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Dear SAU 7 School and Community Members,

A Season For Gratitude

As we head into Winter Break, I want to commend the unwavering efforts of SAU 7 employees who have, in essence, reimagined public education over the last nine months. I also want to recognize and express gratitude for the hard-working parents (and other family members and friends) of SAU 7 students who have selflessly put other parts of their lives on hold to support their child's learning during these difficult times. Just like it has in many other ways, COVID-19 has challenged us to work together for better outcomes. This holiday period is a much anticipated, brief pause for rest. Schools are closed from December 23 through January 1, providing all of us with an opportunity to find creative ways to reconnect, recharge and just enjoy the special people in our lives.

Please take time to take care of yourself and others. Even in a normal school year, the pressures of the holiday season can cause feelings of isolation, without enough time to connect, socialize, and support others as we may intend. For some, this period may bring on added feelings of stress and anxiety related to family, finances, and commitments. I am so thankful that our schools, even in our current state of Remote Learning, are still brimming with people dedicated to creating space for all students and families to belong. It is especially this time of year when we need to look to each other for support and make an extra effort to look out for one another.

Together We Can Lower Community Spread

Thank you to our community for your shared commitment to doing the best for our students. Our public health officials strongly advise us to continue with frequent handwashing, wearing masks, maintaining 6-foot physical distancing, and avoiding gatherings and travel as much as possible. The best way to ensure the safety of the children and staff in our schools is to lower the community level of the spread.

Mission Statement

To prepare all SAU 7 students for success in whatever path they choose.

Return to Campus Update

We understand this time continues to be difficult for students, staff members, families, and our community at large. I want to acknowledge the feedback we are receiving from many parents urging for a safe and prompt reopening. I also have heard from many parents advocating for a more cautious approach. After examining the data and trends of COVID-19 in our region, we have plans to reopen schools on January 4, 2021.

We are making steady progress toward preparations for a safe school opening, so that we will be ready to welcome students back on January 4. Our School Board has approved additional health and safety measures which include face coverings for all staff and students throughout the day, continued social distancing, frequent hand washing, and staying home when ill or required to quarantine.

Due to the importance of supporting school reopening, local COVID-19 test sites are now prioritizing students, teachers, and staff. Individuals can contact the Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital Colebrook (603) 388-4259; <https://www.ucvh.org/index.php/news-events/103-north-country-healthcare-test-locations> to make a testing appointment if they have symptoms.

Upon return to school, parents are asked to continue to cooperate with our health and safety daily screening. Your principal will forward you the link to the new screening form in advance of the first of the year.

We all have the same goal, to return students to campus when it is safe to do so. When we reopen on January 4, we want to do everything possible to be able to stay open.

Stay Updated

We will continue to report our progress at regular intervals and look forward to hearing from our community as we progress thoughtfully and methodically in our plans toward reopening for in-person learning. You can send your feedback to your school principal.

Happy New Year

As we all do our best to adhere to all health and safety precautions through the winter, we will see a better 2021 for our community and our schools. However, you choose to spend this unusual holiday season, we wish you and your loved ones a safe, restful, healthy, and happy holiday. Here's to the new year and the joys and promise that it brings.

With Warm Wishes for a Happy and Healthy New Year,

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