

2021-2022 COVID-19 FAQ's

Updated 8/30/21

Are masks being mandated?

Yes. Students and staff are required to wear masks indoors (in schools and wherever children are present) regardless of vaccination status.

Staff and students do not have to wear masks outdoors.

- Mask-wearing is mandatory on buses.

Vaccinated staff do not have to wear masks indoors when they are alone.

- Groups of vaccinated staff do not have to wear masks indoors when there is no chance they will interact with students or unvaccinated staff and when they all agree to do so

Masks are available for staff, students, and visitors.

What data are we looking at to make our decision about universal masking?

Vaccinations are the most effective way to combat the spread of COVID-19. Masking is the second most effective way. (Dr. Mike Smith, Duke University Medical Center, Co-author of the ABC Science Collaborative study published in Pediatrics). As well as guidance from Maine DOE/CDC.

What steps will be taken to keep kids safe on buses?

- Masks will be worn at all times on buses.
- Assigned seating will be implemented on buses for all morning and afternoon runs.
- Hand sanitizer will be provided, and students will apply as they enter the bus.
- Windows and hatches will be open as weather allows.

What will breakfast, snack time, and lunchtime look like?

- Masks must be worn at all times except when a student is seated and eating.
- Students will be directed to maintain 3' of distance as much as possible, and put masks back on when not actively eating.
- Staff may eat lunch together but should maintain as much distance from one another as possible, and at least 6' is suggested.
- When possible, outside snacking and eating is encouraged.

Breakfast

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- Breakfast at KFS will be in classrooms.
- Breakfast at HBS will be in the classroom.
- Breakfast at BJHS will be eaten in the advisor's classrooms for the first week of school. Starting the second week of school, students will eat breakfast in the BJHS cafeteria (which is not open the first week of school due to the installation of a new floor) and will go to their advisor's room directly after they are finished eating.
- Breakfast at BHS will be in the cafeteria, classroom, or outside(weather permitting).

Lunch

Lunch at KFS - There are 4 lunch sessions in the cafeteria with assigned seating (Cafeteria will be at 80% capacity) with assigned seating.

Lunch at HBS - There are 6 lunch sessions in the cafeteria with assigned seating (Cafeteria will be at 50% capacity) with assigned seating.

Lunch at BJHS - There will be 6 lunch sessions by team (Cafeteria will be less than 50% capacity) with assigned tables by advisor group.

Lunch at BHS - There will be 3 lunch sessions ($\frac{1}{3}$ of the student population in each). Students may eat outside (weather permitting).

Will staff have to report their vaccination status?

Yes, confidentially to Central Office. By Maine law, DHHS has the authority to require staff to report their status to the School Department, and the Superintendent is required to report non-identified data to the Maine Department of Education each month, indicating the percentage of vaccinated adults in our schools. For more information, click [here](#)

Will staff vaccination rates be published?

Beginning in September 2021, Maine DOE/CDC will be publishing staff vaccination rates. Once it is published we will notify the community.

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Will student vaccination rates be published?

Yes. For more information, click [here](#)

What does social distancing mean?

- Will strive to maintain 3 feet as much as possible.
- Students will socially distance to the extent possible in classrooms, hallways, common spaces when moving through the food service line and while eating.
- Sharing school supplies and other materials will be discouraged.

Will vaccinated students who have to quarantine have the opportunity to attend remotely, or what opportunities will be afforded to students in this capacity?

Students who have to quarantine will have access to asynchronous learning. There is no synchronous option. Learning activities will be aligned with the synchronous instruction that will be continuing (if only some students have to quarantine) or was planned (if the entire class has to quarantine).

Why are special needs students having a count of their “mask slips” if able-bodied students are not being counted?

Brunswick strives, as per MUSER and IDEA, to create individualized educational programs (IEPs) for identified students with disabilities. These students' IEPs must include the special education services, related services, accommodations, and modifications necessary to ensure they can benefit from their educational programs. As such, in the event that a student's challenge with wearing a mask is a result of their disability AND interferes with their access to their educational program, the school district may address this behavior through the provision of appropriate services and supports. Educators utilize the least restrictive strategies possible to address challenging behaviors. In order to ensure each student's plan is appropriate and least restrictive, the selection of strategies is based on both formal and informal data collection. Some of these strategies include:

- Nonverbal cues
- Scheduled mask breaks
- Incentives
- Positive behavior support plans
- Sensory supports
- BCBA consultation
- Alternate learning spaces
- IEP goal development and associated specially designed instruction
- Other strategies as appropriate

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Please note the majority of children with disabilities in Brunswick's schools demonstrate the ability to adhere to the school district's mask mandate. Very few students are unable to, for disability-related reasons, consistently wear their masks. The specific programs for this latter group of students vary according to the individual and are developed in conjunction with parents through the IEP Team process.

General education students who do not adhere to the school district's mask mandate are also provided with a number of interventions and supports designed to support mask-wearing. If these strategies are ineffective, these students are referred to each school's RtIB system, which develops strategies based on data collection, to support their adherence to the mandate.

How will you respond if rates increase? Will remote schooling be an option?

We will take our cues from the Maine DOE and Maine CDC. If those organizations advise us to close one or more facilities for students, we will distribute technology devices to students and provide remote schooling for affected students.

Will there be more information on how to remain healthy in place of vaccinating, or is there a contact that can be made public to explore alternative ways to support the immune system until the long-term effects of the vaccine are determined?

We will continue to provide information to the BSD community on ways to remain healthy. This information will originate from the Maine DOE, Maine CDC, or US CDC and will be vetted by the district's health advisors.

Contract Tracing?

Brunswick School Department will follow Maine CDC Standard Operating Procedure

- The school nurse is the primary point of contact
- School officials contact trace per SOP
- Quarantine, isolation, and testing requirements per SOP
- Developing local contact tracing process with standard timelines and expectations for staff

Is pool testing mandatory?

No. Optional per student

- "Pods" of students self-swab and provide specimens to be tested as a pool
- Pods could include elementary classrooms, BJHS teams, and athletic teams

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- If a pool is COVID-positive, the members of the pool have individual PCR tests
- The positive individual isolates but the other members of the pod who tested negative do not have to quarantine
- Students who did not participate in pool or individual testing will have to quarantine

Music instruction procedures:

Kate Furbish Elementary School

- All music is vocal at KFS.
- Students will wear masks at all times including when singing.

Harriet Beecher Stowe Elementary School

- Music is both vocal and instrumental at HBS.
- Students will wear masks at all times, including when singing and playing instruments.
- Students playing wind instruments will use musician masks (with slits).
- All reed and brass instruments will have bell covers to slow the spread of aerosols.

Brunswick Junior High School

- Music is both vocal and instrumental at BJHS.
- Students will wear masks at all times, including when singing and playing instruments.
- Students playing wind instruments will use musician masks (with slits).
- All reed and brass instruments will have bell covers to slow the spread of aerosols.

Brunswick High School

- Music is both vocal and instrumental at BHS.
- Students will wear masks at all times including when singing and playing non-wind instruments.
- Students playing wind instruments may remove their masks only while playing.
- All reed and brass instruments will have bell covers to slow the spread of aerosols.