



September 6, 2024

Dear Lamoille North Families, Staff and Community Members,



As we reach the end of the second week of the 2024-2025 school year, I want to take a moment to reflect on the wonderful start we've had. Walking through the halls of our schools, seeing the excitement in the eyes of our students, and witnessing the dedication of our staff remind me that our schools truly reflect the heart of our community. Together, we've set a strong foundation for what promises to be a year filled with growth, opportunity, and connection.

Our students returned eager to learn, collaborate, and engage with new challenges. Whether they are exploring the wonders of science, expressing creativity through the arts, or working on essential life skills, they have embraced the start of this school year with a sense of excitement that is truly inspiring.

Across our school community, students, teachers, and staff members have worked to emphasize our core values of equity, access, and opportunity. Our elementary schools are creating classroom goals and making new friends; the middle school hosted a wonderful "Welcome Breakfast" for our 7th graders and their families on the first day of school - giving our new students their own day to get to know their teachers and each other was an ideal way for them to start the year; students at Green Mountain Technology and Career Center are working through orientations and beginning the required safety trainings for their programs; and our high school students just today signed up for student clubs and explorer groups.

During our first week back, I spent a wonderful afternoon at Hyde Park Elementary School (HPES) where they held a 'Welcome Back' BBQ for students and families. It was energizing to see the conversations between students, staff, parents, and families. After a delicious meal, the group headed inside for the school's 'House Sorting Ceremony' in which students are randomly assigned to a school house - think of the Harry Potter house system- that includes students from all grades alongside school teachers, staff, and leadership. This [Ron Clark Academy House System](#) was debuted by HPES last year and is focused on building a sense of community and relationship inside the school through activity and education-based challenges. The excitement was palpable as students joined their respective "houses".



On that note, we want to thank all of the people who volunteered to make food and dedicate their time for this annual event, including community members from the VFW, and two Lamoille North School Board members who are representatives from Johnson (Katie and Allen Audette). This exemplifies what it means to be one community, all working together to serve each and every Lamoille North student and family. In addition, we want to acknowledge our staff and their remarkable, unwavering dedication across Lamoille North. They have worked tirelessly to create welcoming, supportive, and inclusive environments for every student.

None of this would have been possible without your support—our families and community members. Your commitment to our schools, whether through direct involvement or simply being present and supportive in the lives of all of our children, makes such a difference. We are truly fortunate to be part of a community that understands the vital role of education in shaping our future. Your partnership in this journey means everything to us.

As with many areas of life, our work truly takes a village. We couldn't provide the level of support and service our students and families deserve without skilled partners across Lamoille County and the state. Our area has an incredible network of organizations and professionals primed and ready to help our communities fill their needs. One such platform to find assistance across a wide range of topic areas is the new [Find Help Tool](https://lamoille.findhelp.com/) (<https://lamoille.findhelp.com/>) specific to Lamoille County. With a simple zip code search, the platform provides the names and contact information of local and state organizations that can provide information, assistance, and referrals, and covers everything from food assistance to housing needs to workplace skills, training and more.



We also want to take this opportunity to remind our communities to remain safe and vigilant as a growing list of Vermont communities face the threat of Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE). This mosquito-carried illness is potentially serious; however, most people infected with EEE virus do not develop symptoms. Those who do may experience a flu-like illness with fever, chills, body aches, and joint pain. Anyone with symptoms should reach out to their healthcare provider. Read more about advice from State Health Officials on our [Lamoille North website](#).

As we move forward, I am optimistic about what lies ahead. Lamoille North is such a special place made up of passionate and dedicated people, curious and creative students, and unique communities. Together, we will continue to foster an environment where equity, access, and opportunity reflect the daily experiences of every student and staff member in our district.



In the next week, we will announce the date and agenda of our first Community Event, so please stay tuned! Also, we will be sending you a survey asking for your input on strengths you identify in our schools and areas for growth you would like to see, as well as budget priorities you believe are important as we move into this budget season!

Thank you for all you do to support our students, staff, schools and community. Here's to a successful, joyful, and enriching school year ahead!

My very best to you,

Catherine Gallagher, M.Ed.
Superintendent of Schools
Lamoille North Supervisory Union