

RSU 18 Rome Director's February 2019 update

This note reflects exclusively my personal perspective as your Rome Town RSU 18 School Director. It in no way or manner represents the perspective of the Superintendent or the School Board. I am speaking strictly for myself in order to provide you with information. You are encouraged to access the RSU 18 web site and to contact the Superintendent for information.

The Governance meeting is at 6pm on Thursday March 7 at the Middle School. Come and be heard.

Positives:

1. **Academics** – The Chief Academic officer, Keith Morin, is proposing to increase our total mathematics support for all the schools by 1.5 full time equivalent people (FTE) and increasing our total educational support coaches by one full time person for a net FTE increase of 2.5.
 - a. To quote Mr. Morin, “Whether it is the NWEA scores or the MEA scores or whatever scores you chose, we have to improve our overall mathematics achievement for all the students.”
 - b. I agree. I told him I would support and encourage an increase of 7.5 FTEs in mathematics. This is a critical life skill and we are well behind as compared to what the State considers to be “proficient.”
 - c. Our high school Mathematics team under the coaching of faculty member Nick Hart scored 256 points in their third “meet”, far and away above the next closest school Waterville with a score of 213.
2. **Belgrade Central upgrades** - the work on Belgrade Central School has gone out for bid. The plan is to get this work completed this summer. It includes improving the drop off area.
3. **The Board** – I see many members of the school board being very active (and speaking up) in the school/board concerns. This is wonderful. Special kudos to Rebecca Seel of Belgrade, Cathy McKelway of Belgrade, Dawn Castner of China and Karen Hatch-Gagne of Sidney.

Areas for consideration:

1. **The 2019/2020 budget** – is underway. As part of that we got a verbal report at our last board meeting by Cheryl Mercier, Director of RSU 18 Special Education Services. Cheryl shared this information to let the board know of the special education challenges our schools experience. It was an eye opener for me.
2. **The Governance meeting is at 6Pm on Thursday March 7 at the Middle School.** Selectmen from the five towns will be there. You are welcome. Please join us. Come and be heard.

Yours in helping our students by helping RSU 18 set the standard for academic excellence for public schools in Maine.

Rome – a great place to live, and a great place to grow up!

Dr. Andrew Cook
397-5332

p.s. If you want to talk or have thoughts, please call me or email me!

acook@rsu18.org