

SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT THIRTY-NINE

Amherst, Mont Vernon, and Souhegan Cooperative School Districts



MICHAEL BERRY
Superintendent of Schools

ROBERT JOZOKOS
Assistant Superintendent

AMY FACEY
Business Administrator

DR. HEATHER JENNINGS
Director of Student Services

February 20, 2026

To the Amherst and Mont Vernon School Communities,

As I return today to the important work of SAU 39, I write to express my profound regret and apologize for my absence from my post as school superintendent for three weeks following my non-punitive, paid administrative leave last month.

I fully recognize the seriousness of being charged with any crime. I take full responsibility for my behavior and for the uncertainty, difficulty, and disruption it caused for our students, staff, families, and community, as well as the strain it put on my family.

Over the past few weeks, I have fully cooperated with the Board's review of the circumstances that prompted my leave and preceded my reinstatement. The criminal investigation has concluded without further action; however, I believe it is important and proper to address the impact.

Schools function best when the focus is squarely on teaching, learning, and children's well-being. When a leader receives negative attention and becomes a source of disruption, that affects more than one person. Leadership requires sound judgment, round-the-clock professionalism, and composure. In this instance, I fell short of that standard. Accountability is fundamental to leadership, and I bear the burden for my actions and their repercussions.

For more than 25 years, I have devoted my professional life to public education and to creating strong, student-centered schools. While that commitment is in no way diminished by recent events, I understand clearly that trust is not rebuilt by apology and contrition. It is restored through consistent action.

Going forward, my path is clear:

- To uphold the highest standards of professionalism and personal conduct
- To keep the emphasis where it belongs: on creating and maintaining welcoming, supportive learning environments filled with opportunity and possibility for all students
- To ensure that all my activities and decisions put the SAU 39 community's welfare front and center
- To regain trust through steady, responsive, and effective stewardship dedicated to results and free of distractions

I want to publicly thank former Assistant Superintendent Steve Chamberlin and Assistant Superintendent Bob Jozokos for overseeing SAU 39's operations during my absence.

I am grateful to all the educators, staff members, and administrators who serve our students each day with dedication and care. As always, I appreciate your support of our schools and, most importantly, our students.

Sincerely,
Michael Berry