learning. For those parents who feel uncomfortable sending their children to school during the pandemic, Hazen Union also will make remote learning available. The meal plan as of now will offer pick-up at the

school for those students involved in remote classes.

The AOE guidelines Hazen Union is following have received pushback from education professionals in several supervisory unions and districts. Harwood Union’s Superintendent Bridgid Nease penned an open letter to that community that leads off with

“We are just five weeks away, or are we?” Nease continues that “It is time for me to speak out – to bring the community into what is really going on and engage you all in finding the solutions.” Nease said the logistics are the problem, more than the health and safety concerns, offering the example of teachers being required to teach

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Hardwick Elementary Gives Parents Choices for Trimester

by Doug McClure

HARDWICK – For the re-start of Hardwick Elementary School, Principal Patrick Pennock sent an e-mail out Monday night asking parents to determine which of three options might work best for their students.

The school year is being divided into trimesters, and Pennock is asking parents

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photo by Vanessa Fournier

Diane Grenkow (left), Jeudevine Memorial Youth Librarian, stands with five of the library’s board of trustees, from left: Ross Connelly, Kathleen Sampson, Andrea Brightenback, Brendan Buckley and Jodi Lew-Smith – chair of the board, around a newly constructed fundraising sign by Rob Alkusczy. The last \$550,000 of the funding is being requested from the taxpayers in a municipal bond vote August 11.

Governor Scott Mandates Masks

by Doug McClure

MONTPELIER – Effective August 1, an amendment to Governor Phil Scott’s Declaration of State of Emergency in Response to COVID-19 “requires all Vermonters to wear masks or cloth facial coverings any time it is not possible to maintain a physical distance of at least six feet with others from outside their household.”

Gov. Scott and Vermont health officials worry that the relatively minor impact of COVID-19 on Vermont will lull people into a false sense of security.

Hardwick Town Manager Shaun Fielder said “Masks are an important preventative measure to limit and reduce the transmission of coronavirus. Wearing of masks coupled with other recommended social distancing measures will help keep you healthy, as well as those you are interacting with. At our local level, thanks to the many volunteers who have been making masks and offering them up to community members, this is very much appreciated. If you are in need of a mask you can check with the Hardwick Neighbor to Neighbor group on how to get one.”

With the approach of cooler weather and students returning to schools, Gov. Scott said “Based on national and regional data on how the virus is spreading – and rather than waiting like other states have – I feel we need to act now to protect our gains, which have allowed us to reopen much of our economy. That’s why today I signed an order, which will strengthen our current mask mandates, so that we do not take steps backwards and we can stay open into the fall as people move more of their interactions indoors.”

Governor Scott has worn a mask in public since first declaring a State of Emergency on March 13. He urged people not to politicize wearing masks, but rather regard the action as a necessary step of

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