

Old Town Elementary School Family Handbook 2021-2022



Work Hard and Be Kind

**576 Stillwater Avenue
Old Town, ME 04468
Phone: 207-827-1544
Fax: 207-827-1549**

**Website: www.rsu34.org
Facebook: RSU #34 OTES
Free App for Apple or Android: RSU #34 ME**

Welcome to OTES 2021-2022!

We would like to welcome you to Old Town Elementary School and the 2021-2022 school year!

This Family Handbook has been developed to provide general information for all families of students attending Old Town Elementary School. It is our intention, along with our school website, app, Facebook page, and teacher/staff contact, to provide information and help improve communication between home and school. You can download a PDF version of this handbook from our school website.

Please read this handbook carefully as there are changes from previous years. **This handbook will also be updated throughout the year as guidance and procedures around COVID-19 are expected to change often.**

If you should have questions regarding any of the information provided, please feel free to contact us at school. We strongly believe good communication is key to a successful school experience for your student. Please reach out when needed!

As always, we look forward to working together to create a successful learning experience for your student!

Jeanna Tuell

Dr. Jeanna Tuell, Principal

jeanna.tuell@rsu34.org

Ext. 3604

Maggie Mitchell

Mrs. Maggie Mitchell, Assistant Principal

maggie.mitchell@rsu34.org

Ext. 3603

Table of Contents

Important Names and Numbers for RSU #34 and OTES	(3)
Affirmative Action	(4)
Arrival at School	(4)
Attendance: Absences, Tardies and Dismissals	(5)
Behavior Expectations	(8)
Breakfast and Lunch Program, Food in School	(9)
Bullying Policy	(11)
Bus Information	(12)
OTES Calendar	(13)
Cancellations and Emergency Closings	(13)
Change of Address/Telephone Number/Email	(13)
Classroom Placement for the Next School Year	(14)
Communication in the School and District	(14)
Discipline	(14)
Dismissal	(16)
Dress Code	(16)
Electronic Devices	(16)
Emergency Procedures	(17)
Field Trips and Excursions	(17)
Health Services	(18)
Homeless Students	(22)
Lost and Found	(22)
Parent Support of Students and Involvement in School	(22)
Parent-Teacher Club (PTC) and Dads of Great Students (DOGS)	(23)
Parent-Teacher Conferences	(24)
Public Notice: Public Education for Students with Disabilities	(24)
Pupil Records	(25)
Report Cards and Progress Reports	(26)
Reporting Concerns Regarding School Safety	(27)
Resource Center	(27)
Resource Officer	(27)
Retention	(27)
Restraint and Seclusion Policies	(28)
Specialty Areas and Services	(28)
Staff Qualifications: Parent/Guardian Right to Know	(30)
Technology	(30)
Tobacco Policy	(30)
Visitors/Volunteers to School	(31)
Weapons Policy	(31)
*COVID-19 Specific Protocols, Procedures and Other Considerations	(32)

Important Names and Numbers for RSU #34 and OTES

Welcome to RSU #34 and OTES! Over the course of the school year, this list of names and numbers may be handy to you. Please post for quick reference.

Old Town Elementary School: 827-1544

OTES Fax: 827-1549

Classroom Teacher: _____ **ext.** _____

Principal: Jeanna Tuell ext. 3604

Asst. Principal: Maggie Mitchell ext. 3603

Secretaries: Deb Letourneau ext. 3600, Betsy Clark ext. 3602

School Nurse: Cece Costello ext. 3605

School Counselor: Trysha Lunn ext. 3609, Vicki Wilcox ext. 3608

School Community Coordinator: Jennifer Goodwin 827-2508

Librarian: Michelle Reesman ext. 3238

Music: Amanda Marquis ext. 3143

Art: Pam Dunphy ext. 3145

PE: Lisa Beaulieu ext. 3123

RSU #34 Central Office

Superintendent of Schools: David Walker 827-7171

Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment: Jon Doty 827-3932

Food Service Director: Stephanie Salley 827-3908

Special Education Directors: Kimm Kenniston and Betsy Dyer, 827-3921

Important Community Numbers:

Alton School: 394-2331

Bradley/Viola Rand School: 827- 2508

LMS: 827-3900

OTHS: 827-3910

City of Old Town: 827-3980 (clerk)

Cyr Bus Lines: 827-2335

Helen Hunt Health Center: 827-6128

Housing Authority: 827-6151

Old Town Fire Department: 827-3400 or 911 for emergencies

Old Town/Orono YMCA: 827-6111

Old Town Parks and Recreation: 827-3961

Old Town Police Department: 827-3984 or 911 for emergencies

Old Town Public Library: 827-3972

Old Town/Orono YMCA: 827-9622

Old Town Parks and Recreation: 827-3961

Old Town Police Department: 827-3984 or 911 for emergencies

Old Town Public Library: 827-3972

Affirmative Action

Regional School Unit #34 ensures equal employment, equal educational opportunities and affirmative action regardless of race, sex, color, national origin, religion, marital status, age, or handicap. Grievance procedures are available in the principal's office.

Affirmative Action Officer – Scott Gordon

Co-Affirmative Action Officer – Cheryl Leonard

Section 504 Coordinator – Kimm Kenniston

Title IX Coordinator – David Walker

Director of the Office of Civil Rights Washington, DC,

<https://www.hhs.gov/ocr/index.html>

Arrival at School

1. Arrival Time and Entrance Locations

- a. Students should begin to arrive at school at 7:30am. Do not drop off students prior to 7:30am as there is no supervision.
- b. Students should report to their assigned entrance. Kindergarten enters through the covered entrances at each community. Green Community kindergarten doors are located to the right on the front of the school. Blue Community kindergarten doors are located on the back of the school, near the center. Red Community students enter through the front door. Green Community students enter through the right side entrance by the PreK playground. Blue Community students enter through the back K-2 recess door. Yellow Community students enter through the back main doors past the 3-5 playground. Paths are marked with colored arrows.

2. Drop Off Procedures

- a. Students arriving by bus will be dropped off in the bus loop near the front entrance.
- b. Students arriving by car can be dropped off in the car lane. Students must be able to get themselves prepared to exit the vehicle in a safe and quick fashion. Adults must not exit the vehicle to assist or park in this loop to ensure a quick drop off process. Students should walk down the middle of the sidewalk, away from other vehicles.
- c. If your student needs assistance or you wish to walk your student into school, please park in appropriate spaces and use the crosswalk and sidewalk to enter the school. **Please do not park to the left of OTES in**

the visitor spaces or along the grass. Students should not cross the parking lot or drop off loop by themselves.

Attendance and Absences

RSU #34 and OTES are committed to the philosophy that every student should be present in every class, every period, every day. Daily attendance and promptness are expected in all classes and are essential for success in school.

In regards to school absences, it is expected that parents/guardians and students cooperate with the staff, school nurse, guidance counselors, administration, and the school resource officer in order to fulfill the School Board Policies and State of Maine Statue 5051-A. RSU #34 administration is required to follow State Attendance and Truancy laws and statutes. Every child between the ages of 5 (once enrollment has occurred) and 17 shall attend school, and an unexcused absence of one half day or more is considered violation of the compulsory education law. Absences may be excused through contact with parent or guardian. Examples of excused absences are: illness, family illness or emergency, or prior approved absence for family business. Administration will make the decision on whether absence is excused or unexcused. Absences due to communicable diseases must be noted by a letter from a physician or school nurse before the student will be readmitted. Absences due to COVID-19 conditions will have specific protocols communicated through school nursing staff and/or administration.

1. Daily Absence Reporting

- a. Parents/guardians should notify the school by telephone at 827-1544, option 2, which can be used to leave a message on the attendance hotline 24/7, or by email to the classroom teacher and Deb Letourneau (deb.letourneau@rsu34.org), or by providing a note prior to the absence.**
- b. If the parent/guardian fails to notify the school, the school will attempt to contact the parent/guardian.
- c. Students who are absent without a parent/guardian excuse will be marked as unexcused, which may result in truancy.
- d. All absences, including those approved in advance by parents/guardians or school officials, except those for school-sponsored activities, will count in a student's attendance.
- e. Any absences may affect a student's academic achievement.
- f. The school encourages parents to schedule doctor and dental appointments after school hours.

- g. Parents/guardians may be required to submit supporting documentation in order to excuse the absence of their student if absenteeism is an issue. For example, in order for the absence to be excused, parents/guardians may be asked to submit written notification from a licensed physician stating the reasons why a student is unable to attend school.
- h. The School Resource Officer may be sent to a student's home at any time when their absence causes concern.
- i. We fully understand that COVID-19 symptoms, illness, quarantine, and other related concerns will potentially affect student absences. We are understanding of this ongoing situation and all COVID-19 related absences will be excused as long as information is communicated with the school. Absences due to COVID-19 conditions will have specific protocols communicated through school nursing staff and/or administration.

2. Planned Non-Illness School Absence (3 or more days)

- a. Planned trips during school days are disruptive to a student's learning. Given that the school is responsible for the educational progress of a student, **we require that the parent/guardian complete a form requesting prior approval and missed work.**
- b. Students are required to complete and return missed assignments. After this work has been reviewed by a teacher, the form will be filed in the student's cumulative record.
- c. The Planned Non-Illness Absence Form can be found [here](#).

3. Chronic and Excessive Absenteeism Procedures

- a. *Chronic absenteeism* means missing approximately 10% or more of the school year (equivalent to 18 days out of a 176 day school year) regardless of whether absences are excused or unexcused. A cumulative absence rate of 20% is the guideline in determination of *excessive absenteeism* (total of 4 days absent at the end of September, total of 8 days at the end of October, total of 12 days at the end of November, etc.). (Chang and Romero)

Month	Chronic Absenteeism (10% or more)	Excessive Absenteeism (20% or more)
September	2	4
October	4	8

November	6	12
December	8	15
January	10	19
February	11	22
March	13	26
April	15	30
May	17	34
June	18	36

Chang, Hedy and Romero, Mariajose [Present, Engaged and Accounted For: The Critical Importance of Addressing Chronic Absence in the Early Grades](#) National Center for Children in Poverty, Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University, September 2008

- b. Since attendance represents a critical component in the overall success of each student, when a student's absenteeism is chronic or excessive, the school will implement the following steps:
 - i. The school will send a letter to the student's parents/guardians. The letter sets out the total number of student absences and the importance of school attendance.
 - ii. If the student's attendance does not improve, the school will send a second letter requesting a meeting.
 - iii. If attendance continues to be an issue, the school will send a third letter, certified or delivered in person by our School Resource Officer.
 - iv. If all options are exhausted, the school will involve outside agencies such as The Old Town Police Department, The Department of Education, The Department of Health and Human Services, and/or the District Attorney.

Tardies and Early or Changed Dismissals

1. Tardiness

- a. **Arrival after 8:00am is regarded as tardiness.** Remember, school activities begin at 7:30 am and this should be your goal time for arriving at OTES. Students arriving late to school impact the flow of the classroom morning procedures. Many students feel uncomfortable when arriving later than their classmates. Students are required to make up their work when tardy.

- b. Continued unexcused tardiness will result in parent notification and may result in a meeting with staff or a plan that involves the makeup of school time or work.

2. Early Dismissal from School

- a. Parents/guardians must notify the main office if their student needs to leave for any reason during the school day.
- b. Students are always dismissed through the office only outside of regular dismissal time.
- c. Students will not be dismissed after 1:45 pm unless prior arrangements have been made by the parent/guardian or in case of emergency.
- d. In the event of a student illness, if parent/guardian cannot be reached regarding the need to leave school, individuals designated as an emergency contact may be notified to pick up the student from school.

3. Dismissal Plan Changes

- a. The office must be notified by a parent/guardian of any changes in a student's dismissal plan i.e. riding a different bus home or being picked up when that is not typical.
- b. **Notification should be via phone call, email, or note as early as possible. We encourage parents, if calling or emailing, to make arrangements prior to 1:00 pm and REQUIRE these changes be made by 1:45 pm.**

Behavior Expectations

1. School-Wide

- a. Here at OTES we work hard and be kind. We are also safe.
- b. We use kind words and actions. We use manners and respect.
- c. Every day when we enter the building, we have a job to do and we will do it to the very best of our ability. We take responsibility for our learning. We encourage others to do the same.
- d. We arrive at school with all materials we will need, including papers, homework, a snack, a water bottle, face masks, and library books. We take home materials as asked by our teachers and staff.
- e. We are ready to learn with a good night's sleep. We arrive on time; if we miss even a minute, we miss a lot of learning.

- f. We dress appropriately for our job at school. This includes sneakers on PE day and clothes for outside play. We do not wear hats in the school building.
- g. We walk through the building and keep our hands, feet and objects to ourselves. We ask an adult before we leave a room so adults always know where we are for our safety. We use all materials and spaces safely.

2. Playground

- a. Listen to playground duty staff
- b. Make safe, respectful choices
- c. Stay in the correct playground areas
- d. Use the slide properly:
 - i. Slide down feet first
 - ii. Hands and feet inside at all times
 - iii. Only go down the slide
- e. Swings
 - i. Keep clear of the swings
 - ii. Swing straight
 - iii. One to a swing
 - iv. No jumping off the swings
 - v. Share the swings so all students who wish to swing can have a turn
- f. Children are working inside the building:
 - i. Stay away from the building
 - ii. No screeching/screaming
- g. We have a hands-off policy at our school!

Breakfast and Lunch Program / Food in School

RSU #34 offers a state and federally approved breakfast and lunch program. Specific school nutrition questions should be directed to the RSU #34 Food Service Department at 827-3908.

1. Menus

Menus are distributed monthly and can be found on the [district food service website](#) and app, and the RSU #34 Food Service as well as RSU #34 OTES Facebook pages.

2. Payment

- a. New this year, through federal and state funding, breakfast and lunch are free for all students.

- b. **Milk alone does cost 50 cents**, however if a student takes a milk, a fruit, and one other item (veggies sticks or a cheese stick for example) to go with the lunch they bring from home, they won't have to pay for anything. That is enough to count as a reimbursable meal and is therefore covered for free. This will be allowed and supported by our food service staff.

- 3. **Free and Reduced Meal Form- VERY IMPORTANT! Regardless of your income, please take the time to complete the Free and Reduced Meal Form as appropriate. Much of our Federal and State funding is based on the number of qualifying students. Your help is of GREAT importance! The online form can be found [here](#). A printable application and other materials can be found [here](#).**

- 4. **Breakfast in the Classroom**
 - a. Breakfasts are available daily upon arrival to all students on a grab-and-go basis to be eaten in the classroom. Some classes may utilize other spaces to eat if needed.
 - b. Students who need to eat breakfast at school should arrive at school on time to ensure meal availability and adequate eating time.

- 5. **Lunch, Snacks and Water Bottles from Home**
 - a. Please send a water bottle with your student daily. Our water fountains are currently not in use. There is a water bottle filling station on each floor.
 - b. Please label lunch boxes with the student's first and last name.
 - c. **Excessive junk food is strongly discouraged. Coffee, energy drinks, and caffeinated soda are not allowed.**
 - d. Sharing of food is not allowed.
 - e. The microwaves are not available for student use at this time.

- 6. **Peanut/Nut Products**

While we are not a tree nut free school, we need to be very cautious about peanut and nut products at school to protect the health of our students with allergies. Families in classrooms that need to be nut free will be notified. Snacks and lunch items containing nuts will not be allowed in those rooms. Our school kitchen is a nut free environment. We also provide a nut free table where students with allergies and students not eating nut products can sit if the

cafeteria is in use. Students eating nut products during the day are asked to wash their hands immediately after they have eaten.

7. Food for Celebrations or Special Events

Due to COVID, food provided by families to the classroom must be store bought and in its original packaging. Please be aware of classroom allergies. Speaking to the classroom teacher before sending in food to share is preferred.

8. Food Preferences or Concerns

If you have preferences about your student not eating school meals or other concerns, please contact your student's teacher.

9. Lunch and Recess Schedule

K-2 Lunch and Recess Block- 10:30-12:00

3-5 Lunch and Recess Block- 11:00-1:00

Each individual teacher can provide information on their specific schedule.

Bullying Policy

It is the intent of the RSU #34 Board to provide all students with an equitable opportunity to learn. To that end, the Board has significant interest in providing a safe, orderly, and respectful school environment that is conducive to teaching and learning. It is not the Board's intent to prohibit students from expressing their ideas, including ideas that may offend the sensibilities of others, or from engaging in civil debate.

1. "Bullying" means any physical act or gesture or any verbally, written, or electronically communicated expression that:
 - a. A reasonable person should expect will have the effect of:
 - b. Physically harming a student or damaging a student's property;
 - c. Placing a student in reasonable fear of physical harm or damage to his/her property; or
 - d. Substantially disrupting the instructional program or the orderly operations of the school; or
 - e. Is so severe, persistent, or pervasive that it creates an intimidating, hostile educational environment for the student who is bullied.
2. For the purposes of this policy, bullying does not mean mere teasing, put-downs, "talking trash," trading insults, or similar interactions among friends, nor does it include expression of ideas or beliefs so long as such expression is not lewd, profane, or does not interfere with students' opportunity to learn, the instructional

program, or the operations of the schools. This does not preclude teachers or school administrators from setting and enforcing rules for civility, courtesy, and/or responsible behavior in the classroom and the school environment.

3. The determination whether particular conduct constitutes bullying requires reasonable consideration of the circumstances, which include the frequency of the behavior at issue, the location in which the behavior occurs, the ages and maturity of the students involved, the activity or context in which the conduct occurs, and the nature and severity of the conduct.
4. Bullying, as defined by RSU #34 policy ([see policies beginning with code JICK](#)), is not acceptable conduct in RSU #34 schools and is prohibited while on school property, while in attendance at school or at any school-sponsored activity, while students are being transported to or from school or school-sponsored activities or events. This policy also applies to bullying that occurs at any other time or place that such conduct directly interferes with the operations, discipline, or general welfare of the school. Any student who engages in conduct that constitutes bullying shall be subject to disciplinary consequences up to and including suspension and expulsion. A student's bullying behavior may also be addressed through other behavioral interventions.
5. Students who have been bullied or who observe incidents of bullying are encouraged to report this behavior to a staff member or school administrator. Acts of reprisal or retaliation against any person who reports an incident of bullying are prohibited. Any student who is determined to have falsely accused another of bullying shall be subject to disciplinary consequences.

Bus Information

1. Bus Rules

- a. Always listen to the driver
- b. Use quiet, kind words
- c. Stay in your seat
- d. Keep your hands to yourself
- e. Masks must be worn at all times on busses

2. Bus Violations

Bus drivers will inform administration about bus behavior violations and school discipline procedures will apply. Typical consequences can include a warning, call home, seat reassignment, and suspension off the bus.

3. Temporary or One Time Bus Changes

- a. All bus students must only ride their assigned bus. Students may not exit their bus at a different stop.
- b. If there is a change in dismissal, a note, phone call, or email to the classroom teacher and cc Deb Letourneau) must be presented from the child's parent/guardian informing the office of the change.
- c. Bus changes will only be honored with advanced notice and if bus space is available.

4. Cyr Bus Garage Number: 827-2335

OTES Calendar We maintain an [OTES Google Calendar](#) that is also linked to the [OTES webpage](#)

Cancellations and Emergency Closings

1. In the event that it is necessary to cancel or close school, the decision will be made by the Superintendent of Schools. The superintendent will then send out an automated notification via phone and our app (make sure your notifications are enabled), including the details of the cancellation. Parents may also check the RSU 34 website (www.rsu34.org) or app, the RSU #34 OTES Facebook Page, or local news outlets for cancellation information.
2. It is critical that we have up to date contact information for all students! Please notify the main office promptly of any changes in address, emails, and telephone numbers.
3. **If a parent/guardian is uncomfortable sending their student to school due to weather, they are allowed to keep their student home. The parent/guardian must notify the office of this, and the student will be marked with an excused absence.**

Change of Address/Telephone Number/Email It is **critical** that we have up to date contact information for all students! Please notify the main office promptly of any changes in address, emails, and telephone numbers. Please also make sure your voicemail is set up and has space to leave a message.

Classroom Placement for the Next School Year

We take placing our students in classrooms very seriously and work on this task in May, June and beyond during each school year for the following year. While we do not take parent/guardian requests for specific teachers, we welcome parent/guardian input. If you would like to provide input into your student's placement, please contact the principal, assistant principal, or school counselor prior to the end of May. Input could include: positive peer relationships, peer relationships to avoid, learning characteristics or needs of your student, past experiences and established relationships with staff members, and other information.

Communication in the School and District

Communication is key to a student's success. We value collaboration and welcome feedback about your child's experience at OTES. If you have a question concerning your child, please follow the chain of command below until the issue is addressed or resolved.

1. Teacher
2. Building administrators
3. Director of Curriculum, Instruction, Assessment (if academics are a concern)
4. Director of Special Education (if student programming is a concern)
5. Superintendent
6. School Board

Discipline

Our goal at the elementary level is to develop self-control within our students. Self-control is not taught by removing all controls and allowing students to do as they please. Instead, effective discipline provides for the opportunity to reduce teacher direction and encourages students to take an increasing amount of responsibility for the control of their own behavior. Teachers shall spend time early in the year to instruct students as to their responsibilities and privileges in the classroom and on the school grounds. Teachers will make the classroom rules and procedures known to the students at the start of school. Students' rules and expected conduct will be reviewed as necessary throughout the school year. In the same manner, general school rules will be subject to early information and review.

1. The following are general expectations:

- a. Students are expected to show respect to all people during the school day.
 - b. Students will be expected to follow the specific rules and regulations established for their particular classroom.
 - c. Serious disruptive behavior in the classroom will not be tolerated.
 - d. Obscene and/or profane language may not be used in or on the school grounds.
 - e. Damage to school property will be considered a serious offense.
 - f. Fighting with intent to harm between students will be considered a serious offense.
 - g. Cell phones must be turned off or have their ringer silenced and remain in the student's bag or with the teacher. Students are not permitted to use cell phones or other electronic devices during school hours without staff permission.
 - h. School Board Policy will be followed in the event of possession of firearms, drugs, alcohol, or smoking materials.
2. Unless dictated by Board policy, the penalties for the above infractions will be determined by the teacher, assistant principal, and/or principal. The penalties may include loss of privileges, detention, parent, student, and school personnel conference, suspension, or, in extreme situations, expulsion. Twenty-four hour notice will be given for detention. The school is not responsible for transportation after the detention period.
3. The classroom teacher has the right to remove a student from his/her room in order to maintain the general classroom discipline.
4. It is also understood that the school *does not* condone corporal punishment in any form. It may, however, be necessary to restrain a student when his/her actions physically endanger others or when complete defiance occurs. Please see our Restraint and Seclusion Policies.
5. We view an effective discipline development plan as assisting students to form a strong foundation for good citizenship by taking pride in and responsibility for their actions in the school setting and in the community as a whole.
- 6. Parental support and participation is essential for an effective discipline plan.**

Dismissal

1. Please remember that dismissal plan changes cannot be made after 1:45 pm unless it is an emergency.
2. Bus students will be dismissed at 2:15 pm. Staff will accompany these students to the bus loop and/or the appropriate bus.
3. Walkers and pick ups will be dismissed at 2:25 pm. Families can use the pick up loop to retrieve their student(s). Students should be able to get themselves and their belongings into the car without assistance in order to use the loop. Vehicles should not be parked in the loop to ensure a quick pick up process. Families can also park and walk to pick up their student using the crosswalk or sidewalk.
Students will not be allowed to cross the pick up loop or parking lot by themselves.
4. Please contact the school right away if you will be late picking up your student. Repeated late pick up will result in a meeting and planning for other dismissal options.
5. See the Tardies and Early or Changed Dismissals section above for information on dismissal outside of our regular schedule or procedures.

Dress Code

1. Students are expected to dress appropriately for school. Students who wear clothing that is offensive to others or that does not adequately cover the body will be required to change into more appropriate attire.
2. Students should be dressed appropriately for the weather as they all go outside daily.
3. Students should be dressed appropriately, including wearing sneakers, for their scheduled PE day(s).
4. It is recommended that all students, especially K-2 students, bring a change of clothes including underwear and socks. These can be kept in their backpack or in their cubby. Many things can result in the need to change clothes!

Electronic Devices

Students are allowed to have electronic devices, including cell phones, to travel to and from school. Once students have arrived on the school grounds, devices should be silenced or turned off and stored in their backpacks or with the teacher until the end of the day. If a student feels the need to use their cell phone or other device, they must do so only with teacher permission. The school will not be responsible for lost or stolen items.

Emergency Procedures

1. Emergency Response

- a. RSU #34 has detailed emergency response plans in place for a variety of situations. The majority of these plans are kept confidential for security reasons, however, in the event of an emergency, we would communicate through our automated call system, our Facebook page, and possibly individual calls to families.
- b. These situations are one reason why it is critically important to have accurate contact information for each student's family and emergency contacts.
- c. Although we recognize that in an emergency situation you would want to get to your student as quickly as possible, please allow us the time to follow our procedures before expecting communication or arriving at the school or another location.

2. Emergency Drills

OTES staff and students practice emergency drills on a regular basis. These practice drills are an opportunity for us to make students feel more prepared in high stress situations. These drills are often conducted in partnership with the OTFD and OTPD. After an emergency procedure is practiced, we try to communicate through Facebook and our webpage in order to inform families.

Field Trips and Excursions

Field trips are an important part of the educational experience. All field trips are an extension of the classroom learning activities.

1. Permission Slips

A permission slip must be signed by the parent or guardian and returned to school before a student will be permitted to go on a field trip or excursion.

2. Supervision

Teachers and administration will decide how students should be adequately supervised. Family members may be asked to chaperone if appropriate. Non-school-age children are not allowed on field trips. The staff member in charge of the trip is ultimately responsible for the students on the trip.

3. Behavior Expectations

On trips, students and staff are representing the school. School and behavior expectations extend to field trip experiences.

4. Local Excursions

Please be aware that most classrooms take local walks and educational excursions along the bike path and in the forest that border the playground without prior parent permission.

5. COVID Precautions

Field trips will be evaluated specifically for their safety in the time of COVID-19. Outside, physically distanced trips will be our focus this year. School COVID procedures and precautions will be taken on all school trips.

Health Services

The purpose of the RSU #34 student health services program is to help each student attend school in optimum health and benefit from the school experience. A registered nurse is assigned to OTES. CeCe Costello RN is our school nurse. She can be reached at 827-1544 ext 3605 or at cece.costello@rsu34.org.

1. Health Conditions Information

- a. The Student Health Survey should be completed by parent/guardian at time of enrollment and updated annually.
- b. Parent/guardian must notify the school nurse or principal of any health concern that could require emergency services, interfere with the student's education process, or require interventions throughout the school day.
- c. Students requiring medical accommodations throughout the school day (including, but not limited to, physical education, dietary conditions, physical limitations, and medical interventions) must submit a statement from their licensed medical provider stating the need for such accommodations each school year.
- d. It is strongly encouraged that parents/guardians follow a pattern of having regular medical and dental screenings for their child.
- e. The district maintains prefilled epinephrine auto syringes to be used in the event of an emergency. Parents/guardians must indicate in writing if their student cannot receive this emergency care. Parents/guardians of students with a known severe allergy with a prescription for an

epinephrine pen need to supply the school with an epinephrine pen for their child.

2. Immunizations/Enrollment

- a. Maine law requires all students to have on file evidence of required immunizations prior to attending school. Parents/guardians should bring immunization records or proof of medical exemption at the time of enrollment and obtain additional immunizations as required by state law. Beginning September 1, 2021, religious or philosophical exemptions are no longer allowed. An exception is allowed for students who have an IEP in place prior to September 1, 2021.
- b. The State of Maine Department of Health guidelines are used in determining the length of time a child should be absent for specific diseases (e.g. chicken pox). In compliance with state laws, unimmunized students may be excluded from school during a disease outbreak.

3. Illness or Health Conditions and Exclusion from School

A student should not be in attendance and will be sent home with any of the following:

- a. Temperature of 100 degrees or greater, or with incidents of vomiting and/or diarrhea. Student may return to school when free of above symptom(s) for 24 hours without any fever-reducing medication or other medication to relieve symptom(s)
- b. Symptoms related to possible communicable diseases (skin rashes, redness of eyes, swollen glands, etc.)
- c. Excessive drainage from eyes, ears, persistent earache, constant cough or painful sore throat accompanied by enlarged lymph nodes
- d. Students with (or having the potential to transmit) an acute infectious disease or parasite (e.g. live head lice, scabies)
- e. Students excluded from school for health reasons may return once the reason for the exclusion is no longer present. Any questions regarding when to return to school should be discussed with the school nurse.
- f. Students returning to school after injury or surgery, and who are thereby temporarily incapacitated (e.g. crutches, casts, or slings), are required to present a physician release to return to school along with a statement of any modifications or accommodations that need to be made.
- g. During the COVID-19 pandemic, we ask parents/guardians to conduct a symptom screening of their student(s) daily prior to sending them to school. Please see the COVID section at the end of this document for

further details. **A medical provider note or results of a COVID test may be required to return to school.**

- h. A student with a known exposure to COVID-19 must be kept home, and the parent/guardian must notify the school nurse. Please see the COVID section at the end of this document for further details.

4. First Aid

Whenever possible, the school nurse will treat any injuries or mishaps that a student sustains at school. Sometimes it is necessary for school personnel to administer basic first aid to students. Such first aid might include washing a cut, and applying bandages or ice packs. If your child has a significant injury, including any head injury, or becomes ill while at school, you will be notified as soon as possible.

5. Notification of Illness or Injury and Emergency Transport

- a. Students becoming ill or injured at school should ask a staff member for assistance right away. Staff will accompany the student or request the nurse come to their location if necessary.
- b. Parents/guardians or emergency contact individuals of students who become seriously ill or injured during the school day will be notified. **It is extremely important to have current information on our emergency contact form in case we need to reach you.**
- c. In the event of a serious accident or illness where the parent/guardian or other emergency contact individuals cannot be reached, an ambulance will be called and the student will be transported to the nearest hospital emergency room. When advisable, the student will be accompanied by a staff member. Additional staff will continue to attempt to reach the student's parent/guardian. Parent(s)/guardian(s) are held responsible for any costs involved.
- d. Accident insurance is available for students at a reasonable cost and parents are urged to take advantage of this offer. The school receives no compensation for this service.

6. Medication

- a. If at all possible, please arrange medication times so that they can be given at home (before and/or after school).
- b. If it is necessary for a student to take medication at school, there is a written medication policy that **must** be followed. Any medication, prescription and non-prescription, must be in the original containers,

properly labeled and accompanied by written instructions before they can be dispensed. In addition, a health care provider's signature is required for all medication.

- c. Tylenol (acetaminophen), Ibuprofen and short term prescriptions are the only exceptions. Medication to be administered for 15 consecutive days or less, such as an antibiotic, are not required to have a health care provider signature but must be brought to school in the original container with a current and clear pharmacy label. This includes prescription and non-prescription medication, including cough drops.
 - d. The first dose of any medication should be given by the parent/guardian at home.
 - e. The school nurse establishes a procedure for storage of the medication in a safe location, providing accessibility for the student when needed.
- Medication must be transported to and from school by a parent/guardian or other adult.** Maine State Law permits students to carry and use emergency medications such as EpiPens and inhalers with written permission from the parent/guardian and the health care provider, and demonstration of proper use to the school nurse. See the school nurse for details.
- f. The school nurse will monitor the student's manner of taking medication. This may include observing the student taking medication, reviewing student documentation, reminding the student to take the medication, communicating with the authorized prescriber regarding any side effects and notifying the parent/guardian of any problems, including the student's refusal or failure to take the medication in an appropriate or safe manner.
 - g. Medications must be picked up at the end of the school year unless a student is participating in summer school programming. Reminders will be given to pick up medication. **If medications are not picked up in a timely fashion, they will be safely disposed of.**

7. Health Screenings

- a. Vision and hearing screenings are provided for students in kindergarten, first, third, and fifth grades, as well as for any student referred by a teacher or parent.

8. Head Lice

- a. If a student has lice eggs, the parents/guardians are called and a treatment plan will be discussed with the nurse.

- b. If a student has live lice, the student's parents/guardians are called to pick up the child and a treatment plan will be discussed with the nurse.
- c. Students with lice are not to return to school until the school nurse or designated school official has checked to be sure the lice have been removed.
- d. If a family has experienced chronic lice, the nurse will check the student more frequently to be sure the student is lice and nit (egg) free.
- e. Teachers can recommend a student be checked for lice if they are observing excessive head scratching.
- f. Full classroom checks are only conducted if the class is experiencing several outbreaks and/or excessive absences are occurring, which is uncommon.
- g. We do not regularly inform other families about lice cases due to privacy concerns.

Homeless Students

Kimm Kenniston is the homeless liaison for RSU #34. It is the responsibility of RSU #34 to notify the citizens and parents in the district on an annual basis that education services are available to students classified as homeless. If you need further information to determine the rights available to students who are homeless in RSU #34, please contact Kimm Kenniston at 827-3921.

Lost and Found

Items that are found at school will be placed in our lost and found locations. If items are labelled with a student name, they will be returned to the student or their classroom teacher. Items found on the playgrounds are often placed in a bin just inside that door for easy student access. Most items are placed on tables at the top of the main staircase on the landing or in the lobby. Please have your student ask their teacher if they can look for their lost items there. Families are also welcome to check in the office and get a pass to look through the lost and found themselves. Lost and found items are periodically gathered and donated to charities, so please check as soon as you lose an item.

Parent Support of Students and Involvement with School

To guarantee the best possible education for your student, families and the school must work together. Here are a few suggestions as to how this can be accomplished:

1. Follow our Facebook page, bookmark the district website, and download our free app to easily keep up with news and happenings.
2. Check your student's backpack and folder daily for work and teacher communication.
3. Come to back-to-school nights in the fall so you can meet your student's teacher early in the year.
4. Let your child know that you respect and support the teacher and that you intend to work together for your student's best interests.
5. Find out how much homework is expected and talk with your student about the importance of completing the homework assignments.
6. Make sure your student gets plenty of rest and has an adequate diet. Encourage good health habits and allow free time for leisure activities.
7. Don't pressure your student about grades or compare your student to other children. Look for the positive.
8. Encourage interests in books, magazines, hobbies, trips, and current events. Have reading materials in your home. Talk, read and work with your student.
9. Feel free to contact the school whenever there is a problem. Don't just talk about school problems with your friends, get in touch with the school where someone can give your problem immediate attention. In the event of a classroom concern, please contact your student's teacher first by calling or e-mailing or to possibly schedule an appointment.
10. Help your student be prepared for each day.
11. Volunteer in our school, your student's class, or during events. Please visit the office for a simple volunteer form and to see what opportunities are available.

Parent-Teacher Club (PTC) and Dads of Great Students (DOGS)

Parents, guardians, or other adults involved in the lives of OTES students are encouraged to be active participants in our PTC or DOGS groups. Both groups are great networking opportunities and all volunteer opportunities are optional!

1. The many efforts of the **PTC** help to provide enriched school learning opportunities and fun for our students. Please watch for notices of meetings throughout the year. **These meetings are typically the first Wednesday of the month from 6-7pm in the OTES Library or via Zoom. The first meeting of the year will be later in the month, Wednesday, September 15th at 6pm.** The talents and interests of our families make this a most valued resource in our school. If you cannot attend the monthly meeting, the meeting minutes are posted on our website. The PTC works with staff to host many events including community meals, during and after school activities, and with the library staff to host special events such as the annual author visit and book fair. There are

opportunities to support our school and this organization in many different capacities! Each month we also try to feature at least one staff presentation to keep families informed about what is happening at OTES.

2. **The DOGS** group is a group of dads and men connected to OTES students. They will meet throughout the year and typically choose a few projects/events to support OTES.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

Scheduled parent-teacher conferences are held at the end of the first trimester. Teachers will be scheduling a parent/teacher conference prior to November 20th. Parents and teachers can schedule conferences on an as needed basis at other times. In addition, the building principal and assistant principal are always available to facilitate issues if the need arises. We aim to accommodate parent meetings whenever requested! **At this time conferences and other parent meetings will be held virtually.**

Public Notice: Public Education for Students with Disabilities

1. The purpose of this notification is to ensure that Regional School Unit #34 is in compliance with 05-071 Chapter 101 Maine Unified Special Education Regulation, Birth to Age Twenty. *“Each SAU shall maintain and implement policies and procedures to ensure that all children residing in the jurisdiction between the ages of 3 and 20 years, including children with disabilities who are homeless children, are wards of the State or state agency clients, children with disabilities attending private schools and receiving home instruction, highly mobile children (including migrant or homeless), children who have the equivalent of 10 full days of unexcused absences or 7 consecutive school days of unexcused absences during a school year, and children incarcerated in county jails, and who are in need of special education and related services, even though they are advancing from grade to grade, are identified, located and evaluated at public expense.”*
2. It is the stated intention of Regional School Unit #34 to provide any eligible special education student for whom it has responsibility, a “genuine opportunity for equitable participation” in special education programs.
3. Section 504 Child Find Notice: Children eligible for Section 504 Accommodations or services include those children who have a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity.

4. If you suspect your child has a disability and may need special education services or 504 Accommodations, or if you would like additional information, please contact your child's teacher or call the District's Special Education Director, Kimm Kenniston at 827-3921.

Pupil Records

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's education records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she reaches the age of 18 or attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred are "eligible students."

1. **Right to Inspect and Review:** Parents or eligible students have the right to inspect and review the student's education records maintained by the school. Schools are not required to provide copies of records unless, for reasons such as great distance, it is impossible for parents or eligible students to review the records. Schools may charge a fee for copies.
2. **Right to Challenge:** Parents or eligible students have the right to request that a school correct records which they believe to be inaccurate or misleading. If the school decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student then has the right to a formal hearing. After the hearing, if the school still decides not to amend the record, the parent or eligible student has the right to place a statement with the record setting forth his or her view about the contested information.
3. **Releases Without Permission and Directory Information:** Generally, schools must have written permission from the parent or eligible student in order to release any information from a student's education record. However, FERPA allows schools to disclose those records, without consent, to the following parties or under the following conditions (34 CFR § 99.31): School officials with legitimate educational interest; Other schools to which a student is transferring; Specified officials for audit or evaluation purposes; Appropriate parties in connection with financial aid to a student; Organizations conducting certain studies for or on behalf of the school; Accrediting organizations; To

comply with a judicial order or lawfully issued subpoena; Appropriate officials in cases of health and safety emergencies; and State and local authorities, within a juvenile justice system, pursuant to specific State law.

Schools may disclose, without consent, "directory" information such as a student's name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, honors and awards, and dates of attendance. However, schools must tell parents and eligible students about directory information and allow parents and eligible students a reasonable amount of time to request that the school not disclose directory information about them. Schools must notify parents and eligible students annually of their rights under FERPA. The actual means of notification (special letter, inclusion in a PTA bulletin, student handbook, or newspaper article) is left to the discretion of each school.

- 4. Additional Information:** You may call 1-800-USA-LEARN (1-800-872-5327) (voice). You may also contact Kimm Kenniston, Director of Special Education, at (207)827-3921. Individuals who use TDD may use the [Federal Relay Service](#). Or you may contact us at the following address:
Family Policy Compliance Office at the U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

Report Cards and Progress Reports

Progress reports are issued by the classroom teachers two times a year: at the midpoint of both the first and second trimesters. Report cards are issued three times a year, at the conclusion of each trimester. These reports should be signed and returned to the teacher. If you have questions or concerns about your student's performance, please contact the classroom teacher.

Progress Report 1	October 22, 2021
Trimester 1 Report Card	December 3, 2021
Progress Report 2	January 21, 2022
Trimester 2 Report Card	March 11, 2022
Trimester 3 Report Card	Last Day of School

Reporting Concerns Regarding School Safety

Students, parents/guardians, staff, and community members are highly encouraged to report all dangerous and potentially dangerous situations and/or events directly to an administrator or to the school resource officer (SRO) right away. Such situations include, but are not limited to: threats, harassment, bullying, acts of violence, drug activity, or the possession of weapons on school property.

Resource Center

RSU #34 has a resource center located at OTES to support our families. The resource center has food items, hygiene products, and other household goods when families are in need. The resource center is typically open once a week and the schedule will be posted on Facebook and our website/app. The center is also available in urgent need situations. For more information on this resource or other assistance, please contact our School Community Coordinator, email Jenn Goodwin at jennifer.goodwin@rsu34.org or text/call her at (207)370-8564 .

Resource Officer

RSU #34 has a full time School Resource Officer (SRO) on staff from the Old Town Police Department. This officer is available to provide support and assistance to the school administration and staff to maintain a safe and constructive learning environment. He/she will serve as a resource to administrators and teachers in planning and providing age-appropriate educational programs that foster respect for the law, an understanding of law enforcement, and safe and healthy behaviors. The officer will serve as a resource to administrators and staff concerning law enforcement and child welfare issues, attendance and truancy, and to assist individual students and their families in addressing issues related to law enforcement, as well as help students to have a meaningful school experience. This position ensures that we have a liaison between the schools and the Old Town Police Department in addressing issues of concern to both departments.

Retention

The retention of students in their present grade is an educational decision made by school officials. Students will be retained when it is in their best interest educationally. The basis for a retention decision rests primarily on an analysis of the student's academic achievement and/or their maturational development.

The teacher and/or building administrators will keep parents informed of their child's progress and of the possibility that retention in grade may be required. A parent conference will be arranged whenever appropriate prior to any decision to retain the student. Any parent who chooses to question the school's retention decision regarding their child may appeal to the Superintendent of Schools. Any such appeal will be shared with the School Board.

Restraint and Seclusion Policies

Please visit the [policies section](#) of the RSU 34 website, www.rsu34.org, and see Policies JKAA and JKAA-R.

Specialty Areas and Services

1. **Physical Education** instruction is provided by a physical education teacher and educational technician once a week to students in grades K-5.
2. **Music** instruction is provided by a music teacher to students in grades K-5 once a week. Instrumental lessons are available to students in grades 4 and 5. Information on these lessons will be sent home in the fall.
3. **Art** instruction is provided by an art teacher to students in grades K-5 once a week.
4. **Library** and other academic skills are taught by the Library Media Specialist and library educational technicians. K-5 students visit the library with their class once a week, but may exchange books and items or use the library in other capacities on additional days. Students are expected to care for and return their library items in a timely manner. Visit the library website [here](#) for great resources!
5. **School counselor** services are provided at Old Town Elementary School. The role of the counselor is to work with the parent(s)/guardian(s), students, and school staff to support a student's school success. We currently have two school counselors who provide classroom lessons, small group interventions, and occasional individual sessions. School counselors are a great resource to parents/guardians for further support of their student's school experience, however they are not clinical providers.
6. RSU #34 and OTES have established partnerships with **outside agencies** for clinical counseling and case management services. School counselors and

special education staff will connect with families when these services are recommended. If you have questions about these services, please contact our school counselors.

7. **Outdoor play and learning** are a huge part of the OTES experience. We have an extensive learning garden, multiple outdoor classrooms, and a greenhouse is currently under construction. We have many staff members trained in aspects of outdoor education, but all staff members and programs are encouraged to take advantage of our outdoor learning facilities. Students should be prepared for outside time daily and families should watch for information about garden, forest and other special outdoor activities.
8. **Special Education/Section 504** accommodations and services are available. These are provided to those students who have identified special needs. More information may be obtained from the building principal. If you are concerned about your student at any time, please reach out to their teacher and then administration if necessary.
9. OTES has a full-time **K-5 Gifted and Talented (Chapter 104) program**. The program aims to advocate for students who have significantly different needs than their peers. A screening process takes place each year in third grade, but if you have questions about your student's needs, please reach out to their classroom teacher.
10. **Title 1 intervention** services in math and literacy are available for all students who need extra support to be successful. Referrals for this program are initiated by the teacher, but if you have questions about your student's needs, please reach out to their classroom teacher. At least one family night will be held for students participating in these programs (dependent on COVID conditions in 21-22).
11. **English as a Second Language (ESL)** services are available to students whose first language is not English. The program supports students as they adjust to a new culture and learn to speak, read, and write in their new language. Screening for these services is done at student registration.
12. RSU #34 runs a partial day **PreK** program with two daily sessions. OTES houses one of these PreK classes. Our program has a focus on social skills along with literacy and math readiness activities. Students must be 4 years old as

of October 15th in the school year to be eligible. Enrollment is limited and available on a first come, first served basis.

Staff Qualifications: Parent/Guardian Right To Know

Under the ESSA federal law, parents and guardians may request information regarding the professional qualifications of their students' classroom teachers and paraprofessionals. Please contact the Curriculum Office at 827-3932 to request this information. You have a right to request the following:

1. Whether the student's teacher has met state qualification and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction
2. Whether the student's teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which state qualification or licensing criteria have been waived
3. Whether the teacher is teaching in a field or discipline of the certification of the teacher.
4. Whether the child is provided services by paraprofessionals and, if so, their qualifications

Technology

- Regional School Unit #34 recognizes technology as an important teaching and learning tool in the preparation of our students to be productive citizens. Students are instructed to use all forms of technology in a safe and appropriate manner. Students are expected to report if websites or tools are being used inappropriately or if they accidentally come across content that is inappropriate for school. Students who use technology inappropriately and/or who do not report other students using technology inappropriately can have their technology privileges limited or suspended.
- Learning platforms that can be used for remote learning, such as SeeSaw and Google Classroom, will remain a part of our elementary program. These platforms are conducive to aspects of in-person learning and will maintain students' familiarity with their use in the event of the need for remote learning.
- If school technology equipment is sent home, it is the family's responsibility to care for and return loaned materials.

Tobacco Policy

Smoking and/or the use of tobacco products, including electronic devices, is prohibited in/on all school facilities and grounds at all times. This applies to students, teachers, employees and visitors. Students are also prohibited from possessing such products.

Visitors/Volunteers to School

1. During the 2021-2022 school year, the welcoming of visitors and the use of volunteers will depend on COVID protocols.
2. All visitors and volunteers entering OTES must wear a face mask.
3. All visitors must check in at the main office window in the vestibule and be issued a visitor's pass if they are to enter the building.
4. When waiting to pick up your student during the school day, adults are asked to wait in the area to the left of the main entrance and flagpole.
5. Students are not allowed to bring guests from other schools to their classrooms without prior approval from the classroom teacher and/or administration.
6. All items or messages should be brought to the main office to prevent excessive interruptions to classroom instruction. Items for pickup by families or students will be left in the office or on the vestibule table.
7. Volunteers working directly with students must fill out a simple volunteer form and submit it to the office for a criminal background check. They must also follow visitor procedures.

Weapons Policy

It is the policy of the RSU #34 to take a zero tolerance position on weapons in schools or on school property. Violators of this policy will be subject to severe school and/or legal consequences. In an effort to ensure a safe environment for students and employees, all persons are prohibited from the following conduct at all times on school premises, in any school or personal vehicle, or at any school-sponsored activity:

1. Knowing possession or use of articles commonly used or designed to inflict bodily harm and/or to intimidate other persons. Examples of such articles include, but are not limited to: firearms, ammunition, explosives, "brass" knuckles, switchblades, butterfly knives, chains, clubs, and Kung Fu "stars". The above applies to in or about any vehicle whether visible, concealed or in a storage compartment.
2. Use of any object as a weapon, although not necessarily designed to be a weapon, to inflict or to threaten bodily harm and/or to intimidate, coerce or harass. Examples of such objects include, but are not limited to: belts, other articles of clothing, combs, pencils, files, compasses, scissors, and replicas of weapons.

3. Students who discover they have accidentally brought a weapon to school must immediately turn in the article to an adult. This must be done without displaying the item to other students.

COVID-19 Specific Protocols, Procedures and Other Considerations

“Schools are an important part of the infrastructure of communities. They provide safe and supportive learning environments for students that support social and emotional development, provide access to critical services, and improve life outcomes. They also employ people, and enable parents, guardians, and caregivers to work. Though COVID-19 outbreaks have occurred in school settings, multiple studies have shown that transmission rates within school settings, when multiple prevention strategies are in place, are typically lower than – or like – community transmission levels.” (CDC School Guidelines).

In accordance with US CDC guidelines for schools (updated July 9, 2021), RSU 34 will return to school five days a week with all students and staff in-person for the 2021-22 school year. Our strategy is to safely return all children to full-time in-person learning in the fall with layered prevention strategies in place. Protocols will be regularly reviewed and revised as conditions warrant.

Health & Safety Guidance

1. **COVID response protocols for positive cases** - The district will follow current state guidelines for handling the occurrence of a COVID positive case in the schools (SOP document). As of August 12, 2021, these require reporting, contact tracing, and quarantines for individuals who test positive, and quarantines for non-vaccinated and/or non-masked, non-pooled testing participating individuals with a close exposure. Positive cases identified by pooled testing will follow state DOE guidance for pooled testing.
2. **Encouraging vaccination** – Regional School Unit #34 strongly encourages all students and staff to obtain a complete COVID 19 vaccination when eligible. To assist in this effort, the district will partner with health providers to conduct vaccination clinics at appropriate times. The district will also continue to record vaccination status privately (for contact tracing) and report aggregate numbers publicly.
3. **Masks** - Given new evidence on the B.1.617.2 (Delta) variant, CDC has updated the guidance for fully vaccinated people as well as guidance for COVID-19 prevention in K-12 schools. The CDC recommends universal indoor masking for all teachers, staff, students, and visitors to K-12 schools, regardless of vaccination status. At this time, RSU #34 schools will require masking of all teachers, staff, and students when indoors. We will re-evaluate the need for universal masking six (6) weeks after the opening of schools and monthly thereafter adjusting the requirement based on levels of community

vaccination, student vaccination, community transmission, pooled testing participation and other relevant data. OTES will also implement outside masking for the first six (6) weeks of school and will re-evaluate this need as well. Elementary students can go through quite a few masks in a day, please send your student with a few changes daily. We will have extras available if needed.

4. **Distancing** - Social distancing of 3' will be maintained whenever compatible with full in person return per CDC guidelines, including almost all sedentary classroom situations. Distancing will not be enforced during brief (less than 5 minute) transition periods in hallways nor during specific active/cooperative learning activities in class. Distancing is not required outdoors. Unvaccinated staff should maintain 6' foot distancing from students when compatible with educational needs. Social distancing in cafeterias is not compatible with full return to schools. Other prevention strategies will be initiated appropriate to mealtimes. To begin the school year, OTES students will be eating with their own classes either in the classroom, outside, or in another designated space.
5. **Pooled testing** - Opt-in pooled testing will be encouraged for all staff and students on a weekly basis in accordance with the ME DOE guidelines and testing program to provide for early detection. If you have questions, please see additional pool testing information shared previously or call OTES at 827-1544.

To give **consent** for a student to participate in optional pooled testing, start [here](#). You will need to enter an access code for the child's school. Old Town Elementary School: **Z1A0SE** (note: the fourth character is a zero, not a capital o). You'll answer a few questions and can give your consent online. No paper needed! If you need a [paper copy of the consent](#), please try this link or contact your child's school. Trouble-shooting tip - if you're registering multiple people, and run into any troubles, it may be helpful to use a different browser for the second person. Here's some more helpful information!

[RSU #34 Informational Flyer](#)

[Concentric by Ginkgo Parent Info Sheet](#)

[How Do I Provide Consent for My Child by Ginkgo](#)

6. **Ventilation** - Schools will continue to be operated to ensure high rates of air change through upgraded HVAC equipment, including the continued use of Needlepoint Bipolar Ionization (NPBI) technology while maximizing outdoor air to the extent possible. Teachers continue to be encouraged to keep windows open when temperatures allow.
7. **Handwashing** - All students and staff continue to be encouraged to engage in frequent handwashing for 20 seconds; hand sanitizer will remain available in all spaces.
8. **Symptom check protocol** - Administration will modify COVID-19 symptom lists as guidance is updated and will communicate guidance and requirements regularly to stakeholders. Symptom checks must be conducted daily before school for all students

and staff. Students and staff showing symptoms are required to stay home. All staff, students, and anyone entering OTES must use the pre-screener shown at the end of this document and linked [here](#).

9. **Cleaning protocols** - Custodial support will be continued to allow for increased overall cleaning in schools. Classroom cleaning supplies will be available in all classrooms and staff is encouraged to clean surfaces as practical. CDC guidelines state that “cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove potential virus that may be on surfaces”

Additional Considerations

1. **Transportation** - Return to pre-COVID capacity on buses. Masks required on buses per CDC guidelines. When weather permits, windows should be opened in front and rear of the bus for increased ventilation.
2. **Performing arts/music** - Cautious return to pre-COVID practices, with recommended safety precautions in place, particularly for grades 6 and younger and for groups where spacing is restricted.
3. **Volunteers/visitors (school day)** - Resume volunteer program, following established protocols (including sign-in form/sheet that includes an acknowledgement form outlining safety protocols). See OTES procedures above and check in with your student’s teacher or the office if you are interested in volunteering.
4. **Meetings (in-person vs. virtual)** - Continue to utilize virtual meetings when possible. Decisions made on a case-by-case basis depending on meeting participants and agenda. When masks are required for students and staff in a building, visitors attending meetings will also be required to mask.
5. **Extracurricular activities (guidelines, planning, etc.)** - Follow general guidelines outlined above (i.e., same as school day); groups may wish to continue virtual meetings/events as desired or able; keep attendance records for in person meetings/practices/events. Pooled testing participation is encouraged for all extra-curricular participants.
6. **Parent/guardian conferences** - continue virtual conferences, with option for parents/guardians to request in person conference if desired.
7. **Special events** - (Open House, Literacy nights, School-wide gatherings, etc.)
 - a. Open House - to be held in person with consideration of staggering grade levels to limit crowding

- b. School-wide gatherings - TBD on case-by-case basis as conditions permit, OTES will limit gatherings to distanced, school community based groups at this time
 - c. Other events - TBD on case-by-case basis as conditions permit
- 8. Social and academic supports-** Student achievement will be assessed and monitored throughout the school year to identify and address any gaps in learning that may have been created. Intervention will be provided in classrooms and through targeted plans and programs to support students.
- 9. Social and emotional support -** Social and emotional development will be addressed in classrooms as well as small groups, school guidance programs, advisory programs, as well as through additional social work services in the district. We will focus on transitions back to school and fostering reengagement in the first weeks of school.
- 10. Technology readiness -** We will continue to incorporate technology in our teaching and learning to maintain successful platforms that were developed this past year and be ready to support distance learning if it becomes necessary. At OTES, each K-3 student will have a SeeSaw account and each 4-5 student will have a Google Classroom account. These platforms will be established, shared, and practiced so that if remote learning should be necessary, students will be ready. We will also have devices for at home use available, should this be necessary.
- 11. Hybrid/remote learning -** We are not planning to offer hybrid or remote options for all students. We will only provide limited, interim remote learning plans resulting from the need to quarantine. To be considered for limited remote learning, families would need to provide the school with documentation of medical necessity. If families would like more information about documentation needed, they should contact their student's school principal. Families who are looking for a long-term, full remote programs for the 2021-2022 school year should explore external options like Maine's virtual charter schools, national virtual learning companies or homeschooling. For more information on these options, contact Jon Doty, Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Assessment at jon.doty@rsu34.org. OTES staff will communicate with families experiencing quarantining about remote learning. Materials and technology links will be provided as necessary. Live remote learning will not be offered except in special circumstances.
- 12. Out of school activities-** We encourage families to be vigilant out of school as well! Our experience during the 2020-2021 school year was that most exposures causing quarantines originated through out-of-school events, such as community sports and sleepovers. Please help us keep our students in-person five days a week by helping to keep community spread slow!

Pre-Screening Tool for School Attendance

Within the past 24 hours have you had a fever* or taken fever reducing medicine?

YES =



Do you feel sick, had vomiting/diarrhea, fever*, sore throat, new cough, or felt unwell?

YES =



Have you been told to stay home and isolate/quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure?

YES =



Stay home with any YES response to the questions above.

Attend school when all answers are NO and your child is feeling well with no other symptoms of illness. Call or see your school nurse or other designated person at school if you have questions.

IF YOUR CHILD HAS ANY ILLNESS THEY SHOULD STAY AT HOME UNTIL NO FEVER FOR 24 HOURS WITHOUT TAKING FEVER REDUCING MEDICATION AND SYMPTOMS ARE IMPROVING OR GONE.

**A fever is 100.4F/38C or greater.*

