



PRHS

Family Newsletter

January 2024

January				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8	9	10	11	12
15 MLK Day No School	16 - Silver Day Midterms	17 Midterms	18 Midterms	19 Midterms Sem 1 grades close
22 Teacher Workshop No School	23 2nd SEMESTER STARTS	24	25	26 Last day of add/drop
29	30	31		

February				
Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
			1	2
5	6	7	8	9 Sophomores visit LRTC
12	13	14	15	16 Winter Carnival LRTC applications due
19 No School	20 No School	21 No School	22 No School	23 No School
26	27 '24-25 Course Registration begins	28	29	

Greetings from Mr. Anderson

Hello PRHS students and families!

Even with the arrival of winter weather, January is off to a great start at the high school! On Friday January 5th, we had our annual Alumni Day - an all time high forty-five graduates participated! The presenters shared valuable advice as they reflected on their journeys from PRHS to college and careers.

Students (and teachers!) are working hard this week completing assessments for semester one, we are looking forward to the start of semester two next week.

If you have any questions about your student’s learning at the high school, please contact the main office staff or me at 998-5400 x129 or eanderson@rsu16.org.

Thank you,

Mr. Anderson

High School Class Happenings

Winter Carnival is coming!

Students can participate in a wide variety of activities that foster community, competition, and all-around fun. Winter Carnival Day is Friday, February 16.

Cash/Prize Calendar Fundraiser!

The Class of 2024 will be selling raffle tickets/calendars with cash and prizes to area retailers and attractions. Calendar sales have begun and will run through the end of January. Drawings will occur throughout the month of February. Entries are \$10 each, or 5 for \$40. If you’re interested, contact Mr. Latham via email: dlatham@rsu16org

Project Graduation

Class of ‘24 Project Graduation is selling [Woopie Pies](#).

More High School Updates

Yearbook Info

Would you like to place a personalized ad in the PRHS 2024 Yearbook for your Senior? You can now create an ad for your Senior online at Yearbooksforever.com. Please see the [attached Flyer](#) for more detailed information.

The 2024 Poland Regional High School Yearbook is available for pre-orders. Order yours today by visiting the PRHS Yearbook Shop at yearbooksforever.com or [using the link](#).

Galapagos Trip 2025

Enrollment is now open for the June 2025 trip to the Galapagos Islands. This trip allows access to a natural site that is rarely able to be visited by tourists and provides your student (and even yourself) with an amazing educational experience in science, culture and international perspective. There are limited spots so enrollment with the deposit will lock in your spot. Go to the [Galapagos Enrollment Page](#) to see all the details about the trip including proposed dates of travel, a full itinerary, and what is included in the price.

Email pmartin@rsu16.org with any questions.

From the Counselors' Corner...

Here we go! Semester 2 is upon us and half the year has gone by. We have had many college and career activities this month, especially for the class of 2026. Course registration for '24-'25 starts soon. Seniors are making their plans for next year. Lots of future thinking around here!

WELCOME to Erin Hamlin who joins us part time as a Substance Use Educator for PRHS and BMWMS! We look forward to seeing her in health classes, providing parent resources, working with students, and sharing her knowledge base with all of us!

LRTC (Lewiston Regional Technical Center). The process for LRTC starts! The new program for next year is **Firefighting**, which will be housed at Edward Little HS. ALL sophomores learned about LRTC's offerings on January 3, 2024. Any interested juniors and sophomores will be able to visit LRTC's programs (both at LRTC and at EL) on **February 9, 2024**. Permission slips are available [here](#) and in the Guidance Office. A slideshow on the steps of the application process is [here](#). Counselors will hold sessions to help students with applications. Applications will be **due the Friday before February break (Feb 16)**.

The [Senior Calendar](#) is your one-stop place for all information for seniors.

FAFSAs - Hey Senior families! **The FAFSA ([Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#)) is available NOW!** It has been a little wonky but they are working out the glitches. Students and parents can each get their FSA IDs now at [studentaid.gov](#) ; this takes 2-3 days to process. Find more information on our [website](#). [FAME](#) will also have more information and training around the new FAFSA. Right now FAME offers 30 minute free financial aid coaching for families at [Free FAFSA Help with FAME](#).

FREE COLLEGE is here for the classes of **2024** and **2025**! The process is easy - apply to one of the Maine community colleges, do your FAFSA, enroll full time. The classes of 2020-2023 can still access the free college option as well!

Class of 2020-2021 - enroll no later than during the '23-'24 academic year

Class of 2022 - enroll no later than during the '24-'25 academic year

Class of 2023- enroll no later than during the '25-'26 academic year

We really are deep into thinking about next year. Learning Areas have had many new courses approved. Students will learn more about those as a part of the course registration process. You, as a parent/guardian, will see those selections at student led conferences in March. Now is the time for your student to think how to best prepare themselves for their futures!

Any questions or concerns about your students? Start with their counselor and/or advisor. We are happy to help!

Carrie Rhoads

Students with last names

A-F

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998-5400 x 125

Hillary Bush

Students with last names

G-M

hbush@rsu16.org

998-5400 x 101

Corey McFadden

Students with last names

N-Z

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From the Substance Use Counselors corner..

Vaping & Tobacco Use Among Youth

Current statistics

- According to the Center for Disease Control **e-cigarettes** have been the most commonly used tobacco product in the United States since 2014.
- The 2023 National Youth Tobacco Survey shared that among middle and high school students, 2.8 million **(10%)** reported current use of a tobacco product in 2023.

What are E-cigarettes & how do they work?

E-cigarettes (aka-JULLS, vape pens, mods) heats up a liquid (known as vape juice or e-liquid) until it turns into a vapor which you then inhale. Many assume this vapor is harmless, but this is false. The flavored “e-juice” in cartridges actually contains nicotine, an extract of tobacco with addictive properties. Other harmful chemicals linked to serious lung disease, cancer causing chemicals and multiple heavy metals (American Lung Association).

Risks for Youth according to the CDC

- [Interactive Vaping Map - Effects](#)
- The aerosol itself contains high levels of harmful chemicals with long term side effects
- Nicotine is highly addictive
- Nicotine during adolescents can:
 - Harm brain development which continues until about age 25.
 - Impact learning, memory and attention.
 - Increase risk for future addition to other drugs.
 - Brain & body becomes use to having nicotine and when it is stopped tem
 - Create a cycle of nicotine dependence due to wanting to decrease symptoms of anxiety or stress but this addiction can itself be a source of great stress.

Signs of Vaping:

- New health issues such as trouble breathing, coughing, headaches, dizziness, sore throat & chest pain
- Behavior changes: anxiety, irritability, difficulty concentrating and loss of appetite
- Faint whiffs of new smells such as fruity or sweet scents
- Small devices such a cartridge, pod or USB looking device

How to support your teen:

- Know the facts - educate yourself on health impacts and consequences of use
- Be open and ask - have the conversation (use open ended questions, be curious, focus on “health & safety vs. threats and punishment”.
- Try to understand their why of beginning
- Set clear expectations

Resources for quitting:

- [Smokefree Teen](#): is a website from the National Cancer Institute with information, tips, tools, and live web-based support for teens interested in quitting tobacco use.
- [SmokefreeTXT for Teens](#) is a text-based program from the National Cancer Institute to help young people quit tobacco use.
- [1-800-QUIT-NOW](#) connects teens to their state quitline where they can get free and confidential support from a quit-coach and get connected to additional resources. Learn more at [CDC.gov/Quitline](https://www.cdc.gov/Quitline).

Mariah Matson, LMSW-cc, CADC

mmatson@rsu16.org

998-5400 x 123

Co- and Extra- Curricular Update from Mr. King

Open Coaching Positions

Outdoor Track Assistant
JV Softball
Middle School Baseball

I am pleased to announce that Andrea Forbush will be our Varsity Softball Coach this spring. Coach Forbush is excited to continue to push our girls to be the best they can be and continue their run in the Western Maine Conference.

We also welcome back Coach Dan Roy to work with our middle school Indoor Track program. Coach Dan has had many seasons coaching with Whittier and Poland Regional as well as his 25+ years of Panther Track.

Coach Charles Pray will coach Unified Basketball. We are currently looking for partners to work with our Unified Athletes. This is a two day a week commitment and interested students may seek out Mr. King, Mr. Pray or Ms. Forbush. Their game schedule begins on January 25.

Coach Chuck Cantone has enjoyed Indoor Track so much that he has signed on for the spring. This is exciting as he has been a great addition to our coaching staff.

Athletic Updates

Indoor Track is off and running. Although our numbers are not huge, they have an impact in the Western Maine Conference. Keep up the good work. They compete at USM on Friday afternoons if you are interested. This week Mason Dulworth and Cohen Demuth took 2nd and 3rd in the 55 m dash, then reversed order for 1 and two in the 200m dash. Ethan Castonguay and Ryan Kelly took 3rd and 4th in the 400m dash. Brayden Brown and George Dionne took 1st and 2nd in the 55mH. Cayden Langlois was 2nd in the Long Jump. For the girls, Graceyn Camire took 2nd in the 400m dash, Brianna Croriveau took 2nd in the 2 mile run, and Ragen Wakem was 2nd in the High Jump.

Current records:

Boys Basketball Varsity 1-7
Boys Basketball JV
Girls Basketball Varsity 5-5
Girls Basketball JV 9-1
Kings Hockey Varsity 5-3
Red Hornets Hockey Varsity 6-5

Parents, we continue to work with our kids to promote a positive image for them. I ask for your help. It is not okay for kids to taunt opponents. There has been some harsh language, swearing at opponents, and calling out of names and numbers at a few events this winter. Surely professional sports are not always the best model for us. If you see your child doing any of these things, please help by having a conversation with them.

Livestream

We apologize for the technical difficulties with the Pixelot Livestream. The camera has gone offline twice which has resulted in games not being broadcast. We believe the issues have been addressed. Our recent weather has been an issue.

Team Photos

(Cheer photos will be loaded soon, they were taken on Monday 1/15)

The team/player photographs for the high school and middle school are active and ready for parents to view and enjoy:

Start at <https://pefxmaine.gotphoto.com> and enter access code:

For Poland Regional High School: **PRHS-TEAMS-W23-24**

For Bruce Whittier Middle School: **BWMS-TEAMS-W23-24**

Enter your student’s name to find your student (EITHER first name or last name, not both), then select your student. Enter your personal information.

Select a package, then choose a pose for each part of that package. The -POSTER pose should only be used if purchasing a poster. Add To Cart, then checkout to pay securely by credit/debit card.

Finished portraits can be delivered to the school at no charge if you order by Jan. 26. Otherwise, portraits will be mailed directly home at an additional charge.

Questions? Please call PortraitEFX of Maine at (207) 657-6372 for help !

Nathan Tsukroff
PortraitEFX of Maine
12 Portland Rd
Gray, ME 04039

Community Service Club

The Mechanic Falls Vineyard runs a Backpack Program as part of their food ministry which directly supports students within our RSU 16 district who may experience food insecurity. Each week identified students have the opportunity to take home a bag of non-perishable food items. In January the Community Service Club hopes to help collect food items to continue this needed program. To learn more about specific needs please click visit [Food Drive Flyer](#). Items can be dropped off at the High School OR can be sent with your student. There are boxes in the guidance office that go by grades. Thank you for all your help!

Music Updates from Mr. Williams and Mrs. Edwards

For more information and updates about these concerts, folks can check the [District II website](#).

Drama:

Students have started the process of auditioning for the one act festival to be held in March. Any students still interested in participating in the activity should contact Ms. Robinson at drobinson@rsu16.org. All students are welcome and the festival is a wonderful experience.

Speech & Debate:

Speech and Debate concluded their regular competition season with outstanding performances at the Cape Elizabeth Tournament earning the team the third place award overall. The team is now getting ready for the State Championship Tournament Jan. 20, 2023 and then will go on to compete in the national qualifying tournaments.



Health Office Update

The respiratory season is in full swing. We are seeing a variety of illnesses in our community that include Covid-19, influenza, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), common cold, and strep throat.

COVID symptoms may include fever, cough, fatigue, muscle or body aches, congestion, shortness of breath, sore throat, headache, sneezing, vomiting/diarrhea, or loss of taste/smell. Symptoms show up 2 to 14 days after infection.

Influenza (Flu) symptoms may include fever, chills, headache, body aches, dry cough, fatigue, stuffy nose and sore throat. Some children may throw up and have diarrhea. Symptoms show up about 1 to 4 days after being exposed to a sick person.

RSV symptoms may include fever, cough, fatigue, stuffy nose, shortness of breath, sneezing, fast/short breaths, flaring nostrils, wheezing and grunting, poor feeding/no appetite. Symptoms are usually the worst on days 3 through 5 and last about 7 to 14 days.

Common cold symptoms may include fever, cough, fatigue, stuffy nose, sore throat, sneezing, and slightly swollen glands. Colds are upper respiratory infections that can be caused by many viruses.

Strep throat is an infection in the throat and tonsils caused by bacteria called group A *Streptococcus* (group A strep).

Strep throat symptoms may include pain when swallowing, fever, red and swollen tonsils, white patches or streaks of pus on the tonsils, tiny red spots on the roof of the mouth, swollen lymph nodes in the front of the neck, and possibly headache, stomach pain, nausea or vomiting, and/or rash.

Some of the symptoms of flu, COVID and other respiratory illnesses are similar. Your child's provider may order a test if it is necessary to confirm a diagnosis.

We have free COVID-19 test kits available in the nurses' office at this time. Please reach out to the nurses' office if you are in need of home tests. Also, households can order a free at-home test kit from [covidtests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov).

Students who become ill at school will be dismissed only to the specific people listed as the emergency contact, unless the school is instructed by the guardian to make other arrangements. Students who have a fever of 100.4F should stay home until they are fever-free for 24 hours (without the use of anti-fever medicine). The Maine CDC has four steps to help reduce the spread of viruses. These four steps include washing your hands, covering your cough, getting vaccinated, and staying home when you're sick. Please report any illnesses or medical updates to the nurses' office.

Thank you.

Lisa Storer RN, BSN lstorer@rsu16.org 998-5400 Ext. 108

Pamela Tracy LPN ptracy@rsu16.org 998-5400 Ext. 127



Other News

Attendance

We encourage parents to work with the school staff to keep their children in school or to provide timely excuses for absences. Please call 998-5400 x124 within 24 hours of an absence, beforehand when possible. Please review the [Planned Absence Guidelines](#) if your student will be absent from school for family vacations or other personal reasons.

Monthly Newsletters

We will send out a monthly digital newsletter via email throughout the school year to keep you up to date on events at school. If you do not have internet access and still need a paper version sent in the mail during the school year, please contact the high school main office (998-5400).



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