



Oyster River Cooperative School District Superintendent Newsletter

Dr. James C. Morse, Sr.

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Parents, Guardians, Staff, and Students,

Welcome back. We have many new families joining us this year. The new 2022-23 school year is upon us with only one week before we open school once again.

Starting my 11th year, it continues to be an honor to serve as Superintendent of the Oyster River Cooperative School District. There is such palpable positive energy across the district in anticipation of this new school year. Last year was the first full opening since COVID and many were nervous about the opening of school. This year, the atmosphere is quite different. Parents/guardians, teachers, and students I've talked to are truly looking forward to this school year with excitement and anticipation.

Oyster River is known for the high performance of our students. We continue our commitment to academic achievement. Your children have some of the highest proficiency scores and SAT scores in New Hampshire. Beyond test scores, last year our students continued to receive many recognitions in areas such as music, writing, robotics, athletics, and leadership. An ORCSD student also achieved Eagle Scout status for his work rebuilding a bridge in the Stolworthy Wildlife Sanctuary. We are fortunate that our students can benefit from the incredible partnership between families, the community, and the district.

Beyond academics, research clearly demonstrates that children who engage in extra-curricular activities have a stronger bond with their school and achieve higher academic levels. To that end, there are many opportunities for children to enrich their experience in Oyster River from the arts, athletics, and clubs; we encourage your children to take advantage of the myriad of choices.

In a school system that expects so much of our students, we recognize there are times when students need additional support. We have systems in place to offer many opportunities for students to get additional support should they need it. Both the high school and the middle school have "FLEX" time in their schedules which provides built in blocks to access teachers and support. We have also added instructional support in Math at the elementary schools, as well as tutor support at the middle and high school. All of our schools have intervention supports should a student struggle academically.

ORCSD online registration system is open for your student for the 2022-23 year. Please log into your PowerSchool parent account at <http://powerschool.orcsd.org> Under forms you will find enrollment forms to submit.

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Special points of interest

- [2022/23 School Board meetings](#)
Now broadcasting from our new middle school
- 2022-23 School Hours:
Elementary 9:00 - 3:25
Middle/High 8:15 - 3:00
PEP Program:
8:15 - 10:45 AM
12:00 - 2:30 PM

Message from the Superintendent continued

We also understand the need to support your children in the area of social development. We began to focus on Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) prior to COVID when we started building a multi-tiered system of SEL supports. Helping your children make good decisions, learn about social and self-awareness, build relationship skills (especially in a time of increased social technology), supporting them with a network of professionals when needed, and strengthening our comprehensive system is important to ensure all children can achieve their goals.

The tiered SEL system became critically important last year as we returned to school full time, helping children transition back to school. Your children/our students are the center of our universe. We want every child to be successful and receive what is necessary to achieve at the highest levels. Part of this work involves making sure facilities contribute to a high-quality experience.

As we open the 2022-23 school year, we are excited to share the forthcoming completion of the new ORCSD Middle School. This incredible, nearly \$50 million-dollar project has come in on budget and provides a state of the art academic and sustainable facility that will serve ORCSD families for generations. The building and outside areas will be completely done by November. Due to geo-thermal heating and cooling, solar panels over the carport and roof, and a super insulated shell, this building will be net-positive meaning it will generate more energy than it uses. When we activate our option to buy from Revision Energy in six years, we will be able to sell that excess sustainable energy back to the grid. The most exciting news for students is the playground at the back of the school. It will be ready by the time the children arrive. Unfortunately, the turf for the front field was back-ordered due to supply chain issues so it will not be finished until mid-October.

In closing, we are honored to educate your children. In my forty-six years as an educator, I have found your children the most eager to learn, the most interesting, and the most engaged. In the upcoming school year, we will continue to prioritize academics and the social skills your children need to exceed in this ever-changing world. We found that the transition back to school was difficult for many last year, and we will continue to support them in their transition back to school this year. We are ready to welcome your children and will do our best to help them grow as young people and learners.

Assistant Superintendent Report

Suzanne Filippone

The ORCSD has a long history of academic excellence and focus on individual students through personalization. Faculty and staff members have high expectations of all students to achieve to their fullest potential with abundant support and encouragement. Our students continue to demonstrate academic excellence with their high levels of performance in state testing. Our district Math and ELA SAS results places the district student average proficient or highly proficient. Our SAT school day assessment scores place Oyster River students scoring higher than both the state and national average: Reading and Writing: ORHS: 557, NH: 512, National: 490 and Math: ORHS: 561, NH: 494, National: 472.

Our students, at all grade levels, receive a great deal of practice in critical thinking and communication skills. Oyster River High School's, Dillon Labonte was awarded 1st place at the UNH Community Changemaker Challenge for his project entitled "120 Minute Movement". Our 3rd grade students participated in a study of local vernal pools with Dr. David Steirnbart, a herpetologist and vernal pool researcher from UNH and Catherine Fisher, a local naturalist, and member of the Lee Conservation Commission. Students excel inside and outside of the walls of classroom. The district continues to provide academic excellence and opportunities for all of our students who in turn demonstrate high levels of performance.

Individualized instruction is also taken very seriously so that all students are challenged to meet their full potential in heterogeneously grouped learning. The result of this approach to education is that students excel in basic skills of self-discipline and teamwork. The district takes great pride in our students working together to achieve great accomplishments as seen with several State Championships in our athletic program, including but not limited to our Coed Golf Team and Unified Soccer Team. We have also seen this teamwork translate to our MS Robotics Team, who went on to the VEX IQ Worlds Competition in Dallas, Texas and each year our band, chorus, and orchestra students are accepted into the NHMEA All State Festival. We are honored by the accomplishments of all of our students as they grow as learners and perform with excellence.

Oyster River Cooperative School District
 COVID-19 Return to School Protocols—August 2022
Catherine Plourde - Special Services Director

In accordance with the CDC’s updated guidance the district will implement the following protocols to respond to the COVID-19 virus:

Mitigation Measures

Focus on hand hygiene routines, especially during key times in the day (before and after eating, after using the restroom, and after recess).

Continue with enhanced cleaning and disinfecting protocols for all school facilities and school buses.

Continue to optimize air handling and ventilation practices which includes increased outside air intake and improved air filtration.

Do not enter school facilities if you are sick or have symptoms. Contact your school nurse.

Isolation when testing positive for COVID-19. If you test positive for COVID-19 you will isolate and not be able to enter any school facility for 5 days. Your days will be determined in consultation with a school nurse. Please make sure you take a picture of your positive COVID-19 test. You may return to school on day 6 wearing a mask through day 10. You are not required to test after day 5. You may only return to school on day 6 if symptoms have improved and you are fever-free for 24 hours. Continue to isolate and contact your school nurse if you still have a fever or symptoms do not improve (more details below).

Please remember to always consult your health care provider.

Procedures when testing positive with COVID-19

If you had no symptoms:	If you had symptoms:
Day 0 is the day you were tested (not the day you received your positive test result)	Day 0 of isolation is the day of symptom onset , regardless of when you tested positive
Day 1 is the first full day following the day you were tested.	Day 1 is the first full day after the day your symptoms started.
Day 5 is end of isolation , return to school on Day 6 wearing a mask through Day 10. You may only return to school on day 6 if symptoms have improved and you are fever-free for 24 hours.	Day 5 is end of isolation , return to school on Day 6 wearing a mask through Day 10. You may only return to school on day 6 if symptoms have improved and you are fever-free for 24 hours.
If you develop symptoms within 10 days of when you were tested, the clock restarts at day 0 on the day of symptom onset .	

- ◆ The district will no longer require a quarantine for those individuals who were exposed to a positive or presumed positive contact. Only those individuals who are confirmed positive or who are waiting for a COVID-19 test result will be required to isolate (not attend school). The school district will no longer offer asymptomatic or symptomatic testing. If you are having difficulties seeking a test, please reach out to your healthcare provider or a school nurse.

School Nurse Contact Information:

Katherine Moore, RN, Mast Way School, kmoore@orcsd.org, 603-659-3001

Sheila Koutelis, RN, Moharimet School, skoutelis@orcsd.org, 603-742-2900

Cheryl Thibodeau, RN, ORMS, cthibodeau@orcsd.org, 603-868-2820

Michael Hope, RN, ORMS, mhope@orcsd.org, 603-868-2820

Kimberly Wolph, RN, PEP/ORHS, kwolph@orcsd.org, 603-868-2375

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Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Justice [DEIJ]

Dr. James C. Morse, Sr.

Through the hard and amazing work throughout the district, we are proud to announce that we have been able to successfully create and fill a position for the first ever Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice Coordinator for the Oyster River Cooperative School District. Rachael Blansett joins us from higher education, previously working as a Diversity & Inclusion fellow between two New England colleges and has a breadth of experience working in designing and facilitating workshops focused on a wealth of topics within educational equity, supporting students, teachers, and staff in this work while also being deeply invested in a various community organizations.

In thinking of what we needed as a community from someone in this role, our goals were vast. However, after assessing our needs as a district, collaborating with a multitude of thought partners and important stakeholders, we were able to pinpoint critical areas of focus for this role which will be:

- ◆ supporting teachers in curriculum and competency-based education practices,
- ◆ planning and leading professional learning experiences for faculty/staff/students, and
- ◆ monitoring and assessing the progress toward our strategic plan DEIJ goals.

As she becomes acclimated to the district, we have created a transition plan for Ms. Blansett to focus on for the next 6 months and will be reassessed and addressed in January. During her first initial months with us, the core of Rachael's work will be building relationships with all the various stakeholders in the Oyster River community, while also learning about the district so she can better evaluate our needs and support us in this work. This will include coordinating the Superintendent's DEIJ Community Group, meeting with faculty on a regular basis, identifying professional development needs and creating a professional development plan for staff.

She will be meeting with students and student-led groups, leading and facilitating workshops and relevant programming to the district, and serving as a liaison for all the stakeholders who are doing this great work in the community. Rachael will serve as a bridge to connect us all on the outstanding work being done and help to be our driving force in maintaining the momentum to sustain these efforts.

We are so excited to have her join the district and celebrate the work we have done over six years and assist us in creating a path to the future.

[DEIJ - Oyster River Cooperative School District \(orcscd.org\)](http://orcscd.org)

Joshua Olstad, IT Director

For more information about the ORCSD Care program you can link to more information [here](#).

This year ORCSD is please to offer ORCSD Care to all families. ORCSD Care is an optional program that covers accidental damage, loss, or theft to district issued laptops, iPads, chargers and carrying cases. The cost to enroll is \$20 per student.

Each student must be enrolled separately, and coverage will not go into effect until student(s) are enrolled and payment has been received in full. Payments can be made through [Titan](#), our lunch program, or by sending a check to your school's front office. Please make the checks payable to Oyster River Cooperative School District and include ORCSD Care Program on the memo line.

Students receiving free and reduced lunch will automatically be enrolled in ORCSD Care. If you are unsure of enrollment or need more information concerning the [free and reduced lunch program](#), please contact Doris Demers.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact your building administrator.



School Nutrition

Doris Demers - Director

The Oyster River Child Nutrition Program provides healthy food in a pleasant atmosphere.

In order for students to start the day ready to learn, breakfast is offered to all students daily. We offer a variety of whole grain, low sugar breakfast breads, fruit, juice and milk choices. Children can come in for breakfast as soon as they get off the bus.

A limited variety of healthy snacks, milk and juice are available for purchase at snack time. Prices range from \$.50 to \$1.25.

Lunch consists of the main meal offered on that day's menu, plus several alternates: Yogurt plate, sandwich, or chef salad. All meals include whole grains, protein, fruits, vegetable and milk. Children bringing lunch from home may purchase milk, or water at lunchtime. For children with food allergies, adjustments can be made if a doctor's note is provided.

Lunch and milk money can be made online at <https://family.TitanK12.com> or brought to school in an envelope with the student's and teacher's names clearly marked. Please make checks payable to

Oyster River Child Nutrition (ORCN). Money is placed in each student's account daily, and purchases are deducted from the account daily as purchases are made. Menus are posted on the district website. Parents are encouraged to review them with their child.

Applications for free and reduced breakfast/lunch are sent home the first week of school but are always available from the school secretary, OR can be filled out online at <https://family.titanK12.com> to expedite the process. All applications are strictly confidential.

[Free & Reduced FAQ'S](#)

Applications may be filled out any time during the school year if financial circumstances change. Once your family is approved that application covers the entire school year plus 30 days into the following year.

For questions, call Doris Demers, Director at 603-389-3310 or email ddemers@orcscd.org.

ORMS
GRAND OPENING
CEREMONY
August 23, 2022



SAU Email Contact Information:

Superintendent ~ Dr. Jim Morse at jmorse@orcscd.org

Assistant Superintendent ~ Suzanne Filippone at sfilippone@orcscd.org

◆ Executive Assistant ~ Wendy DiFruscio at wdifruscio@orcscd.org

Director of Student Services ~ Catherine Plourde at cplourde@orcscd.org

◆ Administrative Assistant ~ Pamela Purser at ppurser@orcscd.org

Business Administrator ~ Susan Caswell at scaswell@orcscd.org

◆ HR Coordinator ~ Theresa Proia at tproia@orcscd.org

DEIJ Coordinator ~ Rachael Blansett at rblansett@orcscd.org