

MT. BLUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHESTERVILLE – FARMINGTON – INDUSTRY – NEW SHARON – NEW VINEYARD – STARKS – TEMPLE – VIENNA – WELD – WILTON
129 SEAMON ROAD, SUITE 2, FARMINGTON, ME 04938
Phone (207) 778-6571 | Fax (207) 778-4160

“Public Schools not only serve the public, they make the public.”

TO: RSU 9 Parents & Guardians
FROM: Christian M. Elkington, Superintendent
RE: Several Updates to share with you!
DATE: 3-13-2022

I hope this memo finds you, your family and friends enjoying what I hope is the beginning of spring-like weather and with it the HOPE that more sunlight and warmer temperatures will soon bring “new” life to our gardens, lawns, fields, and trees. The last week has brought about some important changes and transitions to our district. I am told by our principals that overall; our students and staff have transitioned well with our moving towards being mask optional this past Wednesday. The support that each of you has brought to these transitions is much appreciated by our School Board, staff, and me.

We have used - 5 snow days so far this year with Friday, June 17th being our last school day. If we were to have another snow day, we would be forced to move the last day of school to Tuesday, June 21st as the new Federal Holiday, Juneteenth (June 19th), will be celebrated on Monday, June 20th. As we can all understand, the chances of a large majority of our students coming to the last day of school, which will be a half day, after a three-day weekend are slim. Holding school on the 21st would also become an unnecessary expense for us because of the Monday, June 20th holiday. Therefore, to avoid lengthening the school year, we will have a Remote Learning Day for any future snow days this year, where we determine travel might put students at risk because of the weather.

We know that student attendance during a Remote Learning Day can put a strain on some of our families. Because of this it is our goal to make attendance as easy as possible for families during any potential Remote Learning Day. **In Grades PreK-5** your child will be marked present based on their ability to complete the work assigned for the day. If your child is struggling with completing their work, please email your child’s teacher or call the school and leave a message, and the classroom teacher will adjust your child’s attendance code. For families of students **in Grades 6-12**, if there is a technology issue, please let the school know as soon as possible, and the school will adjust your child’s attendance code. Each school will communicate their Remote Learning Day Plan to you.

February and March - Recognize several important fundamental new learnings of our country’s history as well as the importance of both Public Education and Career and Technical Education. A few quotes to share with you on these important recognitions:

In Honor of February’s Black History Month:

- "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that." Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

In Honor of Public Schools Week Feb 21st – 25th:

“Preach, my dear sir, a crusade against ignorance.” Thomas Jefferson

- "The whole people must take upon themselves the education of the whole people and be willing to bear the expenses of it." President John Adams

In Honor of March's Women's History Month:

- "Optimism is the faith that leads to achievement." Helen Keller
- "Knowing what must be done does away with the fear." Rosa Parks

RSU 9 Staff Members of the Month for January and February - Were recognized at our last two School Board Meetings. Congratulations go to Andrew Rothert, Maria Howatt, Joyce Smiley, and Kathryn Clement for their steadfast support of our schools and district and for their contributions to help make RSU 9 the best that it can be!

RSU 9 Longevity Awards – Were handed out in person to three of our staff for 35 years of public service to our students, staff, and communities. Congratulations and thanks go to David Alexander, Roger Bolduc and Deb Muisse for their dedication and commitment to our students and families! WOW!

Congratulations go to:

- **Jake Bogar** for being selected to receive the University of Maine Pulp and Paper Foundation's Teacher of the Year Award! John was nominated by a former Mt. Blue student and will be recognized April 6th.
- **FTC Director Melissa Williams** for being recognized by Bridge Academy of Maine in their article Celebrating Women Leaders in Maine Career and Technical Education!

The National Technical Center Honor Society – Had their induction ceremony (Foster Technical Center Branch) recently at the Mt. Blue Campus. You will probably recognize several of the names and so I ask you to please join me in congratulating: Jayden Achorn, Alyssa Beaulieu, Grace Bell, Savanna Bowen, Chance Brooks, Kellsie Buzzell, Jenna Campbell, Emma Casavant, Ryleigh Castonguay, Sherilyn Chick, Katie Cilley, Samantha Clark, Delia Colello, Kaidence Coolidge, Vivian Cormier, Tomas Cundick, Katelyn Daggett, Khloe Dean, Jet Decker, Mariah Dill, Emma Dunn, Mckella Ford, Jillian Gamage, Samuel Goodspeed, Sophie Haley-Vigue, Even Hamblin, Alex Hardy, Abigail Hatch, Kandie Hensley, Daniel Hodgdon, Emily Holmes, Lauren Howatt, Alex Hupp, Jay Hutchins, Nathaniel Hutchins, Anna Hyde, Kamryn Joyce, Samuel Judkins, Kyran Katzenbach, Jade Lewis, Toby Lindsay, Even Lowell, RyLeigh Macomber, Elle Marshall, Emma Maxim, Emily Maxim, Madyson Nichols, Eryn Parlin, Seth Pinkham, Reagan Pratt, Brynne Robbins, Gabriella Rodriguez, Ella Shaffer, Cole Sillanpaa, Caleb Sinkinson-Brown, Olivia Smothers, Kaylee Sterling, Abbigail Swett, Melissa Thomas, Jamie Thompson, Amelia Tierney, Callahan Towle, Brody Walsh, Daniel Wilson, and Carson Zundel! **HOLY COW, what an impressive group of young people!** Way to go RSU 9!

Did you know that:

- **Multiple RSU 9 Staff** agreed to take on more work after school or on the weekends to help us with cleaning and sanitizing in our schools. They are a key ingredient in dealing with some of our past and current difficulties. We can't thank them enough for making this continuing commitment to our students, staff, and schools!
- **Dan Higgins** joined RSU 9 as our new Business Manager at the beginning of February. Dan comes to us with over 16 years of financial and leadership experience in Maine schools and was the unanimous choice of the School Board Hiring Committee. Welcome Dan!

In closing I would like to share this quote with you: *"After 25 years of teaching I've realized that my favorite thing to say, when a student walks in late, is this: I'm glad you're here."* - David Theriault

The difficulties we have and are facing have and WILL continue to tap into the strengths and patience of many in RSU 9!
We are certainly glad for the positive support of our students, staff, and schools that each one of our families has given each and every day!

As your superintendent of schools let me thank each of YOU for your positive efforts in helping make our home-school support stronger each day!