



Regional School Unit No. 18

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This week I am sending the same update to all of you. Two months of school are now behind us, and every Friday many of us take a collective sigh that we made it through another week. Recently there has been a dramatic increase in the number of COVID-19 cases in our state. Fortunately, this past week we did not have any further instances in our schools. However, we did have school community members who were affected by COVID-19. A few families reached out to let us know that someone in their family, or their place of business had tested positive or was a possible close contact. These families, either on their own or from our advice checked with medical professionals and when appropriate kept their children home to self-isolate while their family dealt with the COVID-19 issues. Thank you to all of those involved for your open communication and your good decisions making.

Every week Mr. Morin and I are trying to visit schools. We want to see first-hand what is happening and to be there to help our building leadership address any issues that are identified. I want to share something that we observed in our schools over the past couple of weeks. We saw teachers doing extra cleaning between classes, building administrators helping to clean after lunch, custodians who are taking the cleanliness of their school very personally and finally an amazing crew of high school students who we have hired as additional custodial staff working with our night custodians to make sure our schools are thoroughly cleaned every night. We all know that things can change at any moment and the ability for schools to stay open could be put in jeopardy, but the team we have is working as hard as they can to keep us moving forward.

This year has come with amazing challenges. I hear every single day from people who are grateful for how our school community is responding in these unprecedented times. I will tell you, the only reason we have been able to make this year work the way we have is because our entire staff has worked hard to make it happen. We have nearly five hundred and fifty staff, and every single one of them have stepped up. Thank you.

A couple of popular questions from last week were: Are we opening up our schools to the community for voting this year on election day, and is there a plan for the start of winter sports season? The first one is easy, no. None of our towns are holding their voting in our schools. On each town website you can find the location and times for voting. As far as winter athletics are concerned, there is no plan to start at this point. The Department of Education, the Maine Principal Association, Maine Sports Medicine and other groups are still working to come up with a recommendation. Our winter athletics program will not be starting when they were originally scheduled. There will be more details on this as decisions are made.

This week there is a workshop day on Friday. This workshop is for just our teachers. This was originally scheduled on our calendar for the year. These workshop days are incredibly beneficial for all of us.

Have a great week, stay safe and stay healthy.