

RSU 18 Rome Director's June update

7/8/18

Everyone,

As always I hope you will reach out to me by phone, in person or email to share your thoughts and perspectives. (397-5332 acook@rsu18.org). The weather is just beautiful, I hope you are enjoying it as much as we are.

The good news:

The budget passed in all five towns 70% for, 30% opposed. In Rome we had 163 for and 64 against (72% for). This was both strong support for the budget and a strong voter turnout. Thank you for excellent support for quality education for our Rome children.

Our Chief Academic officer, Keith Morin, and the high school principal, Paula Callan, provided us with a summary of how our seniors fared in the post-graduation plans. Those are provided below in this table. Of particular interest is some of the colleges and universities that graduates will be attending. The table is a little confusing since some students are counted twice (i.e. a student who is going to a four year college but also going to a college in Maine is noted in two places). But if you look it over, it makes sense.

A Quick Glance At The Class Of 2018		
Number of students graduating	166	
Grades	Includes two Juniors/two 5 th year students	
Post-Secondary plans	114	69%
Will attend a 4 Year College or University	76	46%
Will attend a 1+Year college or program	38	23%
Will attend a Maine	89	78%

College/University		
Will attend a college/University Outside of Maine	25	22%
Entering the Military	3	1%
Entering the Job Corps	1	<1%

College/University choices by the Class of 2018

Allegheny, Army National Guard, Assumption, Bentley, Boston University, Bridgeton Academy, BYU, Utah, CMCC, Colby, Delaware Valley University, Eckerd College, Franklin Pierce, Gordon College, Green Mountain, Hamilton College, Husson, KVCC, Marine Corp, Montclair State University, NMCC, Rochester Institute of Technology, Roger Williams, SMCC, Stone Hill, Thomas, UMA, U Maine, UMF, UNB, UNE, Unity College, University of Dundee, USM, UVT, Wagner, Washington & Jefferson, Washington State University, Western New England University, Wheaton

Work on the new high school athletic fields is progressing. Work is starting on some of the other capital improvement projects. We are hoping to hear of much progress by September from the Superintendent.

We have been asking how the District’s donated scholarship funds are being invested. So far it appears the monies are earning less than 1% on the donated capital. To some of us on the Board being conservative and prudent in scholarship funds investments makes sense. But earning less than 1% in today’s market would seem to be penalizing the amounts of money future students could receive. We are looking forward for a report on this subject from the Superintendent in the fall. We believe we could be more effective (while still being prudent) in our investment strategy and earn more for the student scholarships.

The Superintendent advise us that there are three summer workshops by the faculty underway to identify how to address the “need” topics identified in the Comprehensive Needs Assessment the district recently completed. As noted in an earlier note the major issue in our academic success seems to be the absence of students from school! We look forward to a report in the fall as to how the Board can help the administration and faculty help some parents get their students to school regularly and consistently. I am quite empathetic with the faculty. It is hard to help our important young men and women achieve academic excellence if they aren’t at school.

The Board has agreed to hold a session in our August retreat to identify what could be one, two or three major topics the board wants to focus on in the upcoming year. This is a new activity. Instead of just administering the district, the Board is going to think about how to help lead the district to excellence. I am quite excited about the prospects. I look forward to a dynamic dialogue as to where we would like to help the district go and how we might help the district get there. I am hoping that taking the district to be one of the top 10 districts academically in the State will be identified as one of our key topics to work on!

As always feel free to call me, see me or email me. I love to hear from you.

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