



Maine Indian Education

Indian Island School -- Penobscot Nation

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October 26, 2021

Dear families and friends,

The school committee met Monday, October 25th and discussed the progress of our school year so far. As the pandemic continues to impact our lives, we will continually review and adjust our plan, using data from our health center and state CDC. We also have access to our own tribal medical liaison at Maine's Department of Education. Now that we are participating in the state's pooled testing program, it is time to look at our protocols and procedures to make sure they are still aligned with the most current science. This letter is to share our revisions to those procedures. They are minor, but important for us all to be aware.

We continue to:

- Wear masks that cover the nose and mouth while indoors, regardless of vaccination status
- Physical distancing and hand hygiene
- Do daily family and staff screenings with updated tool
- Use of virus-killing air filtration devices in every classroom
- Conduct weekly pooled testing (led by school nurse) in every classroom

We have revised our hallway traffic pattern and sectioned them off by grade clusters. For example, middle school uses their own wing. Elementary students use the hall in front of their classes. Plexiglass shields in classrooms will be optional as the science shows their limited success at stopping the virus. We will continue to use them when teachers work in close proximity or teachers/students request one. Art class will be indoors instead of outside. We are able to make these adjustments to our plan due in large part to pooled testing.

Please check this document for updates often as COVID-19 seems to be a constantly evolving disease. As always, your child's safety and well-being will be front and center in our decision making. Our goal is to minimize the risks of exposure while offering in person learning. We are grateful for the team effort; we cannot do this without your support.

Sincerely,

Annemarie Swanson

Pre-Screening Tool for School Attendance

Within the past 24 hours have you had a fever* or taken fever reducing medicine?

YES =



Do you feel sick, had Vomiting/diarrhea, fever*, sore throat, new cough, or felt unwell?

YES =



Have you been told to stay home and isolate/quarantine due to COVID-19 exposure?

YES =



Most Common Symptoms of COVID-19:

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fever*
- Chills
- Sore throat
- New loss of taste or smell

Less Common Symptoms:

- Muscle pain
- Nausea or Vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Diarrhea
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Rash
- Swelling or redness of hands/feet
- Red eyes/eye drainage
- Congestion/runny nose

**Fever is 100.4°F/ 38°C regardless of measurement location (oral, temporal).*

Stay home with any **YES** response to the questions above.

Symptoms of illness can have many causes. Please keep your student home and contact your school nurse or primary care provider if your student is unwell. Students who present with symptoms while in school will be dismissed to home at the discretion of the nurse.

**A fever is 100.4F/38C or greater.*



Updated 10.19.2021

Indian Island School Fall 2021 Opening Plan

Instructional Model

Grades PK-8

We will be 100% in person learning Monday-Friday 8:00-3:00 PM. Tuesdays will continue to be an early release day. Learners will be dismissed at 2:00 PM each Tuesday and staff will work on professional development from 2:00-3:30 PM. We will provide limited, interim remote learning only when needed due to cases of the virus that temporarily close our school. Families who are looking for a long-term, full remote program next year should explore external options like Maine's virtual charter schools, national virtual learning companies, or homeschooling.

Communication

There will be multiple modes of communication. The best way to stay abreast of current conditions and updates is our school website (<https://www.maineindianeducation.org/o/iis>), the official Indian Island School PTO facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/413247852672522>) sites, and the principal announcements from SchoolMessenger. Please make sure you are relying on accurate information. When in doubt, check with your student's teacher or call the office. Additional ways communication will occur are as follows:

- Parent/Guardian meetings
- IIS All Together Google Classroom (accessed through your child's account)
- Reopening Plan updates posted in the news section of our school website
- School Committee meetings held monthly

Transportation

Parents are encouraged to transport their children to school or encourage their children to walk to school, if and when appropriate. Indian Island School contracts transportation with Cyr Bus lines. Bus transportation will be available for any school students provided they live within the designated areas. Bus riders must wear a mask over their nose and mouth at all times. Only students within a family unit may sit together. All riders will follow the bus driver's directions for entering and exiting the bus. Questions may be directed to Dave at Cyr 827-2335. Parents will drop off their children at the designated area only. They will yield to buses and allow those riders to enter the building first.

Technology and Infrastructure

PK, kindergarten, and grade one classrooms will use technology located in the building. They will leave their school devices at home to prepare for possible closures. Grade two-eight will need their devices daily and will bring them back and forth using the case

provided. Learning platforms (Google Classroom) and Zoom/Meet video conferencing will be used only when necessary by IIS students and staff.

Staff

Staff are working in the building from 7:15–3:15 daily. All adults will conduct in-person teaching using all safety protocols at all times. Masks will be worn inside. Any certified teacher may be working with small instructional groups to provide extra support as their schedules permit.

Indian Island School supports the following health and safety requirements:

Indian Island School encourages vaccination.

We, along with Penobscot Nation Health Center, strongly encourage all students and staff to be vaccinated against COVID-19 and its variants. Penobscot Nation Health Center conducts vaccination clinics.

The following six health and safety measures are required for Indian Island School to open safely, according to Penobscot Nation Health Center and Maine DHHS/CDC.

1. Symptom Screening Before Coming to School

IIS has daily health screening practices for all students, staff, and essential visitors. Staff are required to complete daily self-reporting to verify they are asymptomatic when reporting to the worksite. Parents of students must conduct self-checks for symptoms prior to boarding buses or entering school buildings each day.

*Use CDC's updated Screener on the back of the opening letter.

- Students showing COVID-like symptoms? Parents/guardians must call the school to report their child's absence and call their health provider to report their symptoms. Students must be cleared by a doctor's note before returning to school. The health clinic has rapid testing available.
- Visitors are welcome, must verify they are symptom-free, and follow all protocols in place at the time of visit.

2. Physical Distancing and Facilities

- Adults will maintain six feet of distance from others to the extent possible. Maintaining three feet of distance is acceptable between and among students when combined with the other measures outlined in this list of safety requirements.
- Distancing is not required while outside.
- A "medical isolation room" is designated for students/staff who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during the school day. The office conference room serves as IIS Medical Isolation room until further notice.

- ALL IIS classrooms have Virus Killer Air Purifiers, that purify the air continuously. The gymnasium and lobby area have an extra large capacity virus killer/air purifier. Windows will be opened at least three inches and doors will remain open to increase ventilation.
- Classrooms will maintain six feet for all persons in the building whenever possible. Adults will maintain six feet from learners unless it is impossible to do their job.

3. Masks/Face Coverings

- All adults are required to wear a mask/face covering indoors, minimum of two-layers, regardless of vaccination status.
- Mask breaks are built into the school day. Masks are not mandatory when outside.
- All students are required to wear a mask/face covering that covers their nose and mouth while indoors. Minimum thickness is two layers. Gaiters must be at least two layers thick to be adequate face coverings.
- Masks/face coverings must be worn by all students on the bus.
- According to the CDC, asymptomatic students who attend school where wearing masks indoors are consistently enforced and who were at least 3 feet away from the individual who tested positive (with no physical contact) in a classroom do not need to be quarantined from the regular school day.

4. Hand Hygiene

- All students and staff must wash hands or use sanitizing gel:
 - upon entering the school/their classroom,
 - before and after eating,
 - blowing nose/sneezing/coughing,
 - after using the restroom,
 - after use of playgrounds and shared equipment, and
 - upon entering and exiting a school bus.

5. Personal Protective Equipment

- Additional safety precautions are required for any staff supporting students in close proximity, when distance is not possible, or when students require physical assistance. These precautions must at a minimum include eye protection (e.g., face shield or goggles) and a mask/face covering that covers nose and mouth.
- Classrooms and/or areas that have been used by an individual diagnosed with COVID-19 must be closed off until thorough cleaning and sanitization takes place.

6. Return to School after Illness

- Sick staff members and students must use home isolation until they meet criteria for returning to school. Rapid response COVID tests are available at the health center. Persons with symptoms must show a note that they are cleared by a doctor to return to school.

Health and Safety Measures in case of a positive COVID-19 test

(1) For one or two confirmed or probable case(s) in a student/staff/teacher who has/have been within a single classroom for the entire day:

- All other students/staff/teachers in that classroom are considered close contacts regardless of the setup of the classroom, face covering use or vaccination status.
- Unvaccinated individuals will need to quarantine. Vaccinated individuals may remain in school, but a COVID test is recommended 3-5 days after the exposure has occurred.
- Art, library, recess, and cafeteria exposures for student/staff/teacher will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- The classroom where the confirmed case is located will be cleaned according to federal CDC guidelines found here:
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/student-becomes-sick-diagnosis-flowchart.html>

(2) For one or two confirmed or probable case(s) in a student/staff/teacher who has/have been in multiple classrooms:

- All students/staff/teachers of any classroom where the student/staff/teacher attended a class are considered close contacts regardless of the setup of the classroom, face covering use, or vaccination status.
- Unvaccinated individuals will need to quarantine. Vaccinated individuals may remain in school, but a COVID test is recommended 3-5 days after the exposure has occurred.
- Art, library, recess, and cafeteria exposures for student/staff/teacher will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- The classrooms where the confirmed case is located will be cleaned according to federal CDC guidelines.

Visitors

The school requires any visitor to follow our health and safety protocols in place at the time.

Ongoing Monitoring Practices

IIS will regularly communicate and monitor developments with Indian Health Services authorities regarding cases, exposures, hospitalizations, and any other relevant metrics that may require a change in school operations. In the event of an elevated number of cases in local health data or in the event of presumed or confirmed cases directly impacting school, IIS will collaborate with IHS and CDC authorities to implement all necessary health and safety protocols. This could include a short-term closure, if school or health officials deem it necessary.

Technology and Connectivity

Every IIS student has access to a personally assigned school-provided device for use at home and at school. These devices support learning in-person and online. HotSpot

devices are available for families, when home internet access is unreliable. Contact the school for more information.

Assessment

State student assessments will help the State of Maine identify students' learning needs and plan for upcoming support for schools. This includes the analysis of any student's learning loss that can be attributed to the year-long school closure. Maine, as well as the Bureau of Indian Education, requires each school to assess student achievement every year. Indian Island School received a BIE waiver and conducts the state fall and spring assessment NWEA/MAP testing in math, reading, and language usage for grades three-eight. The school conducts the winter NWEA/MAP tests for progress monitoring in grades three-eight.

Attendance

Indian Island School records attendance on a daily basis. Attendance is taken in each class. Parents call the school office (827-4285) to report the absence. Parents are encouraged to reach out to their child's teacher via email/phone if there is an extended absence or any issue needing attention. Note: Schools are now required to report chronic absenteeism. A student is considered chronically absent if absent 10% or more of the school year (17 days). This is equivalent to missing just two days per month.

Social Emotional Learning and Mental Health

The direct and indirect impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic are expected to have a lasting effect on students and staff. IIS supports explicit teaching focused on social-emotional learning and relationship-building. Mindfulness classes are part of the school day at IIS. Counseling staff provide mental health support and resources, including group or individual counseling and consultation for students and families, as needed.

Intervention Services

All learners will continue to require flexible and responsive support for their academic, behavioral, and wellness needs. Academic supports will provide focus and review of essential standards through whole-group and small-group instruction (Tier 1) and individual student intervention (Tiers 2 and 3). Academics, behavior, and social emotional approaches are weaved together to form a foundation that ensures all children are ready to reach their individual potential.

Students with Disabilities

Special education services for students with disabilities will include instruction designed to ensure the least restrictive environment (LRE) as required by their IEP. The school will follow all IEP plans as required. The school will provide services per Maine's 504 Rehabilitation act of 1973 to all students who qualify. The school does not discriminate, has a Title IX coordinator to ensure compliance, provides grievance procedures, identifies and locates all children with disabilities who receive special education within our school and provides notice of the school's 504 responsibilities and procedural safeguards to parents.

Preparing for Future School Closures

Changes in public health data could necessitate rapid adjustments to the school's operational approach at any time. Once in-person instruction with social distancing begins, we will be prepared for the potential of building closure on very short notice. The principal will communicate promptly to staff, students, and families using School Messenger in the event that local health conditions warrant school closure or a change in instructional delivery. In the event of closure, IIS will return to full-time online instruction for all students. We will use the remote learning schedule we used last school year.

Safety Protocols

During a health closure, no students will be allowed in school buildings for instruction. Staff would access buildings for critical purposes, as permitted within tribal guidelines. In rare circumstances when a necessary specialized service cannot be provided remotely, individual students may be permitted into a school space/Culture building by appointment and with strict mitigation strategies in place.

Instructional Practice

In the event of a shutdown, all instruction would be delivered online. Indian Island School is a +Google Workplace School, using Google Classroom, Meet, Jamboard, and other Google extensions to provide distance learning.

Schedules

Class schedules, in an emergency shutdown, will mirror schedules used before reopening.

Food Services

Food services will continue. The kitchen will make every effort to provide hot, healthy lunches daily that includes remote learners.

Training and Support

Resources and training to help caregivers understand their roles in supporting students' academic success are available through our guidance department and located. Frequent parent meetings with the Principal and staff will be planned via a Zoom Open Office Hour. All school-level information is shared through School Messenger and posted on the school website: <https://www.maineindianeducation.org/o/iis>.

Technology Support

Luke Esty-Kendall (luke.esty-kendall@indian-island.mie.k12.me.us) provides an online help desk to support students and caregivers with computer troubleshooting.