

# MT. BLUE REGIONAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

CHESTERVILLE – FARMINGTON – INDUSTRY – NEW SHARON – NEW VINEYARD – STARKS – TEMPLE – VIENNA – WELD – WILTON

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TO: RSU 9 Parents, Guardians, and Students  
FROM: Christian M. Elkington, Superintendent  
RE: The 2022-2023 School Year is about to begin!  
DATE: August 27, 2022

I hope this note finds you enjoying a wonderful summer including time with your children, family, and friends. It is now time for us all to look forward to the upcoming school year. The School Board and I are certainly looking forward to seeing our students and staff in action at each of our schools next week! During the school year visiting our schools is the highlight of my day because I see *all* the school staff (teachers, support staff, and administration) working with our students. What I see happening in real-time is the wonderful result of the planning, actions, and hard work contributed by so many in RSU 9. To returning students and parents, thank you for both your past and future positive efforts in working with us! To new students and parents let me welcome you and thank you in advance for the many positive efforts you will make in the months ahead!

## ***IMPORTANT FYIs:***

- 1. COVID-19 Updates** – Please [click here](#) to review our current COVID-19 guidelines and reach out to your school nurse with any questions.
- 2. Calendar Reminders** – Wednesday, August 30th, and September 7th are not Late Arrival Wednesdays (LAWs). We will have normal start times. Our first LAW will be on 9/14. Also, there will be no late arrival on September 21st as it is an early release day. This information is on our district calendars which can be found [here](#).
- 3. Back-to-school paperwork** – Can be found in the parent portal in PowerSchool. [Click here](#) to log in and complete it.
- 4. RSU 9 Water Update** – As previously shared we received our 2<sup>nd</sup> set of water tests and are busily following up with faucet changes made where needed. We will be able to start school with only the Mallett and Academy Hill Schools needing to use bottled water for drinking (we are developing a new plan for Mallett as further testing is needed). For the plan submitted to the RSU 9 School Board this past week please [click here](#). All lab results can be found on our website [here](#).
- 5. Safety is our #1 focus** – This summer we have been completing a Safety Review with the Dept. of Homeland Security. The initial feedback we have received on our current plans is positive.
  - a. Further Safety-Plan feedback** will be received as more visits occur which will support our making adjustments and improvements as needed. Administrators will work continuously with staff to make our schools as safe as possible throughout the coming school year.

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- b. Parent Drop-Off and Pick-Up is by its nature a busy time of the day. With this busyness comes increased safety concerns. Each of our schools has important expectations for parents and visitors to follow when entering and leaving our buildings, which can be just a little bit different based on each building's floor plan. Your school will or may have already shared these expectations with you. For further clarity please contact your school to make sure you understand the expectations we ask parents, volunteers, and visitors to follow. Thank YOU!
6. **Summer Work** – Our Maintenance Staff, Custodians, and Driver-Custodians have been very busy this summer working through supply-chain difficulties to get our buildings prepared with cleaning, repairs, and new projects. We have made excellent progress with more work to finish over the next few months. As you see them, please thank them for their efforts. Thank you!
7. **Summer Student Programming** – Was again offered to students across our district and we look forward to those students who participated feeling and being more successful in the coming year!
8. **Hiring** – Has been very busy and very successful this summer. I am happy to say that compared to last year we have 60% fewer openings! I can also tell you that I interview each finalist and I am very impressed with the people we have hired. They want to be a part of Mt. Blue and I look forward to the strengths they will add to our team!

### ***AS WE MOVE FORWARD:***

From a teaching and learning perspective, we need to celebrate the important differences from last year to today:

- All students will be able to be in school every day.
- The best instructional practices in our classrooms including small group learning and engaging activities to promote both the academic and social-emotional welfare of our children will be followed.
- Students will be fully involved in music, drama, and athletics.
- Students can work and play with all students within their school.
- Field trips will once again occur.
- School buildings are available for evening meetings, events, and recreational activities.
- Volunteers with completed district paperwork, background checks, etc. will assist the learning in our schools.

I believe that we have come through the past two + years better than many states and school districts because we have worked together! Your efforts in supporting our children, our staff, and our schools were and are an important part of why RSU 9 “Mt. Blue” is better together! *Flexibility, Patience, and Understanding* between both school to home and home to school were key to our success. Thanks go to each of you for the multiple positive efforts this past year. Thanks in advance for the efforts you will make in the coming year!

The success of the past year and plans for the coming year, and beyond, further convince me that I was right in joining the RSU 9 TEAM as your superintendent! I know we are all excited that we will be able to reopen our schools following the expectations explained above and believe that these requirements are in the best interests of our students, our staff, and our communities.

*Together we keep HOPE alive within each of our children, within each of us, and within each of our communities!*

*Thanks for listening and remember that [Maine is!](#)*