



May 5, 2018

Dear RSU #4 Community,

It is with great sadness that I have to inform you that one of our students, Micaela-Lynn Lagasse died by suicide on Friday night. A suicide death presents us with many questions that we may not be able to answer right away. Rumors may begin to circulate and we ask that you not spread rumors you may hear. When a tragedy like this happens, it has the potential to have far reaching effects to our students, our parents, our staff, and our community.

I wanted you all to know that we have implemented our schools Emergency Response Plan in an effort to provide an appropriate response to this tragic event. This plan is also designed to provide assistance to our entire RSU #4 community in times of need. Students, staff, and parents will react in different ways to events such as these. Counselors are going to be available in the school setting on Monday, May 7, 2018 to assist students as they express their feelings related to this tragedy. We will also be opening Oak Hill High School on Sunday, May 6, 2018 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. to have counseling staff on site should any members of the RSU #4 Community feel they need a more immediate way to express their feelings. If you feel your child is in need of special assistance or is having a great difficulty coping with this loss, please do not hesitate to call.

While it is important to deal with grief, loss, anger, and fear reactions, we believe it is essential to resume as normal a routine as possible regarding school activities. Our schedule will remain the same but students are encouraged to access help when they need it.

Thank you for your support of our school system as we work together to cope with this loss. All of us at RSU #4 extend our deepest sympathies to Micaela Lynn's family and friends in their time of need. Because of our close school community, this death touches everyone. When someone close to a child dies, children react in many different ways. Please watch your children and be alert over the next several weeks to any changes such as:

- Physical: any changes in sleep patterns or eating habits
- Emotional: any changes such as unusual fears, anger, worry, or clinging behavior towards parents
- Social: loss of interest in usual activities.

Open communication between parents and children is very important. Give reassurance and try to understand your child's feelings. If you think your child is having a particularly difficult time dealing with this loss, please contact your child's school or if outside of school hours contact the Maine Statewide Crisis Hotline at 1-888-568-1112.

Sincerely,

Andrew R. Carlton
Superintendent of Schools RSU #4