**October 14, 2026**

Dear Maine Indian Education Families, Staff, and Community,

I join the Chiefs of the Passamaquoddy Tribe and the Penobscot Nation in expressing my deep sadness at the loss our Wabanaki community has experienced. My heart is with the families and loved ones who are grieving, and with every one of you who is carrying the weight of these difficult days.

As the Chiefs have reminded us, family is at the heart of the Wabanaki People. Our schools are part of that family. Our students, teachers, staff, and families across Indian Island, Indian Township, and Sipayik are connected through generations of kinship, tradition, and care for one another. When our community hurts, our schools feel it too.

Our children look to the adults around them for steadiness, and they watch how we care for one another. They learn from us that grief can be met with love, that asking for help is a sign of strength, and that our values of peace, respect, and love for one another carry us through hard times. I am grateful to our staff, who show up for our students every day, and to our families, who trust us with their children.

Our schools will be warm and welcoming places for every child. Counseling and support will be available for students and staff, and our teachers will offer extra patience, routine, and comfort. Children grieve in different ways, and there is no right or wrong way to feel. If your child needs more time at home, or if you want to talk about how they are doing, please contact your school. We will work with you.

I also want to encourage all of us to look out for one another. Check on your neighbors and elders. Reach out to young people. Make use of the community response teams and mental health resources available in each of our communities. No one needs to carry this alone.

I ask for patience and respect for the investigation as the authorities do their work, and for sensitivity toward the families affected.

Our strength has always come from family, community, and love for one another. Together, we will hold close to what matters most, support our children, and move toward healing and a safer future for all our people.

With care and respect,

Dr. Reza Namin

Superintendent, Maine Indian Education