

SCHOOL UNION 76

BROOKLIN – DEER ISLE-STONINGTON CSD – SEDGWICK

251 N. DEER ISLE ROAD, UNIT 1, DEER ISLE, ME 04627

Office of the Superintendent

Telephone (207) 348-9100 Fax (207) 348-9103

“Public Schools not only serve the public, they make the public.”

Superintendent’s Memo

To: CSD 13 Parents & Guardians
From: Christian M. Elkington
Re: Upcoming Schedule Changes
Date: 12-9-2020

Over the first three and a half months of our school year the students, staff and parents of the CSD 13 Schools have worked very hard to make this year go as well as we could have hoped. The cooperation on a range of issues between home and school, along with the consideration of individual student needs, continues to be the reasons why we have seen each of our schools demonstrate in-person success during the Pandemic. Thanks again go to each and every one of you who has helped make the 2020-2021 school year go as well as I am proud to say it has!

As you are aware, over the last few weeks, cases of COVID-19 have increased around Maine, in Hancock County and in our backyard. The cold weather is now keeping more people inside for longer periods of time. This combined with people participating in indoor gatherings and/or traveling during Thanksgiving, have resulted in the increase in positive cases (apart from those at the nursing home) becoming more dramatic. This has necessitated an added focus on reducing community spread along with the health of all in our schools. As new information becomes available and circumstances on the ground change adjustments have been made in School Union 76’s health and safety practices and procedures and will continue to be made, as needed, for the foreseeable future. Understandably, the recent adjustments and concerns add to the wear and tear on students, staff and families and are starting to show. Because of the need to continue to take extra precautions whenever possible, along with the associated stress that goes with these efforts, I asked our board at last week’s school board meeting to make an adjustment to our upcoming school calendar in order to further support the safety and well-being of our students, staff, families and our communities.

The school committee voted 5-0 (at their Dec 1st Mtg.), to make the week of Jan 4th - 8th a full Remote Learning Week with our plan, at this time, to return to in-person learning the week of Jan 11th. This is in anticipation of the continued uptick in COVID-19 cases likely to result from large gatherings and travel taking place over the holidays in spite of US CDC and state guidance that neither should happen. For the health and well-being of all concerned this preventative measure is most appropriate at this time.

It is with a look towards the future that I am also changing the last school day for students before our holiday break. **Friday, Dec 18th will now be our last school day for student learning in 2020.** Monday Dec 21st will now be a professional day for staff so they can make preparations for an excellent week of Remote Learning beginning on Jan 4th. Dec 22nd will now be added to the

end of our school year as a student and staff day. In examining our success in holding in-person classes along with offering remote learning options I believe we should be celebrating how well the first three and a half months have gone. We should be proud of the work which has led to few interruptions and end 2020 in a positive fashion as outside concerns and worries rise.

Please know that I understand that these changes will be difficult for some families and apologize in advance for this. Throughout the Pandemic we have worked hard to balance the in-person learning and Social Emotional needs of our students with the health and safety concerns of our students and staff. I feel that the above changes to our calendar continue down this path as we review the science and what medical experts are sharing in support of all in our schools.

As always let me say, *“together we will keep HOPE alive within each of our children, within each of us and within each of our communities!”*