



RSU #23
Old Orchard Beach School Department
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August 13, 2021

Dear RSU 23 Community,

I hope this communication finds you all rested, healthy and well and I would like to thank the more than 200 parents who responded to our RSU 23 Parent and Family Health & Safety survey that was sent recently. This survey information provides our team with invaluable parent insights and is currently being used alongside [US CDC's Guidance for COVID-19 Prevention in PreK-12 Schools \(Linked\)](#) to guide and inform our decision making to ensure a successful start to the 2021-22 school year. As you prepare for the upcoming school year, it is important to understand that despite the recent uptick in COVID-19 cases, our primary goal remains the safe return of all RSU 23 students for five days of in-person instruction beginning September 2 (grades 1-9), September 7 (grades 10-12), and September 13 (grades PreK & K). We are in the process of updating the 2021-2022 School Reopening Plan in order to reflect Maine DOE and CDC guidelines. This draft plan, which includes protocols regarding the mandatory wearing of masks indoors by all staff and students (to be revisited each month), physical distancing, and testing will be presented to the RSU 23 School Board next week on August 19 at 6:00 p.m. Below, is some additional information in preparation of the upcoming school year.

SCHOOL CALENDAR: The 2021-22 school calendar can be viewed by visiting our school web page or following this [link](#).

RETURNING STUDENT REGISTRATION

ALL returning students must have the 2021-2022 “Returning” student registration completed prior to the start of the school year. Returning student registration will open up on August 23. The parent/guardian will receive an email with instructions on how to update their child’s information. (This process replaces the paper process.) This should take 15 minutes and it is vital that we get this updated information from you prior to the start of school.

This online process will also have the following information:

- [TECHNOLOGY USE FORMS](#)
- [MEDICAL EMERGENCY FORMS](#)
- [STUDENT INFORMATION](#)

2021 RETURN TO SCHOOL PLAN PRESENTATION

The 2021 Return to School Plan will be presented to the RSU 23 School Board on Thursday, August 19, 2021 and will be distributed to families once approved. The health and safety of our students, staff, and community has remained paramount in our decision making. This plan will provide parents with the overarching guidelines and practices we plan to implement at RSU 23.



INFORMATIONAL MEETING REGARDING COVID-19 TESTING OPTIONS FOR PARENTS: POOL TESTING AND BINAXNOW RAPID TESTING

WHAT IS POOLED TESTING?

Pooled testing is a form of surveillance testing that combines a whole group's tests (5-25 individuals) into one 'pool' instead of testing everyone individually. **Because pool participants get tested for COVID 19 weekly, they DO NOT need to be quarantined from school even if they are considered the close contact of another, school-related COVID-positive case.**

The Health Services Team will be holding a virtual informational meeting regarding the testing tools that will be available for RSU 23 students. **The meeting will be held virtually on Tuesday, August 24 at 6 PM.** I will send you all a link for the meeting on Friday, August 20th along with the RSU 23 Return to School Plan. At this meeting you will have the chance to hear from our school nurses and ask any questions you may have related to the optional school testing programs.

I wanted you to have this information in advance so you know when to expect communications and prepare for the start of school. Lastly, I again want to thank everyone for taking part in our parent survey. The response was amazing and very helpful to us. I will be sharing results of the survey during my Board presentation on August 19.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Suttie".

John Suttie, RSU 23 Superintendent of Schools