



# Regional School Unit No. 18

Phone: 207.465.7384

Fax: 207.465.9130

41 Heath St. Oakland, ME 04963

Carl Gartley  
Superintendent

Keith Morin  
Asst. Superintendent

Melannie Keister  
Director of Business / Finance

RSU 18 Staff, Parents and Students,

In every school I visited this past week, I heard students and staff saying they were happy to be back to school. Ready for a new year, full of hope, but realistic that things have not miraculously changed with the turning of the calendar. The week started last Sunday with one of our schools being notified that a local day care unfortunately had a positive case. This led to several of our students being identified as close contacts making them not able to come to school. Throughout the week, we had additional staff and students who were notified from people outside of our schools that they were close contacts to someone who had tested positive. While none of these led to shutdowns of our schools, they were a brutal reminder of the challenges in our towns. Unfortunately, on Friday afternoon, we were notified of a positive case at the high school. Contact tracing was completed, and the individuals identified as close contacts were all notified and are all following the appropriate quarantines.

During the week, I had the opportunity to have a conversation with two members of the CDC medical consulting team along with a physician contracted by the Maine Department of Education. We reviewed some of our practices and policies and some of the cases that we have had to deal with. We are following the CDC guidelines, and the consistent manner that cases are being dealt with has been helpful. I thank all of the amazing RSU 18 staff, our students and parents for your persistence as we all continue to deal with the stress of this year.

Parents, we did have several incidents this past week of students being sent to school who should not have been. I urge you all to continue to check your children for symptoms at home before sending them to school, and if your child is sick do not send them. Also, if a student is a close contact to a person who has tested positive, they must quarantine for ten days. I know how hard families have worked this year. We appreciate your efforts and ask everyone to remain diligent.

I was asked by several people what the new pandemic relief package out of Washington D.C. means for RSU 18. We are having ongoing conversation with state officials, but thus far we have not been notified as to how Maine is going to distribute these funds. Our best guess based on early signs is that these funds will give us the ability to continue the practices that have made us successful this year. We currently have more than two dozen additional support staff helping in our schools and the same number of part time student custodians. This additional staff has been instrumental in our plans to keep schools open and to keep them clean and safe. We continually restock all of our PPE and we continue to supply our teachers with the materials and technology they need. None of this has been easy, not even close. I will tell you every week how hard the staff is working and how proud I am to be part of this amazing district.

As a reminder to staff: Please fill out the survey to help us collect information about preparing for a vaccination clinic. I am not sure when this will happen, but I want us to be ready.

Have a good week, stay safe and stay healthy.

Carl Gartley  
Superintendent  
#WeAreRSU18