



Regional School Unit No. 18

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Carl Gartley
Superintendent of Schools

Keith Morin
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RSU 18 Families

I am writing to provide you another update on our district's plans to be prepared for the Coronavirus. I will address different areas of our ongoing work.

Prevention: The best way to reduce the spread of the virus has not changed. We should all continue to adhere to our universal precautions: washing hands, coughing into your sleeve, avoid large gatherings, stay home if sick, extra cleaning and disinfecting. Schools across Maine are diligently working to make sure these practices are in place. We have ordered new cleaning materials that are deemed effective against the Coronavirus, we are providing staff with material to clean their classrooms, our Maintenance department has increased their cleanings, and our Transportation Department is working to do extra cleanings on our buses.

Unfortunately, prevention has led to the cancellation of a few of our annual special events that involve group travel. While this is disappointing to all of us, the decisions have been made in an attempt to better keep students safe. In addition to these school / community trips, we are also addressing family travel issues. Like most schools we have had students traveling to areas of the country and world that are affected more heavily. When we learn of this, we work with families, the CDC and medical professionals to make decisions. I commend all the families we have worked with and thank them for following the recommended precautions.

Educational Disruption: There are currently no confirmed cases of Corona Virus in the State of Maine. However, we know it could happen. We want to be ready. This preparation includes providing staff with time and asking them to prepare extended educational plans that could be used for remote learning, collecting online and other resources, and looking at other ways we could consider remote learning. Preparing also includes developing contingency plans for our business offices, transportation, nutrition and other departments. We have reached out to state officials and have received guidance from the United States Department of Agriculture on how to address school nutrition in the event of school closures.

Some of our departments could operate remotely, in other situations we are planning on more of a redundancy model with responsibilities covered by others. So far, the Coronavirus has not been as tragic for young people, but in the unlikely event our schools had to close for a period of time we want to be ready.

Communication: Our administrative team is meeting regularly to review questions and scenarios that arise and to identify possible problems. I will continue to post weekly updates until a time when the situation subsides. If you have questions, please reach out to your building principals. Anything they cannot answer for you they will forward to me. Of course, you can also reach out to me directly.



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As we monitor our attendance rates, if our absentee rate climbs above 15% of our students out of school due to illness, we are reporting this directly to the Department of Education and would look to them for guidance.

I understand that when information changes it can be frustrating. This has happened with this virus and could happen again. We are in daily communication with either the CDC, the DOE or Maine School Management. As information and guidance changes, we respond accordingly. But as this situation evolves changes may happen. Take note of the date on all communications to make sure you are using up to date information.

I will end by commending our entire staff, state and town officials, our emergency responders and the families of our students. Everyone has been incredibly accommodating and helpful. This is a great community to be a part of. I hope you all stay healthy and have a great spring.

Thank you.

Carl Gartley
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