

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT No. 67

**DISTRICT MISSION AND PROFICIENCY-BASED LEARNING VISION,
CORE BELIEFS, AND EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY**

The R.S.U. No. 67 Board of Directors hereby adopts the following mission and vision, core beliefs, and educational philosophies in order to provide the context for decision-making, as well as compliance with Maine's system of LEARNING RESULTS:

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT, PRE-K-12

EMPOWERING LEARNERS FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

Our Vision for a system of learning is that

- All learners have input and choices in how they demonstrate their knowledge and skills;
- The curriculum is rigorous, relevant, and future-focused;
- Instruction is learner-centered, provides opportunity for voice and choice, and is guided by dedicated and passionate staff;
- Assessment provides multiple ways and opportunities for learners to demonstrate proficiency; and
- Reporting is accessible to and understood by learners, teachers and parents through a reporting system which is available throughout the learner's school years.

Our Vision for management of resources is that

- Leadership is shared, based on the strengths of individual teacher leaders, administrative leaders, and community leaders;
- Continuous open dialogue and communication maintains the bond between the school system and the community;
- Technology is current, reliable, user-friendly, always accessible, and provides for effective communication among all stakeholders;
- Innovation to achieve ever greater excellence is encouraged through our system of learning, self-reflection, adaption, and growth; and
- Fiscal responsibility and effective long-term financial planning is demonstrated.

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT No. 67

R.S.U. No. 67 Core Beliefs

We believe people learn in different ways, in different settings, and at different rates for different futures.

We believe learning involves risk-taking and making mistakes.

We believe learning requires persisting through challenges.

We believe learning happens best in safe, caring environments supported by positive relationships.

We believe learning is enhanced when connected to relevant, real-world experiences.

We believe learning should be relevant, engaging and applied, based on high expectations and the passions of each learner.

We believe clear learning targets and continuous reflection are essential to successful learning.

We believe recognizing success promotes self-confidence, motivation and a positive attitude, encouraging future success.

We believe all members of the school community model continuous learning and improvement.

We believe an effective Adult Learning program is a responsibility we have to the communities we serve.

We believe in the importance of the arts, athletics, co-curricular opportunities for our learner's growth.

We believe that we must effectively and efficiently use technology to provide instructional opportunities for all of our learners.

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT No. 67

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION, PRE-K-12

R.S.U. No. 67 is a community that works together to accomplish a common purpose (mission): Empowering learners for today and tomorrow.

R.S.U. No. 67 recognizes its responsibility to respond to differing learner backgrounds, aptitudes, interests, attitudes, and aspirations. It offers, therefore, varied curricula and programs; provides safe and appropriate facilities, resources and services; and uses instructional and assessment strategies that address a variety of learning styles and research-based practices. To ensure that all learners succeed to the best of their abilities and at appropriate developmental levels, the district strives to recruit, hire, and retain staff members who respond sensitively to learners' needs and who work diligently to help them achieve expectations set for them. The district also promotes and supports positive school cultures that encourage innovation, professional growth, and the acquisition of technological skills necessary to meet those needs.

To create and foster a climate of trust and respect, R.S.U. No. 67 strives to be a shared decision-making organization that communicates effectively with all stakeholders. Stakeholders, therefore, are encouraged to share in the learning process; to visit classrooms; and to engage in creative, constructive conversation regarding all aspects of a learner's educational experience. Such collaboration—coupled with periodic, consistent, system-wide assessment of individual learners and curricula—is a vital part of maintaining quality educational opportunities for all.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION, K-3

The natural learning process that begins at home and in pre-school programs continues in the pre-k and early-kindergarten programs* through Grade 3. In a safe, educationally challenging environment, learners continue to explore and interact with

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT No. 67

their surroundings in order to expand and enhance knowledge, skills, and attitudes and to acquire a love of learning. This process is developmental; proceeds at an individual pace; and includes learning to take responsibility for the consequences of one's decisions. As learners work individually and collaboratively, they are taught to respect themselves, other learners, adults, and the environments in which they work and play.

Believing that all learners can learn, educators provide a curriculum which is solidly based in language arts and mathematics, extended to and integrated with the sciences and humanities. This integrated curriculum provides the necessary foundation for subsequent learning, supports the learners' search for meaning, broadens their understanding of the world, promotes problem-solving, and creates an awareness of current technologies. As facilitators of learning, educators provide stimulating, safe, and positive learning environments and employ varied instructional methods that encompass curricular expectations and learner interests. Educators also provide learners the freedom to express and discuss their ideas creatively and opportunities to develop thinking and problem-solving skills. To do so, educators and learners need timely access to adequate, appropriate, and equitable resources; current information and technology; and the skills to utilize resources, information, and technology effectively.

Each learning day includes time for learners to grow intellectually, emotionally, physically, and socially. This whole-person, learner-centered approach continues as learners are flexibly grouped for various learning activities. When appropriate, learners are asked to demonstrate what they know and can do by completing meaningful tasks, reflecting on and taking pride in the results of their work, and applying new learning to subsequent experiences. Learner accomplishments are recognized whenever and wherever they occur.

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT No. 67

Educators, Pre-K-3, consider effective communication between the home and the school an important part of a child's first years in education. Educators and parents/guardians endeavor to set high expectations for learners and hold learners accountable for their work. All stakeholders are encouraged to share learning; to visit classrooms; and to engage in creative, constructive conversation regarding all aspects of a learner's educational experience. Such collaboration—coupled with periodic, consistent, system-wide assessment of individual learners and curricula—is a vital part of maintaining quality educational opportunities for all.

*The R.S.U. No. 67 early-kindergarten program is an important part of the total school program for developmentally young children who need additional time and support to develop socially, emotionally, physically, and academically. Recognizing that children develop in different ways and at different rates, teachers of early-kindergarten learners introduce topics from all the content areas of the curriculum with the knowledge that these topics shall be dealt with in greater depth during the kindergarten year.

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION, 4-8

Middle-level learners are in a unique period of transition from childhood to adolescence. The school community, therefore, needs to be knowledgeable about this transition and about the most effective and current methods of teaching this age group. By working in close partnership with learners and their families or other support systems, the school community recognizes and respects learners as individuals and helps them reach their potential—physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially.

All learners can learn and must be prepared to meet the demands and opportunities of the future in a global society. This preparation crosses all subject areas and is balanced with opportunities to participate in a variety of appropriate co-curricular activities. Learners are encouraged to accept themselves, to be sensitive to differences

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT No. 67

between themselves and others, to develop positive attitudes and appropriate standards of healthful behavior, and to be responsible for their actions.

Learners learn best when they work within educational settings and time frames that honor individual learning styles and that allow them to make choices, work respectfully with one another, and accomplish assigned tasks. As facilitators of such learning, educators strive to maintain safe, stimulating, and supportive learning environments. Both educators and learners, therefore, need timely access to adequate, appropriate, and equitable resources; current information and technology; and the skills to utilize resources, information, and technology effectively. Learners are asked to demonstrate knowledge and skills by completing meaningful tasks through inquiry, problem solving, and healthful risk taking. In addition, learners are asked to reflect on and take pride in the results of their work, and to apply new learning to subsequent experiences. Learner accomplishments are recognized and celebrated regularly.

Educators, 4-8, consider effective communication between the home and the school an important part of a learner's educational success. Together, educators and families/other support systems endeavor to set high expectations for learners and hold learners accountable for their work. All stakeholders are encouraged to share learning; to visit classrooms; and to engage in creative, constructive conversation regarding all aspects of a learner's educational experience. Such collaboration—coupled with periodic, consistent, system-wide assessment of individual learners and curricula—is a vital part of maintaining quality educational opportunities for all.

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT No. 67

PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION, 9-12

Mattanawcook Academy has a unique heritage and environment which it seeks to share, preserve, and transcend as it strives to fulfill the district's mission: **...Empowering learners for today and tomorrow.** To this end, the school endeavors to meet the educational needs of all learners by recognizing and responding to diverse learner aptitudes, interests, skills, and values; by offering a varied curriculum; and by using instructional and assessment strategies that address a variety of educational learning styles and research-based practices. The school maintains high expectations of all learners and encourages them to become lifelong, self-directed, self-assessing learners. Raising the aspirations of learners is an essential part of helping them realize their full potentials and must be done within the context of changes that will undoubtedly occur in all areas of their lives.

Educators act as facilitators of learning; use varied instructional methods and settings designed to engage learners in relevant, active learning; and strive to maintain a safe and productive environment for learning. To do so, educators and learners need timely access to adequate, appropriate, and equitable resources; current information and technology; and the skills to utilize resources, information, and technology effectively. Because learners must be prepared to assume responsibility as able decision-makers, wise consumers, and environmentally and politically conscious citizens, educators devote much time to preparing learners to be informed, creative, and practical problem solvers. Class participation and collaboration are important parts of this process.

Although academic achievement in and across different content areas is the primary focus of the overall high-school curriculum, the whole learner is important. The school, therefore, seeks to balance and to integrate curricular and co-curricular

REGIONAL SCHOOL UNIT No. 67

activities as much as possible and helps learners develop positive self-images and self-reliance, as well as concern for the needs and well being of others. Part of that development includes learners learning to take responsibility for their decisions, as well as learning to respect differences among people. The school recognizes and rewards learners achievement in appropriate and varied ways.

Educators, 9-12, consider effective communication between the home and the school an important part of a learner's educational success. Educators and parents/guardians endeavor to set high expectations for learners and hold learners accountable for their work. All stakeholders are encouraged to share in the learning process; to visit classrooms; and to engage in creative, constructive conversation regarding all aspects of a learner's educational experience. Such collaboration—coupled with periodic, consistent, system-wide assessment of individual learners and curricula—is a vital part of maintaining quality educational opportunities for all.

Legal References: 20-A MRSA § 6208-6209

Note: This is a required policy.

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