



## THE MAINE EDUCATIONAL CENTER FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

GOVERNOR BAXTER SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

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Dear Parents/Guardians:

I hope this letter finds you and your family well. I am writing to share an important update regarding educational programming for Deaf and Hard of Hearing students who attend our site-based programs in Maine. The Maine Educational Center for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing / Governor Baxter School for the Deaf (MECDHH/GBSD) Board has unanimously approved the transition of our regional programs from Portland Public Schools to Lewiston Public Schools, with the potential for a program in York schools as well.

We understand that this news may bring a mix of emotions for many of you. Change, even when thoughtfully planned, can create uncertainty and concern. We want to acknowledge the impact this transition may have on your family, your child's education, and your connection to the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community. Please know that our highest priority is ensuring that all Deaf and Hard of Hearing students receive the quality education and support they deserve in an environment that fosters learning, language development, and a strong sense of belonging.

We also recognize that you were not asked to weigh in on the reasoning behind this transition, and we understand how difficult that may feel. While certain factors have made this move necessary, our commitment to transparency, open communication, and collaboration with families remains steadfast. As we move forward, we are dedicated to providing opportunities for you to ask questions, share concerns, and actively participate in the planning process to ensure a smooth transition for all students.

We are here to support you through this change, and we deeply value your input and partnership. In the coming weeks, we will share more details about transition planning, visit new program locations, and discuss how we can best support your child during this period of adjustment. As a first step, the following parent information sessions have been scheduled.

### Information Sessions for parents/guardians:

- **East End Community School & Lyman Moore Middle School - April 29, 1:00-1:45 PM**
- **Mackworth Island Preschool - May 1, 2:15-3:00 PM**

*These sessions will be held in the MECDHH/GBSD cafeteria, as well as over Zoom (see Zoom link on our website)*

Thank you for being an essential part of our community. We appreciate your patience, trust, and collaboration as we work to ensure the best possible future for our students. Please feel free to reach out to us with any questions or concerns.

With appreciation and respect,

Steve Connolly, Executive Director