

RSU 73 - Framework For Returning to School 2021-22

Physical Health and Safety

Required Health and Safety Measures for All Schools

Reminder: Health and safety standards, requirements, and recommendations may change in accordance with Maine Department of Education (“MDOE”) and Maine Centers for Disease Control (“MCDC”) updates. RSU73 will operate within these updated parameters.

1) Symptom Screening Before Coming to School:

Prior to boarding buses or entering school buildings each day, students (parents/caregivers) and staff members must conduct self-checks for symptoms. The school will provide information to families in their primary language to support them in conducting this check.

Any person showing COVID-19 symptoms must report their symptoms following the designated COVID-19 protocol and not be present at school.

Schools will provide clear and accessible directions to parents/caregivers and students for reporting symptoms and absences.

* Before the school year starts, a symptom checklist will be posted on the district website and district Facebook page. Also a written copy will be sent home on the first day of School.

* Before coming to school daily, all staff must fill out a digital symptom’s checklist.

2) Physical Distancing and Facilities:

RSU 73 will follow Maine DOE and Maine CDC protocols for Physical Distancing, that may change over time. The current requirement is: recommended 3 ft when possible.

*Signage about social distancing will be placed throughout the schools. Staff will monitor physical distancing.

* A “medical isolation room” will be designated for students/staff who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during the school day.

*Each school has a designated isolation room. Each isolation room will have an air purifier in it.

Adequate ventilation is required for classrooms.

- All facilities with mechanical ventilation will be adjusted to maximize the exchange of fresh air in all rooms.

- When appropriate, staff should open windows and use fans to blow out the air.

* Custodians will be trained to thoroughly clean and sanitize all school environments.

3) Masks/Face Coverings:

RSU 73 will follow Maine DOE and Maine CDC protocols for Mask/Face Coverings, that may change over time. The current requirement designated by the RSU 73 School Board is: All staff and students will be masked while indoors and while riding school transportation (Except for while eating or taking a designated mask-break in appropriate areas.)

Students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges, who are unable to wear masks/face coverings, may wear face shields. (Medical Documentation and/or stated in IEP) The same applies to staff with medical or other health challenges, regarding face coverings. Face shields worn in place of a face covering must extend below the chin and back to the ears.

- Staff will make sure students are following the mask/face covering guidelines.
- Students and staff will be trained in how to properly put on and take off their masks, as well as how to wear them properly.
Washable masks may be distributed to all staff and students.
- Families will be reminded that the washable masks need to be cleaned daily.
- Parents may send their child(ren) in with their own mask/face covering(s).

4) Hand Hygiene:

All students and staff in a school will receive training in proper hand hygiene.

Upon entering the school, all students and staff must wash hands or use sanitizing gel. Other times that require hand washing or sanitizing gel are:

1. before and after eating,
 2. before and after putting on or taking off face masks,
 3. after using the restroom,
 4. before and after use of playgrounds and shared equipment, and
 5. upon entering and exiting a school bus.
- Staff and students will receive proper training in proper hand hygiene.
 - Buses and classrooms will have hand sanitizer to use.
 - There will also be hand sanitizer stations placed strategically throughout each building.

5) Personal Protective Equipment

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When distance is not possible, or when students require physical assistance while in close proximity to others, additional safety precautions may be used for school nurses and/or any staff supporting students. These precautions may include eye protection (e.g., face shield or goggles) and a mask/face covering.

- Additional PPE will be provided by the district.
- This includes shields, masks, gloves, gowns.

6) Return to School after Illness

If a positive COVID-19 case is declared within the district, RSU73 staff will work with the MCDC, following their guidelines and procedures for notification, cleaning, and in-person instruction protocols.

7) Additional Health and Safety Requirements

- In addition to the above requirements, there will be three water-bottle-filling stations in each building.
- Students will be given their own reusable water bottles, once they arrive in early September. Cups may be used in the meantime.
- Parents may send their child(ren) in with their own water bottle(s).
- Plexiglass will remain up to protect staff who work in high-traffic areas.
- Protocols will be put into place for drop-off and pick-up of students.
- Protocols will be put into place regarding parents/visitors having very limited access to the inside of buildings. (Parents will need appointments to go beyond the lobby/vestibule area)

Signage will be placed throughout the schools to help with flow/movement of students and staff.

8) Health and Safety Training

- All students and staff in a school will receive training in proper hand hygiene.
- Students and staff will be trained in how to properly use/wear any needed.

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Educational plans:

Models of Instruction

For all of the following models, individual schools will set up plans that include:

- * class schedules,
- * instructional expectations for online learning,
- * coordination of assignments and workload,
- * regular and on-going formative assessments, and
- * grading and certifying achievement (via summative assessments).

Educational Model Selection / Transition

The following educational models are designed to meet the needs of students, dependent upon local conditions and resources:

For **Full, in-person attendance**, the district must be able to implement all social distancing requirements and recommendations.

- For **Hybrid Model**, the district must have the capacity to transport and follow social-distance recommendations and requirements for **half** of our students. (We will go to this model only if state requires us.)
- The **Full Remote Model**- Would only exist if a full class or building is closed down because of quarantine and/or the state requires us to do so.

Staff should be planning in a way that has students prepared to immediately transition to remote learning, should the need to do so arise.

- **Remote Academy**- Students must apply and be accepted.

Educational Model Descriptions

1.Full, in-person attendance:

- Following the health and safety requirements from Maine Department of Education (“MDOE”) and Maine Centers for Disease Control (“MCDC”), students will attend school with a regular five-day-a-week, in-person schedule.

2.Hybrid Model : We will only go to this model if the state requires us to do so.

- Following the health and safety requirements from MDOE and MCDC, **Hybrid Model** is based on our being able to have 50% of our students in-person at any one time.
- At every school and grade level, students will be broken into two groups.

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- Each group will be scheduled to attend school in-person each week for two days in a row and to attend remotely for two days.
- Fridays will be remote for all students (unless the groups were not able to attend school twice in a week).
- There will be no new learning on Fridays. This time is dedicated to staff office hours, when students/parents can communicate concerns and/or school work questions.
- Students who attend the life skills program and behavioral program may be able attend Monday through Thursday based on health and safety recommendations and IEP team recommendations.
- *Administrative staff will strive to put family members into the same group.*

3. Full Remote Model - Would only exist if a full class or building is closed down because of quarantine, and/or if the state requires us to do so.

- Students will attend remotely for instruction, Monday through Thursday.
- There will be no new learning on Fridays. This time is dedicated to staff office hours, when students/parents can communicate concerns and/or school work questions.
- Parents of our life skills and behavioral students **may** have the option of sending their children to school in person Monday through Thursday, with this model following the health and safety requirements from MDOE and MCDC. These students can be better served in person and would be safer in such a setting.
- There **may** also be the possibility of allowing other very small groups of children into the school building, based on need.
- All health and safety requirements and recommendations will be followed if any students are allowed to attend in person in a full remote model.

4. Remote Academy- Students must apply and be accepted.

Classroom Setup

Teachers

- Classrooms setups should match class sizes needed to provide required social distancing.
- All throw rugs, etc. should be removed and stored.
- Toys that can't be easily disinfected should be removed and stored.
- Staff are responsible for removing personal items.
- When possible, all students should be seated at desks, as opposed to at tables or on mats.
- Where tables are the only solution, limit the number of students seated at each table to ensure 3' distancing.
- Desks should not be grouped but spread out whenever possible.
- The use of shared materials should be limited when appropriate.
- If materials are shared, Students should use hand sanitizer.
- All facilities with mechanical ventilation will be adjusted to maximize the exchange of fresh air in all rooms.
- When appropriate, staff should open windows and use fans to blow out the air.

Classroom Environment:

Students

- All students are required to wear a mask indoors except when eating or taking an appropriate mask break.
- Students who are unable to wear a mask - due to a medical, behavioral, or other challenges - may wear face shields as an alternative. (In order for this to occur there should be either medical documentation and /or part of a student's IEP.)
- Students should be provided mask breaks with 6 feet of social distancing, or outdoors when possible.
- Maintaining distances of 3 feet when possible, should be part of established classroom protocols.
- Students should sanitize hands when entering and exiting the building/classroom.
- Refillable water bottles should be filled at water refilling stations.
- Students should not drink directly from any water fountains.
- Outdoor classrooms and learning should be encouraged, whenever possible.
- Additional recesses should be scheduled whenever possible to promote activity and to provide a break from the classroom restrictions.
- It is inevitable for students to share materials in centers and small groups, however this should be limited as much as possible. Hand washing/sanitizer should be used before and afterward.
- Teachers should sanitize shared materials, as appropriate.

- Mr. Plourde may allow high school students with parent permission to leave school when they are not in class.

Teachers/Staff

- Per School board requirement, all staff are required to wear a mask.
- Staff who are unable to wear a mask, due to a medical challenge, may wear face shields as an alternative. Staff will be required to provide a doctor's note to this effect.

Specialists

- Whenever possible, specialists (such as physical education, music or art) can be scheduled to meet outside where students may be safely distanced and move about without masks.
- When indoors students in PE must remain masked and when possible keep a 3ft distance. Air ventilation will be set on maximum air intake. Equipment will be sanitized after each class as needed. Students will wash/sanitize their hands before and after class. Limited use of shared equipment is acceptable.
- Art will occur in the art room and may be done outdoors if appropriate. Shared materials may be sanitized between classes when appropriate. Students should wash hands/use sanitizer before entering and leaving art room.

Parents

- Parents will self-screen children prior to loading a bus or upon entering school.
- Parents will be able to enter school facilities during the school days **only if**:
 - they have pre-scheduled business to attend (scheduled IEPs, meeting with a staff member, needing to see the principal, or attending a 504 meeting),
 - wear a mask, and
 - agree to complete self-screening (sign-in check-off).
- During the day, parents needing to drop off items or pick up their child(ren) will not enter the school, and should be met at the door by a staff member. This protocol includes afternoon pick-up.

Transitioning

Students

- Each building will have its own protocol for dropping off/picking up students.
- Bathroom breaks will be scheduled/staggered to limit the number of students in restrooms.

Teachers

- Teachers will be in their classroom and receiving students at the building stated arrival time, or in designated spots pre-determined by administration.
- Teachers are expected to stand in the doorway to assist in monitoring student behavior during transition periods.

- Signage will be displayed to encourage single one-way entrances and exits, distancing in the halls, and reminders in bathrooms to wash hands.
- Plexiglass shields will remain installed to protect staff working in high-traffic areas.
- Students will be dismissed from classrooms by bus or for parent pick up. Dismissal will follow a staggered schedule to minimize the number of students in the hall at any time.
- Facilities will be arranged for efficient parent pick-up and drop-off of students.
- Teachers may log student use of bathrooms.
- Teachers with in-class bathrooms will monitor the bathroom to ensure no more than one student uses the facility at a time.
- If a teacher sends a student to the nurse for a health check, they will contact the nurse to alert them of the student's condition and expected arrival.

Parents

- When school is in session, schools will be closed to all unplanned visitors.
- Contractors entering the facilities will be screened by office staff using the RSU 73 symptoms screening form for visitors.
- A stated arrival time will be created for each school. Parents will not drop students off at school earlier than the stated arrival time. School doors will not open until the stated arrival time.

Transportation

- Social Distancing may not be able to occur on the bus.
- There will be no bus passes given this year.

Students

- Masks will be mandatory for all students riding the bus. Student refusal to wear masks will result in loss of bus-riding privileges.
- Students must use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting the bus.
- Students from the same household can sit together.
- Students will remain seated on the bus until dismissed by the driver, who may call students by row, from front to rear.
- Students will be assigned seats.
- Vans - While riding in vans, masks will be worn. Face shield may be used as an alternative for documented medical reasons and/or stated in a student's IEP.
- Students will report directly to their specified location (classroom, homeroom, etc.) in the school after getting off the bus.
- Students will wash hands or use hand sanitizer immediately after entering the school.

Drivers

- Driver masks are mandatory.
- Drivers will have a supply of masks to provide to students not wearing one upon entering the bus.
- Drivers will ensure that students use hand sanitizer when entering and exiting the bus.
- Drivers will sanitize the bus after each trip.
- Drivers will report to school administrators regarding students who exhibit concerns for wellness.
- Drivers will crack windows for ventilation.

Parents

- During the day, parents needing to drop off items or pick up their child(ren) will not enter the school, and should be met at the door by a staff member. This protocol includes afternoon pick-up.
- Parents must register for no more than **two** bus stop locations. Students will not be picked up or dropped off at any other stops.

Food Service

Students

- Food Service Director and Building Administrators will decide where meals will be served.
- Students may remove masks while eating, as long as 3-feet of distancing is practiced.
- Students must wash hands or use hand sanitizer immediately before and after eating.
- Students may not give or share any food.
- Grab and Go service stations may be used to limit students from gathering and to expedite service.

Cafeteria Workers

- Staff must wear face covering/shield when preparing food, as well as while working with - or in proximity to - employees or students.
- Food Service Workers must practice proper handwashing.
- During the school day, food personnel are the only staff permitted in the kitchens.
- Employees must be vigilant to try to maintain three (3) feet of distance while removing or bringing in items to walk-in coolers or storerooms.
- Staff must properly use gloves during food preparation.
- The use of salad bar or share bins will be determined by our Food Service director based on state/ federal protocols.
- Increase sanitation procedures of cleaning. Maintain all standards for food service, masks/face shields, distance, hygiene.
- Improve ventilation by running exhaust fans in the kitchens.

Parents

- Parents may not provide classroom shared foods (birthday treats, etc.), until further notice.

Adult Education

Students

- Masks are mandatory for students.
- Students must maintain 3-foot distancing when possible.
- Students should provide and use water bottles for hydration.
- Students should sanitize hands when entering and exiting the classroom.
- Students should not share materials when possible.
- Students should not be seated across from one another (facing each other).

Teachers

*Masks are mandatory for teachers.

*Materials should not be shared by multiple groups when possible and should be sanitized between use when sharing has occurred. (Adult students may assist.)

*Teachers will remind students that:

*Class numbers are limited to accommodate provided spaces (3-foot distancing).

*Students will be provided a self-screening questionnaire at the start of each session.

*Students with one or more COVID-19 symptoms should be sent home.