

COVID-19 RETURN TO SCHOOL GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS & FAMILIES



#wearekatahdin
#staystrong
#katahdinstrong

Addendum to the Student Handbook

Based on current Maine CDC Guidelines

The School Committee 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.

*Thank you to the Biddeford School Department for sharing this framework with
Katahdin Schools, RSU 89*

MESSAGE FROM SUPERINTENDENT MARIE ROBINSON

In response to COVID-19, KATAHDIN SCHOOLS-RSU 89 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 KATAHDIN SCHOOLS Guidelines will be in effect from August 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020 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 KATAHDIN SCHOOLS COVID GUIDELINES are mandatory for all students and their families.

On March 16, 2020, we began what has turned into 5 months of waiting and wondering about what the future holds. We begin the 2020-2021 school year with similar uncertainty. The year we are about to embark upon will be a challenge for students, families, and staff.

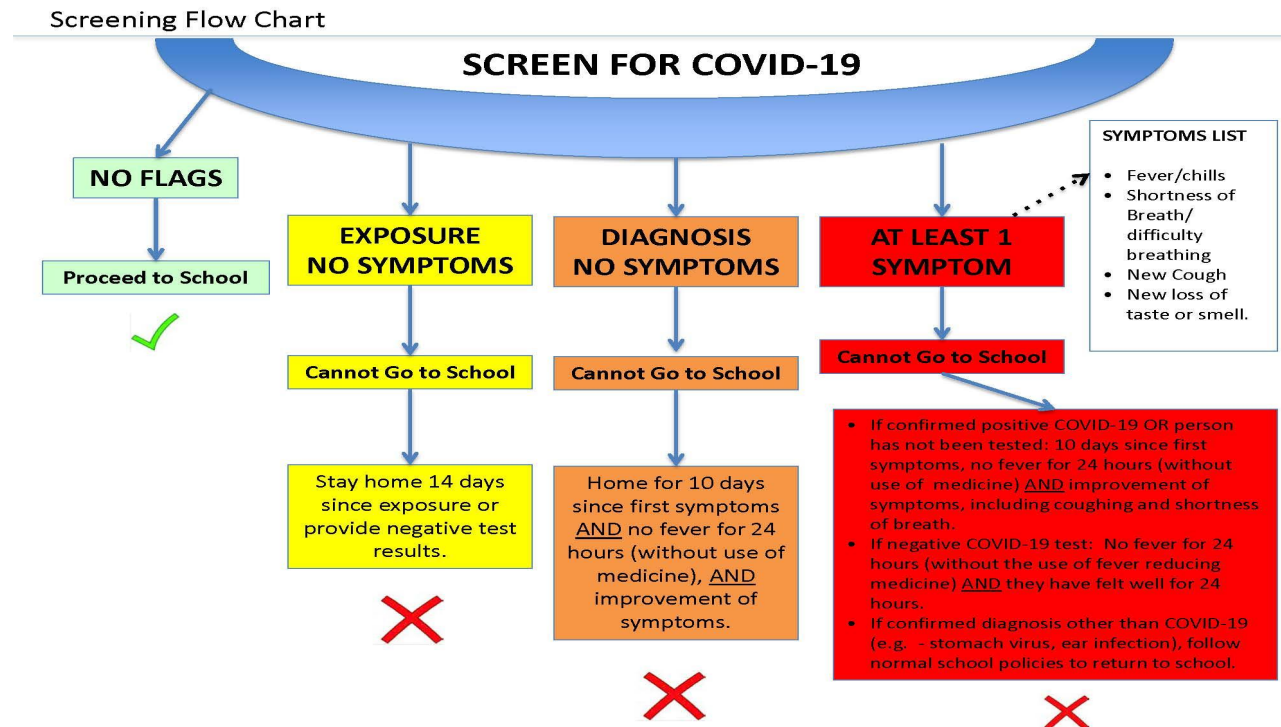
*We consider the safety of your children as our collective responsibility and staff will be flexible as we undergo processes that are new to this year's school experiences. With a continued focus on positive relationships, providing meaningful learning experiences, meeting our students' social/emotional needs and the overall wellbeing of the "whole child", we will strive to successfully meet this challenge and become stronger for it. Please join us as we remain **Katahdin Strong**.*

*~Marie Robinson
Superintendent of Schools*

HEALTH & SAFETY

DAILY SELF-ASSESSMENT:

- Prior to boarding the bus or drop-off, parents/guardians will need to complete a self-screening assessment daily for each child attending school to check for [symptoms of COVID-19](#). If any questions are a “yes” it is necessary to stay home. Parents/guardians should contact Mrs. Cullins with any questions. The self-screening will be available in paper form and on our school website www.rsu89.org.
- *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?
 - 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:



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--about two arm's length-- at all times throughout the day. [See CDC guidance on social distancing](#). Maintaining three (3) feet of distance is acceptable between and among students when combined with the other measures outlined in this list of safety requirements.
- 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:
 - While eating
 - While outdoors, if physical distancing allows
 - While taking a scheduled face mask break during the day.
 - 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 two [face coverings](#) (age appropriate design and size). If disposable masks are used, these should be replaced daily. If cloth masks are used, 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.

PREVENTION MEASURES:

- All students must practice [proper handwashing guidelines](#) and/or 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.
- KMHS students will be allowed to carry a backpack with them - lockers will not be used
- KES students will utilize lockers on a teacher-developed schedule to allow for proper physical distancing.
- 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 will be facilitated virtually.
- Field trips, assemblies, and other large gatherings will not be allowed until further notice.
- See CDC's informational video on how to [Stop the spread of germs](#)

FOOD DISTRIBUTION/MEALS:

- Students will remain in classrooms or go outside for all snacks and meals.
- KES meals will be delivered to the classrooms.
- KMHS students will be called by Cougar Time pods to pick up their meal and return to the classroom or outdoors to eat.
- 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 traditional water fountains will not be used. Bottles may be refilled using our filling stations once they are 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.

PLAYGROUND USE (ELEMENTARY):

- Use of designated playground equipment and supplies will be allowed under close monitoring.
- Use of face coverings/shields will NOT 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.
- Grade level pods will have recess together.
- Students will wash their hands/use sanitizer before and after using playground equipment.
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SPECIAL EDUCATION

- Katahdin Schools will meet with families to make contingency plans for current IEPs, to ensure they receive necessary services and accommodations.
- Determination of additional PPE requirements will be made by the Coordinator of Special Services based upon the unique needs of each student/situation. Additional PPE may be provided for staff working with young children, students with IEPs or student's with specialized health plans such as, but not limited to:
 - Clear face coverings and/or
 - Face shields
 - Kevlar sleeves/arm protectors
 - Gloves
 - Gowns
 - Plexiglass barriers for student desks

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 the bus/van.
- Bus seating will be limited to one student per seat, whenever possible. All students will receive assigned seats and families will be assigned seats together.
- Students 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 and then the back, whenever possible.
- Students will need to practice physical distancing when exiting the bus. The bus radio will be used to dismiss by rows.
- Several windows will be slightly opened to improve air ventilation.
- Up to two (2) children are allowed in each van, depending on the size of the van. If a second adult monitor is required, only one (1) child will be allowed. The total capacity of a van should not exceed three (3) people at any given time.
- Bus drivers will clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces between uses as much as possible. High-touch areas in buses 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).
- Parents/Guardians will be asked the same screening questions as students prior to entry to any 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.
 - Must use the sanitizing station upon entry, 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

- In a hybrid (combination of remote and in-person instruction) or remote instruction model, 1:1 devices will be provided to each PK-12 student. These devices will be transported by the student between school and home.
- Parents/Guardians agree to return the borrowed devices at the end of the school year, unless otherwise determined, to be cleaned and disinfected.
- Sharing of devices between students will be discouraged. If it is required, devices will be sanitized after each shared use.

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

- Classroom seating will be configured with maximum allowable space between students.
- 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 Katahdin Schools 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.
- Katahdin Schools Instructional Staff will lead these classes.
- These remote learning programs will be fully graded and credit bearing and will not be the same as the emergency remote learning that took place in the spring.
- Students who elect to participate in this remote instruction program to begin the 2020-21 school year will have a three-week window to change their decision.
- Beyond the three-week window of change, parents must receive authorization from the building principal to make any changes to their child's instructional program.
- 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 [signs or symptoms of Respiratory Illness](#) or a fever of 100.4°F or higher.
- Students will not be penalized for missing school when required to stay home under these guidelines.
- School nurses will ask about symptoms when absences are reported.
- If a student develops a fever during school hours, a medical isolation room is designated in both schools for students to wait for their parents to pick up their child immediately.
- 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:

- Families will notify Mrs. Cullins, our 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.
- Under the current Maine CDC guidance, a student who has tested positive for COVID-19 will NOT be able to return to school until:
 - the student has gone 24 hours (1 day) without exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, and at least ten days have passed since the student's symptoms first appeared;
 - OR***
 - the student has received two negative COVID-19 test results from specimens taken more than 24 hours apart.
 - AND***
 - Documentation of medical clearance will be required to return to school and must be submitted to the School Nurse.
- 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 14 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, athletic groups, or bus routes.
- Students returning from illness related to COVID-19 will be required to check in with the school nurse and school administrator.
- 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:

- If an individual student is required to quarantine, they will be provided the option to transition into remote instruction and, if they participate, those days will not be counted 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 14 days before being able to return to school. If students participate in remote learning during the quarantine, those days will not be counted as absences.

TRAINING VIDEOS FROM THE CDC

- [How to Wear a Cloth Face Covering](#)
- [Cloth Face Coverings Do's and Don'ts](#)
- [Handwashing](#)
- [Social Distancing](#)
- [Stop the Spread of Germs](#)
- [Know the Symptoms of COVID-19](#)
- [Tested Positive for Covid: When it is ok to Return to School](#)
- [Taking Care of Your Daily Health During COVID-19](#)