



## COVID-19 RETURN TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES



*Addendum to the Student Handbook*  
*Updated 5/3/21 based on current Maine CDC Guidelines*

*The RSU 10 School Board approved this document in public session on August 10, 2020. The School Board recognizes the unprecedented times in which schools operate and the fluidity of our public health scenario, deputizing the Superintendent to make changes to this document, without Board approval, based on emerging legal or health guidance.*

*A special thank you to Biddeford and Gorham Superintendents, Jeremy Ray and Heather Perry, for their work and sharing of their handbook!*

## MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT DEB ALDEN

In response to COVID-19, Regional School Unit 10 (RSU 10) will comply with the guidelines set forth by the Maine Centers for Disease Control (CDC), as well as the State of Maine, which are incorporated herein. These RSU 10 Guidelines will be in effect from August 17, 2020 to until further notice and will be updated with the latest CDC and State of Maine guidelines. Our goal is to continue to minimize the risk of possible transmission of COVID-19 and safely bring back as many students as possible to an in-person school setting to maximize learning. Therefore, these RSU 10 COVID GUIDELINES are mandatory for all students and their families.

The year we are about to embark upon will be a difficult one for students, parents/guardians, and staff. We consider the safety of your children as our collective responsibility and staff will be flexible as we undergo processes that were not present in previous school experiences. With a continued focus on positive relationships, meeting our students' social/emotional needs and the overall wellbeing of the "whole child," we strive to successfully meet this challenge and become stronger for it.

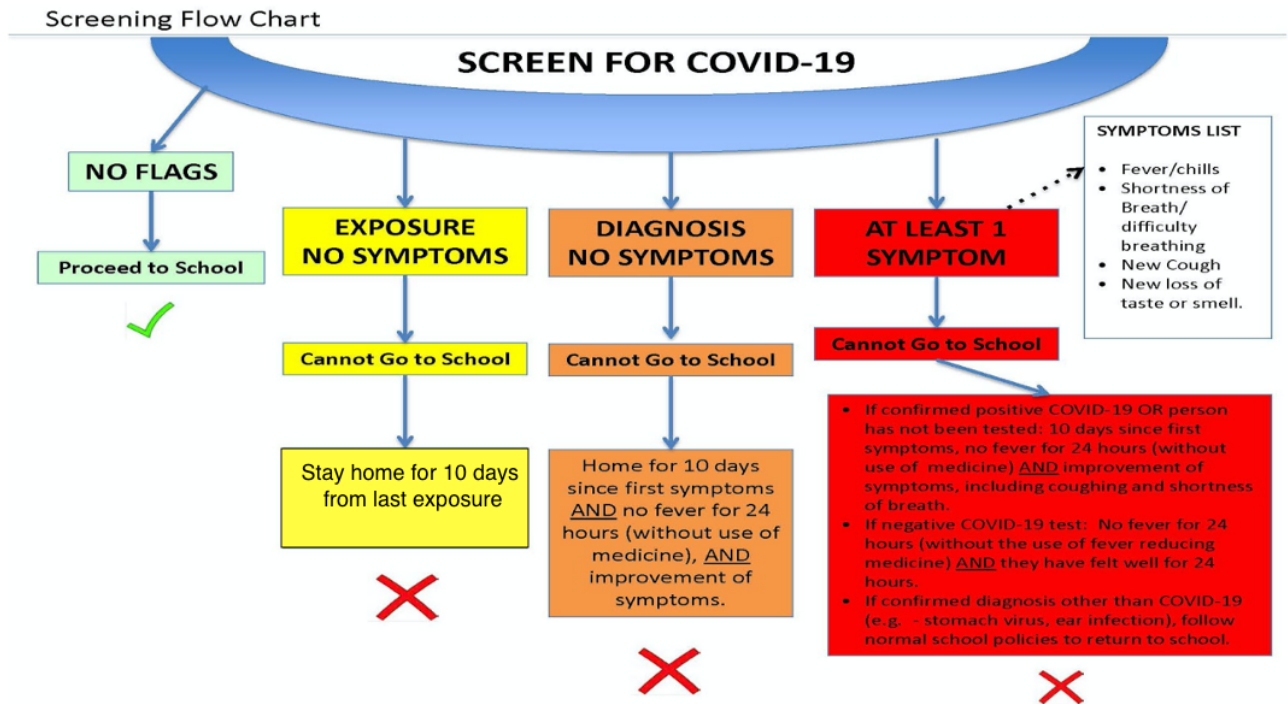
***Nothing is Impossible,  
The word itself says, "I'm Possible!"***

## HEALTH & SAFETY

### **DAILY SELF-ASSESSMENT:**

- Prior to boarding the bus or drop-off, Parents/Guardians will need to complete the [COVID-19 Pre-Screening Tool for School Attendance](#). Certain responses will require that a child remain home. In this event, Parents/Guardians should contact their child's School Nurse. The self-screening will be available in paper form.
- *Daily self-assessment questions:*
  - *Have I been out of the state in the last 14 days?*
  - *Do I or have I been living with anyone who is sick or quarantined due to COVID-19 related symptoms?*

- Do I or have I been around anyone exhibiting these symptoms within the last 14 days:
  - Do I or have I had a loss of taste or smell?
  - Do I or have I had shortness of breath?
  - Do I have a fever or feel feverish?
  - Do I have a cough or sore throat?
  - Do I feel unwell today?
- Parents/guardians should follow the flow chart if ANY COVID-19 symptoms are identified:



**\*In addition to parents/guardians completing the daily self-assessment at home, schools will be screening students as they arrive at school\***

### **FACE COVERINGS/MASKS:**

- All students are required to wear a face covering/mask that covers their nose and mouth when in the presence of others AND maintain six (6) feet of distance whenever possible --about two arm's length. [See CDC guidance on social distancing](#). Maintaining three (3) feet of distance is acceptable between and among students when masks are worn.
- Face coverings must be worn when entering or exiting buildings, while traveling in hallways, and generally when moving about the school. Exceptions may include, but are not limited to:
  - Mealtimes and outdoor activities where students and staff can maintain at least six feet of physical distancing from others and have ready access to put them back on as needed when activity stops

- There may be short periods of time throughout the day that staff and students may remove their masks to eat and/or stay hydrated.
  - While participating in music practice, if permitted
  - When the student's face cannot safely be covered due to a medical condition in which case a doctor's note must be provided and the student would wear a face shield.
  - Face coverings must be worn by all students utilizing transportation by bus or van.
- All students will be provided with [face coverings](#) (age appropriate design and size). If disposable, these should be replaced daily. If cloth, these should be [washed daily](#). Face coverings are subject to meeting current dress code standards in regards to the appropriateness of language/images, etc.
  - Face shields may be an alternative for those students with a medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings. Face shields worn in place of a face covering must extend below the chin and back to the ears.
    - Medical documentation, 504/ IEP process, or meeting with administration will be required for student to wear a face shield
  - **Face Coverings must**
    - Must have double layers
    - Must loop around the ears or tie around the head and neck
    - Must be worn over the nose and mouth
  - Bandanas, scarves, and gaiters are not approved face coverings
  - **Wear your Mask Correctly**
    - Wash your hands before putting on your mask
    - Put it over your nose and mouth and secure it under your chin
    - Try to fit it snugly against the sides of your face
    - Make sure you can breathe easily
    - CDC does not recommend use of masks or cloth masks for source control if they have an exhalation valve or vent

## **PREVENTION MEASURES:**

- All students must practice [proper handwashing guidelines](#) and use hand sanitizer upon entering the school, their classroom, before and after donning or removing a face covering, and throughout the day. Hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds when visibly soiled, before and after eating, and after coughing/sneezing and using the restroom.
- All students must practice proper [CDC infection control measures](#):
  - If coughing or sneezing, students must cover their mouth and nose with a tissue, or the inside of their elbow, and immediately discard the tissue.
  - Avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.

- Avoid touching any surfaces unnecessarily.
- Refrain from physical contact, including hugs and hand-shakes.
- Restroom procedures will be established at each school to limit the number of students in the hallway and restrooms at one time.
- Students should only bring to school what is absolutely essential for each day. Any items brought to school should fit into a single backpack.
- Classrooms will be reconfigured to allow physical distance with students facing one direction.
- The use of lockers will be suspended at the high school and middle school levels. Students will be allowed to carry a backpack. Lockers will be allowed at the elementary level as a storage space and each school will have a protocol on how students will access their lockers.
- Sharing of items (electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids) will be discouraged and restricted.
- Each child's belongings will be separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- Curriculum nights, open houses, and back-to-school events, if held, will be facilitated virtually.
- Field trips, assemblies, and other large gatherings will not be allowed.
- See CDC's informational video on how to [stop the spread of germs](#)

### **FOOD DISTRIBUTION/MEALS:**

- Students will eat in designated areas for all snacks and meals. Cafeterias and gyms may be used if six (6) feet of physical distance can be maintained.
- Students will maintain six (6) feet of physical distance while eating breakfast and lunch, as students will be unable to wear face coverings during these times.
- Students are encouraged to bring a full water bottle each day, as water fountains will be closed. Bottles may be refilled using our filling stations (for those schools that have them available). Water filling stations will be sanitized along with all other "common touch" surfaces.
- Shared food is prohibited. Parents are asked only to send food for their child and not class consumption (i.e. birthdays, holiday celebrations).
- Students will be required to practice [proper hand washing](#)/sanitizing prior to eating.
- All food served to students will be covered and individually wrapped, including utensils.
- Each school will develop meal procedures specific to their building, and these will be shared with staff, students, and parents.

### **PLAYGROUND USE (ELEMENTARY):**

- Use of designated playground equipment and supplies will be allowed under close monitoring.
- Use of face coverings/shields will be required during this time as long as physical distancing is maintained.

- Limits will be placed on the number of students on equipment at one time.
- No more than 50 students may congregate in one section of a play area at a time.
- If needed, at least three (3) areas of each playground will be established and student groups will be assigned to remain in each area each day. These areas will rotate so that students are able to use the entire playground over the course of several days.
- Students will wash their hands/use sanitizer before and after using playground equipment.
- Playground equipment (e.g. swings, slides, etc.) will be sanitized after each recess period before the next group uses them. Playground supplies (e.g. balls, jump ropes, hula hoops, etc.) will be stored in special bins that are labeled specifically for each group's use. These supplies will be sanitized after each use.

## SPECIAL SERVICES

- Regional School Unit 10 will plan for students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs), 504 Plans, Individual Health Plans, and English Learners, to ensure they receive necessary services and accommodations.
- Determination of additional PPE requirements will be made by the Director of Special Services in consultation with the school nurses based upon the unique needs of each student/situation. Additional PPE may be provided for staff working with young children, students with IEPs, or students with specialized health plans such as, but not limited to:
  - Clear face coverings and/or
  - Face shields
  - Eye protection
  - Kevlar sleeves/arm protectors
  - Gloves
  - Gowns
  - Teaching the safety protocols (wearing masks/shields, hand washing and social distancing) is essential. Collaborating with families is key in order to support and teach each student.

## TRANSPORTATION

- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to transport their child to and from school, if able.
- Students are required to wear a face covering at all times while on the bus/van, including upon entry/exit.
- Students must use hand sanitizer when they enter and exit the bus/van.
- Families should be vigilant to limit contact between other parents/students at bus stops and direct contact with the bus driver as much as possible by maintaining a six (6) ft. distance.
- Students will be seated one student per row and distanced according to guidelines, with the seat directly behind the driver remaining open. Prohibited seats will be marked with tape. Families must sit together. *This is subject to change depending on DOE and CDC recommendations.*
- Students may be assigned seats and must sit in the seats assigned to them.
- Seats in the back of the bus must be loaded first and then move forward. The bus should be emptied from the front to the back.
- Students will need to practice social distancing when exiting the bus. Each school will have a protocol for safely getting students into the building.
- Each school will have a procedure for a staggered dismissal to make sure students maintain social distancing requirements.

- Several windows should be slightly opened to improve air ventilation.
- Up to four (4) children are allowed in each van, depending on the size of the van. The total capacity of a van should not exceed one person per row at any given time.
- Bus drivers will clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces between uses, such as seat backs, handrails, stability poles, bars, windows and window ledges.

## PARENTS/GUARDIANS/VOLUNTEERS

- Parents/Guardians will minimize face-to-face meetings by utilizing alternative methods to receive updates (i.e. email, conference call, phone call, web-based meetings).
- Any Parent/Guardian needing to enter the building for an IEP meeting or other important business will need to conduct a self screening before entering the building and should utilize reception areas designated by each school. Main office spaces are restricted to administrative and office staff.
- Parents/Guardians will be asked the same self-screening questions as students to gain entry to a school building. If any response is “yes,” the parent/guardian will not be allowed into the building. If allowed into the building, parents/guardians:
  - Must wear a face covering while in the buildings. One will be provided by the school if necessary.
  - Must use the sanitizing station upon entry and maintain a social distance of six (6) feet.
  - Must attend to their specific business and leave immediately following.
- Upon entering the building, volunteers must follow the same guidelines as visitors listed above.

## TECHNOLOGY

- RSU10 will provide a device for each student (1:1 model). These devices will be transported between school and home by the student.
- Parents/Guardians & Students agree to return the assigned device at the end of the school year.
- Sharing of devices between students will be discouraged. If it is required, devices will be sanitized after each shared use.
- RSU10 will provide technology support for students/families.
  - Email: [helpdesk@rsu10.org](mailto:helpdesk@rsu10.org)
  - Phone: 207-369-5560 ext. 7700

## CLASSROOM SETTING *(If In-Person Instruction Occurring)*

- Classroom seating will be configured with maximum allowable space between students and all desks facing the same direction.
- Schedules will be developed in a way that will limit student movement and/or interactions between student groups throughout the day.
- Employees will modify instructional plans to reduce student contact, sharing of materials or equipment and maintain appropriate physical distancing to the greatest extent possible.
- Common touch surfaces will be sanitized throughout the day.

## REMOTE INSTRUCTION *(If In-Person Instruction Occurring)*

- Any RSU 10 student across grades Pre-K-12 will have the option of participating in remote instruction. Remote instruction is available for any student with health and safety concerns, elevated health risks, or a family member with elevated health risks.
- If a student begins the year with in-person instruction but wants to transition to remote learning they will be able to do this at different points in the year.
- These remote learning programs will be fully graded and credit bearing.
- Students who elect to participate in this remote instruction program to begin the 2020-21 school year must remain in the program at least through the first 6 weeks of school (9/8-~~10/2~~ 10/16). The change to in-person learning will start on 10/19/20. The next time after 10/19 to change to in-person learning will be 11/30. In both of these cases there will be a Request Form that will be available to complete 10/8 -10/14 and 11/16-11/20.
- Assigned instructional staff will also coordinate to ensure programs such as Special Education, 504, RTI, or ELL programs are provided to students remotely as needed.

## WHEN SOMEONE IS SICK

- Parents/Guardians will avoid exposing others by ensuring their child remains home if they experience any [Symptoms of Respiratory Illness](#) or a fever of 100.4°F or higher. *Please refer to the reporting student illness flow chart above.*
- Students will not be penalized for missing school when required to stay home under these guidelines. School nurses or other designated school officials will ask about symptoms when absences are reported due to sickness.

- If a student develops a fever or any COVID-19 symptoms during school hours, a medical isolation room is designated in all schools for students to wait for their parents to pick up their child immediately.
- Parents should consult with their child's health care provider for further guidance.
- Students should not return to school unless they are fever free for 24 hours (1 day) without fever-reducing medication and symptom-free for 24 hours.
- Any area used by a sick person will be closed until proper disinfection has been completed.

### **EXPECTATIONS IF TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19:**

- Parents/Guardians will notify the School Nurse if their child, or anyone in their household, has been confirmed to have COVID-19. As a response to protect the health and safety of our students and staff, areas will be sanitized and CDC guidelines followed to notify all families and employees that have come in contact with and/or have been exposed to the student in the most confidential manner possible.
- Students who have had close contact with someone who tests positive for, or is diagnosed with, COVID-19 must isolate at home and monitor symptoms for 10 days. Close contact is defined as “any individual who has been closer than six (6) feet for more than 15 minutes.”
  - Depending upon circumstances, this could include entire classrooms, clubs, bus routes, playground groupings, or cafeteria groupings
- Under the current Maine CDC guidance, a student who has tested positive for COVID-19 will NOT be able to return to school until:
  - At least 10 days passed since symptoms first appeared **AND** no fever for at least 24 hours (without the use of medicine) **AND** other symptoms are improved
- Students returning from illness with COVID-19 related symptoms will be required to check in with the school nurse.
- The school will work closely with Maine CDC on all contact tracing and other related protocols.
- During the time students are out of school, arrangements will be made to ensure they do not fall behind in their learning (i.e. remote instruction or make-up work following a healthy return).

### **EXPECTATIONS IF REQUIRED TO QUARANTINE:**

#### ***(Still being determined based on Remote Instruction Enrollment)***

- If an individual student is required to quarantine, they will transition to remote instruction and as long as they are participating those days will not count as absences.
- If a classroom or multiple classrooms are required to quarantine due to a positive test, impacted students will transition to remote instruction during the quarantine period. If a student participates, those days will not be counted as absences.
- Students who have traveled out of state to those states not listed in the most up-to-date Governor’s orders must isolate at home and monitor for symptoms for 10 days before being able

to return to school or have a negative Covid test. If students participate in remote learning during the quarantine, those days will not be counted as absences.

- For close contacts of a COVID-19 case where the close contact has had previous, documented COVID-19 infection and/or has been completed their COVID-19 vaccination series:
  - An individual with a previous COVID-19 infection documented by a positive NAAT (a nucleic acid amplification test, such as PCR) or a positive COVID-19 antigen test (e.g., BinaxNOW) who is exposed to an individual with COVID-19 does not need to quarantine so long as the exposure to a positive case occurred within 90 days of the date of the positive COVID-19 test.
  - An individual who believes they had a previous COVID-19 infection but did not have a positive COVID19 NAAT or antigen test must still quarantine after an exposure.
  - An individual who has completed a COVID-19 vaccine series and has been exposed to a COVID-19 case does not need to quarantine so long as the exposure occurred more than 14 days after the individual's completion of the COVID-19 vaccine series.
- Please be aware that if you plan to travel out of the United States, the Maine CDC has recommended that we follow US CDC guidelines for international travel. Travel from a country or U.S. territory with a level 2, Level 3, or level 4 is considered a high risk activity.
  - Students who have traveled to a level 2, Level 3, or level 4 country must get tested 3-5 days after travel AND stay home for 7 days after travel. Even if you test negative, stay home for the full 7 days. If your test is positive, isolate yourself to protect others from getting infected. If you don't get tested, it's safest to stay home for 10 days after travel.
  - [High risk Countries by Categories](#)
  - [CDC travel source](#)

## WHEN A SCHOOL WOULD CLOSE

As we are notified of a positive case, contact tracing is completed by our school nurses seven days a week. This determines who must quarantine and for how long. In consultation with the nurse, the Building Administrator and Superintendent, will determine a full school building would close when there is not enough staff to run in-person learning. Otherwise "Pods" (classrooms, teams, busses) would be determined to go fully remote on a case-by-case basis. This is always based on the contact tracing of exposure. The district will continue to follow all Maine CDC guidelines.

## TRAINING VIDEOS FROM THE CDC

- [how to wear a face covering](#)
- [Cloth Face Coverings Dos and Don'ts](#)
- [Handwashing](#)
- [Social Distancing](#)
- [Stop the Spread of Germs](#)
- [Know the Symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- [Taking Care of Your Daily Health During COVID-19](#)
- [Considerations for Wearing Masks](#)