

RSU 18 Frequently Asked Questions

Questions	Responses
<i>Are there parent organizations in each of our Towns?</i>	Yes, each of the Principals work with their respective parent groups, and each has unique differences that work for their schools. Funds raised stay within that building.
<i>Do both China Middle School and Messalonskee Middle School hold some form of a promotion ceremony for their 8th graders?</i>	Yes, each has a ceremony that helps 8th graders and their families celebrate their transition into high school. Awards, scholarships, etc. will continue to stay within the individual school.
<i>Will lunch menus change for either of the school buildings?</i>	There are currently no plans to change the menus in each of the school buildings.
<i>Will we still compete in similar Band, Chorus, etc. competitions as we have in the past?</i>	Yes, like the different athletic conferences that both systems have been participating in, the Band and Chorus events will continue as they have in the past.
<i>Do both SAD#47 and China Schools have a DARE Program?</i>	Yes, Messalonskee has a program in 6th grade, and China has one in 5th grade. In China the DARE program is funded by the parent organization (Focus Group).
<i>What will be the procedure for approving field trips, and will the requirements around field trips stay the same?</i>	Field trips will require Principal & Central Office approval.
<i>Will SPED procedures change?</i>	Special Ed Director Cheryl Mercier will review all procedures. There are likely to be some changes.

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<p><i>How will we handle progress reports and reports cards?</i></p>	<p>Both progress and report cards will be handled through our PowerSchool student information system. This will represent more change for China teachers since this program will be new to them. The calendars for progress reports and report cards will be consistent with past practice within individual school buildings and will be included in the 2009-10 RSU 18 school calendars.</p>
<p><i>How will current policies, procedures, organizational structure (chain-of-command) change overall?</i></p>	<p>All RSU policies are being reviewed by the School Board. The chain of command will be as it is now. Organizational structures will largely remain intact.</p>
<p><i>People want to make their plans for summer vacations and travel now. Are there certain dates for group meetings or training events that we need to plan our summer schedules around?</i></p>	
<p><i>Formal efforts seem to be underway for S47 and China teaching staff and unionized support staff to “meld” in a variety of ways. What has been planned for lead secretaries along this line? What steps can we take to provide for a smooth transition from two systems into one? How can we take advantage of this opportunity to re-form the lead secretary collective from a group of individuals working mostly independently, into a new, highly efficient and collaborative team that works together to achieve our common goals?</i></p>	<p>Monique Gilbert, Central Office Administrative Assistant, will be in charge of coordinating the activities/needs of the lead secretaries across the RSU. PowerSchool training has already started for China Office Staff. That training is being delivered by representatives from the PowerSchool Committee.</p>
<p><i>Please confirm that staff will not be involuntarily re-assigned to a different school building in RSU18.</i></p>	<p>Openings will occur over time in all RSU 18 schools. Administration will seek voluntary reassignments first and failing will revert to involuntarily transfers as a measure of last resort.</p>
<p><i>Will our employment contracts with RSU18 carry the same basic terms as our present contracts?</i></p>	<p>Employment contracts are likely to have the same basic terms but will be subject to collective bargaining, with representation from unions in both former school systems.</p>

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<p><i>How will China's secretarial staff contracts and S47 contracts be aligned?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">They will be reviewed and adjusted for parity.</p>
<p><i>Will our years of service be honored and carried forward with RSU18 (affects vacation and accumulated sick leave benefits)?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Unionized staff will discuss this through negotiations. Non-unionized staff will see their seniority blended within the new RSU</p>
<p><i>Since RSU 18 is a separate tax entity, do we need to complete new W4's or other forms related to payroll and withholding and direct deposits?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The RSU is considered a new entity for IRS purposes, and new forms will be needed. We will be working on this transition during the fall. Until a new form is created, the current one will apply.</p>
<p><i>Will our year-to-date amounts on our pay stubs revert to 0 at July 1?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The RSU is considered a new entity for IRS purposes, and earnings from July 1st to December 31st will be reported with a separate W-2. Pay stubs will reflect the July 1st earnings, starting with a zero balance</p>
<p><i>At the end of the year, will we receive multiple W2s - one from S47/China and one from RSU18?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Yes, everyone currently employed will receive multiple W-2's in January 2010, one from their current employer and one from RSU 18.</p>
<p><i>Will our account #'s change for PO purposes?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">The accounts listed in the Board approved budget will be the ones to use for all the general fund and adult ed accounts. A few of those codes have changed from the current year.</p>
<p><i>Will new PO forms for RSU18 be ready and available for preparing next year's PO's as soon as the new budget is committed?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Work is still being done on the new P.O.s. The Business office will communicate with lead secretaries when these are ready.</p>
<p><i>Will we need new checking accounts for Activity Funds?</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Not yet determined</p>

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<i>When will we get new checks for Activity Funds?</i>	Not yet determined
<i>Will we see significant changes in budget prep procedures and/or timelines?</i>	The China folks will see a budget schedule that starts a bit later than they are used to.
<i>Will our email address change? When?</i>	Specific details on the conversion of email addresses will be sent out in a separate email soon.
<i>It seems that allowable disk space in FC has been significantly restricted in the recent two months – is that because China’s staff has been added to the S47 FC server? If so, are any plans underway to acquire a larger server for FC?</i>	The crossover for China email has nothing to do with allowable disk space. Disk space limitations have not been changed.
<i>What efforts are underway for changing our websites? We need to know the anticipated cut-over date as we have cited our website addresses in many places on currently printed forms, and all these forms need to be changed.</i>	Yes, the new RSU Website will be operational starting on July 1st.
<i>Reports already developed in PowerSchool need to be revised. Is anyone working or planning the work on this?</i>	Our PowerSchool team, under the direction of Rick McFarland, will be working out a schedule for the necessary reports. They have already started PowerSchool implementation procedures in China.
<i>Is there any training on new software, etc planned for the summer or fall?</i>	Depending on our 1 to 1 laptop initiative, there will be training needed for the new software located on those machines. We plan to schedule training for teachers on the updates to the new PowerTeacher Web Gradebook. Notice of that training will be sent out later in the summer.
<i>What impact will consolidation have on our sub lists?</i>	The review of new substitute applicants will be done by Elementary Principal Jen McGee. Once applicants are interviewed and a determination to hire has been reached, their names will be added to the lists for which they have indicated an interest.

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<i>Will China's sub list and S47 sub list be combined?</i>	Although we can combine them, subs usually tell us where they are and are not willing to work.
<i>Has any thought or effort gone into contacting China's subs and S47 subs and asking if they are willing to broaden their availability?</i>	We will ask all subs where they are willing to work.
<i>China's sub calling is handled by a stipended position, not lead secretaries – do you anticipate changing or aligning the sub-calling contracts under RSU 18?</i>	Unknown at this time.
<i>Letterheads need to be changed – is new letterhead being developed for RSU18?</i>	Yes, it has been completed
<i>Is there a new logo for RSU 18?</i>	Yes, as part of the letterhead development.
<i>Will changes to each Principal's letterhead be limited to the change-over to RSU18? Or is a uniform format or structure being considered for each building's letterhead?</i>	The changes will be limited to the change over to RSU 18
<i>Parent Handbooks, Staff Handbooks, and countless other forms all need revision this summer for First Day Packets. Is anyone currently looking at those forms that are provided through Central Office (FERPA, AUP, F/R Lunch, etc.) so that we will have them delivered at the building level in a reasonable time frame for putting our First Day Packets together?</i>	Yes, C.O. staff have already started to work on this project.

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The RSU will include two additional school buildings and about 75 additional staff that will share common resources such as Central Office staff, SpEd Office staff, Transportation staff, Building & Grounds Maintenance staff, Tech Team staff, Nutrition staff, etc. Will RSU18 increase staffing in any of these departments to accommodate the greater demand for manpower? Or will we wait even longer for responses to requests for assistance/repairs? Or will certain functions currently handled by those centralized departments be “pushed down” to the building level?

Two additional support staff have been hired and are currently working in the C.O. one day each week. There are several details that must be addressed by the July 1st startup, and there are other details that will be addressed as we live through the first year of RSU 18. As we merge our two systems we anticipate that there will be some details that might be missed. Patience and consideration for each other's roles and responsibilities will be important.