



RSU 26

Orono, Maine

Winter 2023



SUPERINTENDENT'S NEWSLETTER

Greetings RSU 26 Community,

We are just over the halfway mark in the school year – our youngest learners celebrated the 100th day of school last week – it finally feels like we are back to normal! It does feel like a new normal... however, our students continue to grow and stretch themselves on their individual journeys and our staff continue to invest in each student's success in classrooms and beyond. This newsletter highlights just a few of the MANY wonderful examples of the successes and resilience that is evident day in and day out in our school community. Thank you for your partnership with us in support of our mission to cultivate a community of responsible, respectful and passionate learners!

RSU 26 Budget Update

RSU 26 is currently in the process of developing our budget for the 2023-24 school year. We recently received preliminary figures for state revenue for next year's budget. We are receiving a small increase in state subsidy of \$77,645, but this is alongside an increased local contribution requirement of \$265,121. This small state subsidy increase falls well short of meeting basic cost of living/inflation increases and identified emerging needs. We have a long way to go to get the budget finalized to share, but if you want to learn more, please tune into RSU 26 Board Meetings (held via Zoom). Another source of information on the budget can be found on our website under the "School Board" tab. Additionally, the RSU 26 Annual Budget Hearing will be held on May

23, 2023

at 6 pm at Orono High School. We invite you to attend to participate in this process and learn more about the school budget.



RSU 26 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Over the past two years, RSU 26 has been examining diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in an effort to be more inclusive as a district and more responsive to support students, families and staff. A representative team, called our DEI Leadership Team, has been working since March 2022 to develop a DEI Action Plan in response to the data we collected

(continued on pg 2)

Dates to Remember

- February 20-24** – Winter Break Week
- March 8** - Early Release
- March 17**- No School for Students
Teacher Workshop Day
- April 12** – Early Release
- April 17-21** – Spring Break Week
- May 10** – Early Release

- May 29** – Memorial Day
All Schools & Offices Closed
- June 11** – Graduation Day
- June 15** – Last Day of School for Students
(subject to change depending on
number of snow days)
- June 19** - Juneteenth Holiday- Offices Closed

(continued from pg 1)

through our equity review conducted last school year. This action plan was adopted in the fall and is available on our website under the “About Us” tab. The foundational equity principles for the plan are: 1) Safety & Belonging for Each Individual; 2) Continuous Growth Mindset; and 3) Identity & Cultural Responsiveness. The Key Priority areas in the action plan are: Community, Cultural Responsiveness & Competency, and Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment. During this school year we have been working on implementation of the plan and are excited about the progress we are making toward our DEI action plan goals. This work is critical as we strive to provide the support and resources

for each individual student to develop their potential, grow their passions, and move along the path they choose.

RSU 26 Strategic Planning

Our district is preparing to begin a strategic planning process this spring with the goal of developing an updated vision of a learner in RSU 26 and a corresponding strategic plan to help guide our district for the next five years. This work will be led by a representative stakeholder group and will seek input from all stakeholders throughout the process. We plan to get started with the work this spring to be ready to engage all stakeholders in the fall with the goal of finishing the plan in approximately 12 months. Stay tuned for more information about this work



and how you can provide input to help shape this important plan.



MATH COUNTS!

CONGRATS TO ORONO MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS MICAH OLSEN, NINA MITCHELL, SOPHIA TYUTYUNNYK AND EVELYN TITUS FOR COMPETING IN THE REGIONAL MATHCOUNTS COMPETITION ON SATURDAY, JANUARY 28TH AT REEDS BROOK MIDDLE SCHOOL IN HAMPDEN. SPECIAL RECOGNITION GOES TO MICAH OLSEN AND NINA MITCHELL FOR BOTH PLACING IN THE TOP 20 AND QUALIFYING FOR THE STATE MEET WHICH WILL BE HELD AT KVCC ON MARCH 4.

Congratulations to Ruth White!

Orono High School's Ruth White is the returning Gatorade Player of the Year! Ruth won the Maine Class C state title for a second straight year and helped lead the Riots to back-to-back championships as a team.

Ruth is an outstanding student inside the classroom, too! She maintains A average and is a member of the National Honor Society and Spanish National Honor Society. Ruth is the president of the Orono High Key Club and has volunteered with the Orono Track Club USATF Youth Program and the Orono Youth Ski Farm Program, relying on her extensive experience as a competitive Nordic skier.



Asa Adams Read-A-Thon!



Students at Asa C. Adams have been reading their hearts out to help raise enough money so each child can receive a memory book. The amazing PTO, and several staff members have organized a read-a-thon that has included several fund activities for our students. Our kick-off was a book exchange where each student got to take home at least two new books to read. Students have also had the opportunity to participate in reading BINGO where students can earn a bracelet for filling in the boxes. The ending activity will be a Winter Carnival where students can enjoy games in the gym. Our goal is \$4500.00 and when we reach the halfway point one of our students will get the opportunity to put a pie in the face of Mr. Butler! If you would like to help our students earn their memory books you can either bring you donation to Asa C. Adams school or use the QR code provided.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Brian McGill, Chair
bmcgill@rsu26.org

Jacob Eckert, Vice Chair
jeckert@rsu26.org

Mark Brewer
mbrewer@rsu26.org

Noah Charney
ncharney@rsu26.org

Kevin Roberge
kroberge@rsu26.org

2022-2023 RSU 26 Board Meeting Dates

Held inperson and via Zoom - link available on meeting agendas and on the RSU 26 website:

February 7
February 28
March 14
March 28
April 11
April 25

May 9
May 23- Annual Budget Meeting
May 30
June 6
June 20

OHS ENVIRONMENTAL CLUB UPDATE

9,200 This is the approximate number of pounds of food waste diverted from the landfill by our Environmentees, members of the district's Environmental Club. Since the first day of school last August, students in the middle school and high school have been encouraged to put their food waste into the cafeteria collection bucket. Once each week, the collected food waste is picked up by Agri-Cycle Energy. The Agri-Cycle folks use anaerobic digestion and composting to turn the hot dogs, mac 'n cheese, beef stroganoff, pizza, tomato soup, milk, and more into renewable energy and healthy soil.



Diverting this much food waste can only be accomplished with the help of the entire school community. If you check out the operation in the cafeteria, you might run into a wide variety of folks willing to pitch in: middle school students, high school students, teachers, and even administrators.

In February and March, the Environmentees are partnering with UMaine's Mitchell Center to pilot a food waste diversion program at Asa Adams. Asa kids in all grades are learning how to separate their food waste, and they are becoming Food Rescue Heroes in the process!

Diverting food waste takes up a lot of time and energy, but this is not the only project on the plates of our Environmentees. When they're not keeping food waste out of the landfill, you might find them hiking Cadillac and enjoying the first sunrise in the east, collecting soil samples to check out PFAS levels and create artwork at the same time, planning Climate Strikes, and organizing Appetizer & Activism nights. Currently, the Environmental Club is made up of 45 students in grades 8-12, who meet every Tuesday morning before school to discuss environmental issues and ways to make our district more sustainable.



OMS Published Authors



This year OMS is offering a new accelerated English language arts class called Writing Across the Disciplines. Students have been studying different genres of writing, including journalism, memoir, legal writing, research writing, and--later this spring--science writing. For each genre they meet with a practicing professional writer in that discipline. Some of these guests have included Sawyer Loftus from the Bangor Daily News and Kristin Vekasi from the University of Maine. Whenever possible, the students share their work with an outside audience, which might be a writing competition or a potential publication. When several members of the class sent in memoir excerpts to editors at Stories, a literary journal operated by the Portland-based writer center The Telling Room, the editors were wowed. They said they were accustomed to getting one or two strong pieces out of a class, but never an entire set of strong submissions. Editor Julie Canniff had this to say: "[These] students seem confident with literary devices like flashbacks and dialogue, juicy similes and metaphor featuring all the senses, and the importance of details to capture setting, character, tension and mood. I could not write like this at 13." The Telling Room published a special mention of what they are calling "The Orono Collection," which includes links to the essays. We hope you enjoy reading our students' wonderful stories, and we congratulate them on their hard work!



LOGO DESIGN CONTEST!

THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY & INCLUSION COMMITTEE IS SEEKING LOGO SUBMISSIONS FOR UNIQUE, RECOGNIZABLE LOGOS FOR OUR DEI INITIATIVE.

THE LOGO WILL BE USED TO BRAND DEI WORK IN A VARIETY OF LOCATIONS, INCLUDING WEBSITES, PRINT MATERIALS, MERCHANDISE & SOCIAL MEDIA

LOGO CRITERIA:

•The logo should express the ideals of diversity, equity and inclusion as outlined in the RSU 26 Equity Action Plan. Plan includes the following key concepts - please consider these when designing logo.

» Foundational Principles: Safety & Belonging for each individual; continuous growth mindset; identity and cultural responsiveness.

» Key Priority Areas: Community; Cultural Consciousness & Competency; Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment.

•Logo that will work with b/w, grayscale & color

•Logo should be scalable (present well in various sizes)

•Logo should be easily recognizable, be unique and represent RSU 26

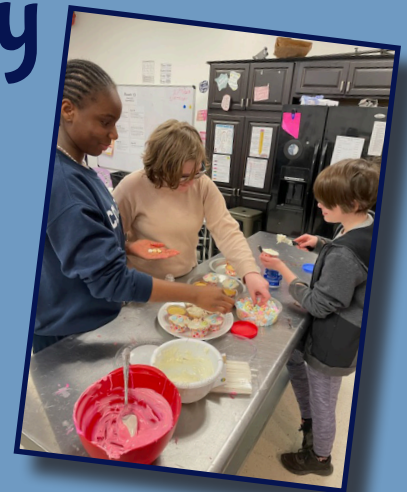
ALL LOGO DESIGNS WILL BE PRESENTED TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY TO VOTE ON. ONCE FINALISTS ARE DETERMINED, DESIGNS WILL BE CONSIDERED BY DEI LEADERSHIP TEAM/COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE. INCLUDE YOUR NAME AND GRADE WITH YOUR SUBMISSION.

SEND SUBMISSIONS AND/OR QUESTIONS TO

RAEHELLE CYR IN SUPERINTENDENT'S OFFICE (RCYR@RSU26.ORG) BY MARCH 15, 2023

PRIZES AWARDED TO FINALISTS!

OMS Riot Cookery



6th–8th graders get together to create a meal and share an afternoon of fun! It is open to any and all middle school students, just see Mrs. Archer for the bi-monthly event sign-up!

FOLLOW RSU 26 ON SOCIAL MEDIA



RSU 26



RSU 26 School Board



@RSU_26

Asa Adams Pre-K & Kindergarten Registration

The Asa Adams School will hold Pre-Kindergarten and Kindergarten registration for the 2023-2024 school year on Thursday, March 9, 2023. The registration event will take place between 3:30 and 6:00 p.m, by appointment. Please use the event link or QR Code at the bottom to indicate you will be attending.

Children eligible for Pre-K must be 4 years of age on or before October 15, 2023. Enrollment is limited, and students will be accepted on a first-come, first-served basis. There will be a morning and afternoon session, each lasting approximately 2 ½ hours. All documentation must be completed before a slot is secured. Morning or afternoon placements can be requested but are not guaranteed.

Children eligible for Kindergarten must be 5 years of age on or before October 15, 2023. Kindergarten is a full-day program. A legal birth certificate, immunization record and 2 forms of residency verification are necessary for completing the registration process. Please call the school at 866-2151 with any questions.



100 DAYS OF SCHOOL!

