

KATAHDIN SCHOOLS RSU #89

Office of the Superintendent

800 Station Road Stacyville, ME 04777 Voice: 207-365-4272 Fax: 207-365-4138

June 13, 2023

To the Citizens and Families of RSU 89 - Katahdin Schools,

We have completed another year at Katahdin Schools and held our 55th Katahdin High School Graduation. Our 26 graduates proudly earned their diplomas when they crossed the stage on June 3rd along with a gymnasium full of family, staff and community members.

We heard memories and aspirations from our Valedictorian and Salutatorian, Charlotte Hartt and Riley Ryan, as well as Principal Mitchell and our alumni keynote speaker, John Pond. 77% of our graduates are headed off to college or trade school and 23% of our graduates are entering the workforce.

The 2022-2023 school year proved to be one of continued change and innovation. We are fortunate to have strong, consistent leadership in both schools so that we can continue to effectively support whole child learning - cognitive development, social emotional development and physical development.

We continue to strive to enhance the programs and offerings at Katahdin Schools. Students enjoy a variety of courses and extracurricular activities throughout the school year. With our Ready, Set, Success program at KMHS, students have the opportunity for credit recovery to occur within the school year, as well as course acceleration. The APEX program which is an online option for students is working well for many students. Additionally, our outdoor education pathway at the middle and high school level with the goal of college credits being able to be earned is being finalized.

Our Connect, Reach and Teach All Children with Outdoor Learning pilot project continued this year. We have created a more integrated learning approach that includes increased time outdoors at our elementary school. This more balanced approach supports the current brain science on learning. We learn more efficiently and effectively if learning is connected to the real world, including movement and our senses. Time outdoors supports whole child development as this strategy has also been proven to reduce stress, improve physical stamina and enhance and deepen learning. Of course, children continue to learn in the classroom as well. The average amount of time students spend outdoors daily is approximately 1 - 1.5 hours including recess.

Our next 5 year district strategic plan is being developed. We had over 65 respondents to the district survey that was available for all staff, students and community members from November, 2022 through January, 2023. The next steps include incorporating feedback from our district administrative team, both of our school leadership teams and most importantly our students. Finally, when all of that information is gathered, it will be presented to the board of directors for additional feedback. Once this process is completed we will share our new plan.

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This past year we have installed full generators in both schools. So far we have been able to maintain our school day for at least two days when power was lost. The generators increase the value of both buildings. The KMHS cafeteria has been outfitted with new tables that allow students more social interaction during lunch.

In September we were awarded \$485,000 in Mackenzie Grant funds. These grants were written in collaboration with school and district leadership teams. With the funds we will be continuing to update with new windows and doors for both KES and KMHS, removing the asbestos tile and replacing it at KES, and redesigning our KES cafeteria. These projects will be happening over the summer.

Our district was awarded the grant we applied for last year to extend our KES Afterschool Program, providing approximately \$90,000 a year in grant funding for the next five years. This funding supports after school tutoring and enrichment programs for students in grades 2-6, as well as a 6-week Summer Academy.

Serving as your superintendent and executive director of the newly formed non-profit organization, Katahdin Children and Families Foundation, we have been able to secure a community learning space, called The Orchard, with grant funding. The Orchard provides the opportunity for public school students to apply their learning in a setting beyond the school building, a challenge that employers are sharing as a need for recent graduates. Additionally, this space is being developed to host community events for all ages! Katahdin Children and Families Foundation serves as a bridge from the school to the community and current goals also include supporting additional child care options for the community.

As I finish my 7th year at Katahdin School I would like to extend my gratitude to staff, families, students and community members for doing your part in making Katahdin Schools a place of continuous improvement where learning happens everywhere!

Best wishes for a restful and rejuvenating summer break.

Sincerely,



Marie Robinson, Ph.D.
[Superintendent of Schools](#)/Executive Director
[Katahdin Children and Families Foundation](#)