

# Regional School Unit 1

34 Wing Farm Parkway, Bath, ME 04530

*Patrick Manuel, Superintendent*  
*Debra Clark, Business Manager*

*Katie Joseph, Assist. Superintendent*  
*Justin Keleher, Dir. Special Education*



***Think - Care - Act***

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June 9, 2021

Dear Staff and Families,

We realize this has been a year of uncertainty, and you may have questions about what the plans are for the next school year. RSU 1 is committed to returning to 100% in-person learning at all schools for the 2021-2022 school year. We are in the process of hiring additional staff and finalizing other details, but we are optimistic for next year especially given that the State just announced that they intend to lift all physical distancing requirements for PreK-12 effective for the start of the 2021 school year.

I hope that the following details will provide you with the information you need to plan for the fall.

- All schools will reopen in the fall for in-person instruction five days per week.
- Remote learning options will be limited and only available for health reasons.
- Hybrid schedules will not be offered.
- All schools will return to their normal daily schedules:
  - MHS/BT: 7:40 a.m. - 2:05 p.m.
  - BMS: 7:30 a.m. - 1:57 p.m.
  - DNS, FMS, PES, & WCS: 8:25 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- We intend to return to one bus run at each school.

Another update is that pooled testing programs are being considered by our local health team and the district's School Board. The Maine Department of Education is strongly encouraging schools to participate in the pooled testing program to protect those students for whom a COVID-19 vaccine has not yet been authorized. If you would like to learn more about pooled testing, feel free to access the two-minute video on this [LINK](#) (it is part way down the page).

The benefits of pooled testing programs are that COVID-19 infections are discovered before there is enough concentrated virus in an individual to spread it to anyone else, therefore enabling full classes and afterschool activities to continue since close contacts would no longer need to quarantine like they have this year. This would allow us to keep all uninfected students in school rather than completing their 10 day quarantines at home. The pooled testing requires

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four circular swipes at the front part of one's nose and can be self-administered by most students. Testing would happen once a week for staff and students who opt into the program. Vaccinated students would not need to be part of pooled testing as those vaccinated are not required to quarantine as close contacts.

Part of the district's decision making process for this new safety measure is to gauge the interest from the RSU 1 community. We would need 30% of students and staff in each building to participate in the program. [Staff and RSU 1 families, please fill out this 1 minute survey \(for families with more than one student, fill out once PER STUDENT\)](#) so we can determine our community's level of support. The deadline for completing the survey is **Wednesday, June 16th**.

We are optimistic for the fall, but all of this is subject to change if conditions deteriorate significantly over the coming months. We will be prepared to respond to changing conditions and will continue to collaborate closely with the Maine Department of Education, the Maine CDC, and our local health team.

Thank you for your ongoing patience, flexibility, and partnership as we navigated the COVID-19 pandemic this year. We look forward to providing our students and staff with a sense of normalcy in the coming school year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Patrick M. Manuel'.

Patrick Manuel  
Superintendent

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