Dear Parent/Guardian,

The Maine Educational Assessments (MEA) include **required** assessments in Mathematics, English Language Arts (ELA)/Literacy, and Science. For the Fall 2025-26 administration, Maine will be using the Northwest Evaluation Assessment (NWEA) for grades 3 through 8 and second year high school students in both math and literacy. RSU 13 has been using this assessment for many years. Students in grades 5, 8, and third year of high school will also participate in a science assessment in the spring. Students in grades 3-8 and third year of high school with the most significant cognitive disabilities will continue to participate in the Multi State Alternate Assessment (MSAA) to assess math and literacy. Students with the most significant cognitive disabilities in grades 5, 8, and third year of high school will continue to participate in MSAA Science, which aligns to the Next Generation Science Standards. Students who are identified as English learners will continue to participate in the ACCESS for ELLs, and students with the most significant cognitive disabilities who are identified as English learners will participate in the Alternate ACCESS for ELLs. All assessments are administered online.

These assessments aim to match the content and skills outlined in the standards that guide instruction in the classroom and provide information about student learning. Assessment data allows our district to track cohort information over time, which means that we can follow specific grade levels and determine ways to meet the unique needs of each group of students as well as individual learners. **No single test can give a complete picture of achievement, and in RSU 13, we combine student grades and teacher reports, to look at the full picture that shows important information about student progress.**

We are committed to providing accurate information to parents and families in our community about the value of student participation in statewide assessments. Parents have the right to request the district's policies and procedures regarding student participation in state and local assessments. When this information is requested, the district will provide all applicable information to families. Parents can also access Assessment schedules and information about rights on the RSU 13 site under the "Curriculum" Tab by selecting "Assessment Data" from the dropdown menu. When a student does not participate in the state assessments, valuable information is lost, and it can result in penalties to schools and the district. It is important that we test all students so that we have the best picture of how to use our resources to best meet our students' needs. We are confident that with the quality instruction delivered by our dedicated educators, and your support, our students can meet and exceed these expectations. We encourage you to reach out to your child's teacher and/or school administrator with any questions you may have about the MEA or your child's progress.

Thank you,

Steffany Tribou
Assistant Superintendent

Ainslee Riley
Thomaston Grammar School
Principal