



RSU23 MEMO

Superintendent's Monthly Update

A Note From Mr. Suttie

**September
2025**

Hi Everyone.

As we make our way through the month of September, I want to extend a warm welcome back to all of our students, staff, and families. The start of a new school year always brings with it a sense of excitement and possibility, and I am pleased to share that we are off to a wonderful beginning. Our classrooms are full of energy, and it is inspiring to see students settling into their routines with enthusiasm and joy.

September is also a month filled with important traditions and historical moments. As a nation, we observed Labor Day as a time to honor the contributions of working men and women. We also paused on September 11, to remember and reflect on the events of 2001, which remain a defining moment in our country's history. Yesterday, we recognized Constitution Day, commemorating the signing of our nation's founding document. These events and milestones remind us of the importance of civic engagement, community, and working together for the common good. These are values that we strive to uphold in our schools each day.

Alongside these observances, September also brings the return of many fall activities. From the start of our athletic seasons to the sounds of the marching band filling our ears, our students are showcasing their talents and school spirit in so many ways. The cooler air and the first hints of color in the trees make this time of year especially beautiful in our community, and I encourage families to take advantage of the opportunities to come out and support our students at games, performances, and other school events.

Finally, I want to take a moment to recognize and thank our families for the essential role you play in our schools. Your involvement, whether through volunteering, attending events, or simply encouraging your children each day, makes a tremendous difference. Together, we create the supportive and engaged community that defines our district. I look forward to continuing to partner with you as we build a successful year for all of our students.

HIGHLIGHTS

Painting & Striping

Welcome Leah Botko!

Jameson School

Loranger School

High School

Adult Education News

PTO-Boosters

[School Board Meeting Link](#)
(Meeting Tonight)

District News

New Painting and Striping

Over the summer, our district completed the repainting and striping of roads and parking lots across all school campuses. These updates were made to improve visibility, safety, and traffic flow for buses, student drivers, families, and visitors. We are grateful for the facilities team and local contractors who worked hard to ensure that everything was ready for the start of the school year.

In the interest of safety for all, we ask that you please take note of the updated traffic flow directions and clearly marked parking areas. It is especially important that designated spaces for emergency vehicles remain open and accessible at all times. Following these markings carefully helps us ensure a safe and efficient environment for students, staff, and visitors.

Thank you for your continued cooperation and support as we work together to keep our school campuses safe and welcoming for everyone.



Jameson Updates

Welcome, Leah Botko!

We are excited to welcome Leah Botko as the district's new Director of Food Services.



Leah brings with her an incredibly strong background in nutrition and culinary arts, holding a Bachelor of Science degree in Food and Nutrition with a minor in Psychology from Framingham State University, as well as a Certificate in Culinary Arts from Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School. She is also a certified School Nutrition Specialist, ServSafe Proctor, and CPR certified.

Leah comes to us from Littleton Public Schools in Littleton Massachusetts, where she has served as Food Service Director and Co-Chair of the Wellness Committee since 2021, leading nutrition operations for four schools and more than 1,800 students. She previously worked in the Nashoba (Massachusetts) Regional School District as Program Coordinator of Food and Nutrition, where she managed budgeting, procurement, and menu development. Her passion for student wellness, inclusive menu planning, and creating a positive dining experience for all students will be a tremendous asset to our schools. Please join us in warmly welcoming Leah to our district community. We are excited for the leadership and expertise she will bring to our Food Services program.

Jameson School is off to a wonderful and busy start! Families are reminded that the school day begins at 8:00 a.m. Students arriving at 8:00 are considered late, so please plan accordingly.

Our next school assembly will be held on Friday, September 26, at 1:40 p.m. Everyone in the community is welcome to attend!

We would like to thank the Biddeford-Saco Elks for their generous support. This year, they have provided new playground equipment for students to enjoy and will also be sponsoring hundreds of meals for our weekend backpack program, which supplies shelf-stable meals for families. Their continued partnership has been instrumental in sustaining this program.

We also extend our gratitude to Saco Valley Credit Union for their \$1,000 donation to the backpack program. Thanks to the generosity of both the Elks and the Credit Union, we anticipate not needing to seek additional donations from our families this year.

Finally, a special shout-out goes to the Saco Bay Rotary Club for providing our teachers with back-to-school supplies for students. Their support ensures that classrooms are well-prepared for learning right from the start.



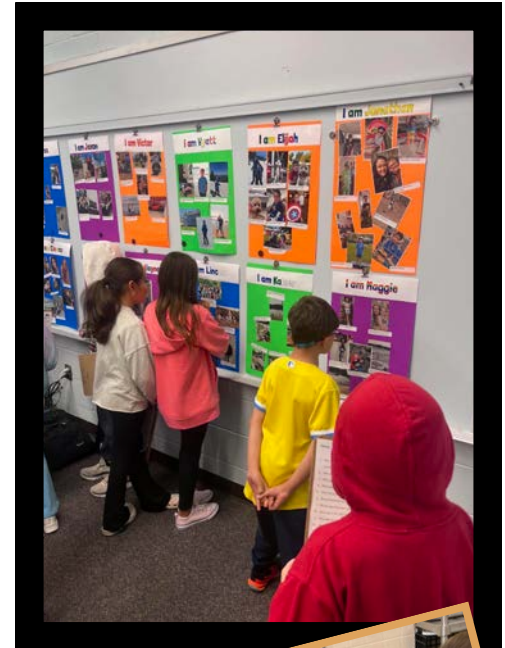
PreK is off to a great start!



Loranger Updates

4th Grade

Fourth graders have been busy exploring and celebrating identity! Students and teachers created posters and wrote poems to share pieces of who they are. They also visited the other classrooms in their learning spaces to discover new things about their peers, make meaningful connections, and celebrate the diversity that makes our community so special.



5th Grade

Students in 5th grade and science enrichment have been checking on their planting projects. Fifth graders harvested potatoes from the raised garden beds. The potatoes were cooked and shared - delicious!



Loranger Community Science News

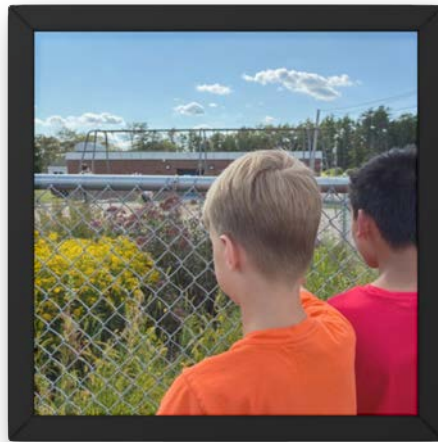
Students spied apples on the tree that was planted during a 5th grade project in 2023. They saw monarchs on milkweed students planted in the fenced area that filters runoff from the parking lot between Loranger and Jameson.



This September, Loranger students began our thirteenth year of beach profiling on West Grand Beach. Students measure the beach each month and send their data to Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve and Maine Sea Grant.



Loranger students also started their second year of composting in the cafeteria. Composting happens with a grant from The Gulf of Maine Research Institute and help from the food services staff, custodians, and OOB Conservation Commission.

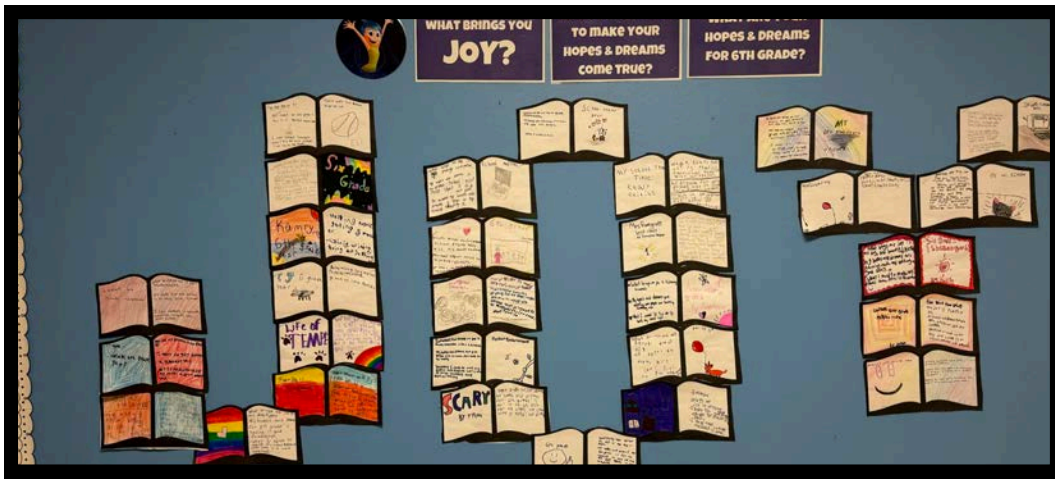


Food waste is collected weekly by Diggers Cooperative of Acton. The potatoes harvested this September at Loranger were grown in garden soil from our own compost program!

6th Grade

Our sixth graders have been working hard on community-building activities and are eagerly preparing for our adventure to Camp Kieve!





Wabanaki Studies

LORANGER MEMORIAL SCHOOL

Cynthia Nye

The MEEA mini grant helped my students and me expand our ash inventory project by learning about two eyed seeing. Minquansis Sapiel, a Passamaquoddy educator who lives in our town, planned and taught 11 classes with me so that we could model and teach students how to combine indigenous knowledge with western science practices. In the classroom and in the woods, she helped us learn about Wabanaki culture and the 4Rs: Respect, Relationship, Reciprocity, and Responsibility. Together, we helped students write and draw two eyed seeing pieces for Findings from The Field, a student research journal published by the Gulf of Maine Research Institute, with whom we are doing our ash protection project. In a survey reflecting on the project, students were asked if their work this year felt different than other science learning in the past. "Yes," wrote one student, "because instead of just learning it, we experienced and observed it." Another wrote, "We learned in a different way that was unlike any other year, learning through a different view." Others wrote, "It was fun learning about Wabanaki stories and exploring nature all the time," and "I learned so much more about nature than I did last year."

In the course of this project, my students were able to learn from other teachers as well. Partners in the project connected me to Butch Jacobs, Passamaquoddy basket maker and speaker. Wabanaki Youth in Science, WaYS, arranged for Butch to visit my school in April. He gave presentations to five classes, teaching us about land claims, language loss, basket making, and Emerald Ash Borer. Since my students and I didn't find brown ash, the basket tree, in our local forests, we took a field trip to the Friends School in Falmouth. Rebecca Dugan of the Falmouth Land Trust led us on a woods walk to find brown ash that had been identified by students from the Friends School in their ash project. Our two eyed seeing project deepened our understanding of respect, relationship, reciprocity, and responsibility for trees, forests, and the community around us.



Loranger is included in the 2024-2025 Mini Grants for Outdoor Learning Report from the Maine Environmental Education Association (MEEA). Last year, the MEEA awarded LMS Gifted and Talented teacher, Cynthia Nye, a grant of \$1300 for a project focused on two-eyed seeing, combining Western science practices and Wabanaki ways of knowing. Well done, Mrs. Nye!

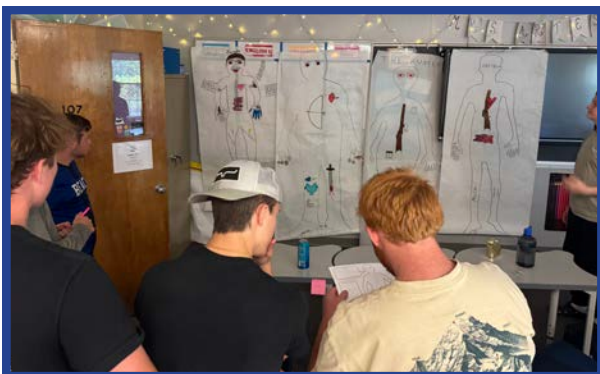
High School Updates



Old Orchard Beach High School was honored to welcome the “Within the Whale” program in the gymnasium on Wednesday morning. Our students were able to go inside the whale and experience a fascinating tour and lesson. Thank you to Mr. Lewis for bringing this to our school.



In English II, students are gearing up to start reading the play, *The Crucible*, by Arthur Miller. Here, students are participating in a scavenger hunt around the high school to learn more about the historical context of the play, *The Salem Witch Trials*. While learning historical facts, they are also working on the skill of paraphrasing to help identify the main topic in a text.



In Honors English II, students were asked to take the short story summer reading assignment, "The Most Dangerous Game," by creating "Body Biographies" to help show their deeper understanding of a main character while being creative at the same time. Students worked mostly in groups to analyze symbols and quotes from the text to represent one of the characters in the story. Students then presented their biographies to the class to explain their reasoning.

Adult Education News

This fall, OOB/Saco Adult Education is offering a Substitute Teacher Intensive class. Please see below the class details:

Description: Substitute teaching is a flexible and rewarding side pursuit with benefits for both the employee and the school. This class will enhance the skills and understandings that lead to success as a substitute teacher in any classroom. Through presentations, discussions, and readings we will address behavior expectations and ways to get and keep students on task; examine lesson plans; review what to expect on any given day; and look at the role of technology in today's classrooms. We will consider the variety of subbing opportunities & roles in both regular and special education, and discuss the professional behaviors that will keep you as busy as you wish. Tours of RSU 23 schools will give you a sense of how today's classrooms function. Leave with a notebook containing the course presentation, relevant readings, and resources that will support you on the job. State-mandated fingerprinting and a Criminal History Records Check (CHRC) are employment requirements with extra fees attached and can be completed during the 10-session course. Access to a computer and a valid email address are required. No class 11/5. Since many local schools share "best practices", this class is relevant to people wanting to work as a substitute teacher in most schools in Southern Maine. An OOB/Saco Adult Education certificate will be awarded upon completion of all class requirements. A special arrangement with RSU 23 ensures that, if hired by RSU 23, you will receive the highest rate of pay for substitute teachers in this district.

Substitute
Teacher Intensive
Schedule:
Mondays and
Wednesdays,
10/20–11/24,
3:30–5pm (no
class 11/5)
Location: Old
Orchard Beach
High School,
Room 111B
Instructor: Linda
Roy, who taught
primary grades in
OOB schools for
39 years and since
retirement has
substituted K–12
in our local
schools.

PTO News

RSU 23 PTO-Boosters are off to a great start this fall. The high school football snack shack is in full swing and we have already fulfilled some wonderful requests of support from our sports teams, high school band, and teachers. We have a lot of great things planned for this school year including dances, performances for students, field trip support, and much more. We are excited to be able to help!

If you are interested in knowing more about what we do to support our schools, please feel free to join us at a meeting or reach out to us by email at pto@rsu23.org



School Board Meetings

Our school board meetings normally take place on the third Thursday of every month at 6 PM. You can watch the meetings with the link below, on local access television live, or on video replay. Link for meeting:

https://www.townhallstreams.com/towns/oob_maine

Thursday, September 18

TONIGHT

Town Hall 6 PM

School Board Meeting

Wednesday, October 1

Early Release Day

Friday, October 10

No School, Staff Workshop

Monday, October 13

No School, Indigenous Peoples Day

