



Regional School Unit No. 18

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RSU 18 Community,

Another week has gone by and there were some significant changes in our state around COVID-19 mandates. Some of the changes will impact schools, others will not. The biggest questions I am receiving are about social distancing and mask mandates.

Social distancing: As of May 24th, social distancing requirements are lifted in Maine. However, this change has not been put into place for Maine schools. We still must use the same spacing rules we have all year. But this change will give us much more flexibility for events like graduations. Families of our seniors and 8th grade students will be receiving more information soon. Keep in mind these changes are coming fast, and we are doing the best we can to give our students a normal end of year experience.

Mask mandates: Inside Maine schools, there has been no change in the mask mandates. Outdoors, students and staff do not need to wear a mask.

Even as I write this message, I realize that by the time some of you read it there could be more changes in the rules. I know that has created some confusion and frustration at times, but we are almost there. If more changes are put into place, I will send them out as soon as I get them.

A non-COVID update for you. This time of year, my team and the RSU School Board works tirelessly to put together and pass a budget for the following year. There are two opportunities for people in the community to express their opinion by voting on the budget. The first is this Thursday. At 6:00 P.M. in the MHS auditorium, we will host our annual district budget meeting. At this meeting the budget is presented and voted on at the meeting. People who attend this meeting can approve or make changes to the budget. Whatever passes at this meeting becomes our draft budget. Then on June 8th, taxpayers in all five towns can vote to approve or reject this budget. Both events are very important. If you have time Thursday night, I welcome as many of our school community members as we can to the budget meeting. Our motto (Every Student, Every School, Every Day) guides our district. The decisions we have made about how to handle education during a pandemic have been grounded in this motto. The RSU 18 staff believes deeply in doing what is best for students, keeping them safe, educating them, giving them opportunities, and watching them grow. This motto also guides our budget development process. The budget being presented is a modest increase of 1.71%. This budget will support the work we do as one of the leading school districts in Maine. (I personally think the best district in Maine) I hope to see some of you at our meeting on Thursday, then get all of you to go the polls on June 8th.

Carl Gartley
Superintendent of Schools
#WeAreRSU18