

Dear Richmond Middle and High School Families,

With the start of school quickly approaching, I wanted to reach out to you with one final letter before students return. Teachers have been in the building, readying for the return of students. We have hand sanitizer stations throughout the school and in every classroom, masks ready to distribute to any students who need them (they are also welcome to use their own), and have moved classroom furniture to allow us to appropriately social distance.

Just as a reminder, we will be starting the year in “Hybrid”. Your student should have received their schedule along with their A/B Group designation (if you have not, please contact the main office). The weekly schedule is shared below. We will also be sending a bus to CATC four days a week. For more information on our return to school plan, see the attached FAQ.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Group A	In person		All students remote	Remote	
Group B	Remote			In person	

Each morning when students arrive, they will be reporting directly to their advisory. No students may enter the building before 7:30- please do not drop them off before this time. On their first day, students will remain with that advisory teacher for the entirety of the day so that we can do some education on new procedures and protocols. The first day for students is:

- Group A: Tuesday, September 8th (All CATC Students are in group A. These students will be transported to CATC 4 days/week. If they have transportation they may transport themselves home from RHS on their distance learning days; if not, we will find a place in the school for them to connect. Group B does not need to connect this day.)
- Group B: Thursday, September 10th (Group A does not need to connect this day since it is a repeat of Tuesday, but they are expected to log in on Friday, September 11th).
- Distance only students: Wednesday September 9th (Connect with advisory Teachers @9:00AM)

Enclosed in this mailing you will find our *At Home Health Screening Tool* and our *Return to School Flow Chart*. As a reminder, we are requiring all students and staff to complete the health check each day before coming to school. If your student is experiencing symptoms, please keep them home!

We look forward to having students return to our building. Please reach out if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Karl Matulis, Principal RMSHS

FAQ Richmond Middle and High School Return to School

When is the First Day of School? The first day of school is Tuesday, September 8, 2020 (Group A) or Thursday, September 10, 2020 (Group B). Distance only learners will connect for their first day on Wednesday, September 9th.

Will we be in hybrid learning all year? The Maine Department of Education requires all schools to plan for potential instruction in 3 learning models: (1) All students in school; (2) Hybrid learning; and (3) Fully remote. Requirements from the state may allow or require us to move into one of the other models at some point this year. Schools must provide uninterrupted learning throughout the school year and more than one model may be required. If we need to switch learning models, you will receive communication from the RSU.

What will my student do on at-home learning days?

All students will receive learning activities for the week via Google Classroom. The following guidelines apply for students attending in a hybrid or a full-time virtual model:

- Students in **Grades 6-12** will attend school remotely via their assigned schedule on virtual days. They are still required to be in their scheduled classes at their scheduled times, whether in person or remote.

What will Wednesdays look like for my student?

Wednesdays are flexible. They may include, but are not limited to: advisory Meets sessions; class meetings; small group lessons, academic assistance; study groups; individual check-ins with teachers; or virtual club meetings. More details will be provided from your student's teacher(s).

In addition to working with students in the areas mentioned above, teachers will also meet in their content areas to discuss students' academic progress and needs, be available to communicate with parents and guardians, and prepare and plan between student groups and remote learners.

What time does school start? We encourage parents to stagger drop off and pickup times to support social distancing. Please note that school doors will not open until 7:30 and students should not arrive early to prevent gathering outside school doors. The first learning period starts at 7:50, so students need to be at school by that time.

What time does school end? We will begin dismissing students who are not riding the bus (walkers, students who drive themselves, and students being picked up by someone) at 2:15 in order to be able to stagger student dismissals. Buses will leave at 2:30.

Does my student need to wear a mask, or can they choose to wear a face shield? All individuals, including staff and students of all ages, must wear fitted cloth face coverings over both their nose and mouth to be in attendance at school or on the bus. Face shields may be an alternative for students or staff with documented medical or behavioral challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings. If one of these exceptions is necessary, documentation from an expert such as a doctor's note must be provided. Students will take mask breaks during the school day as coordinated by their teacher.

We strongly encourage all families to practice wearing masks prior to coming to school. This will make the transition easier for your child.

How will breakfast and lunch work? Students will be seated 6 feet apart during all meal times, and we will have multiple lunches to accommodate smaller groups. Surfaces used for eating will be cleaned immediately after use. Microwaves will not be available for student use, so please plan food from home accordingly. Breakfast will be available before school- students may purchase it and bring to their advisory.

Are the water fountains available? All students are asked to bring their own water bottle daily, as there will be no access to drink directly from the water fountains. Students may use the bottle-filler to fill their water bottles.

Can we access school nutrition on remote days? Families who wish to participate will be provided with food for their at-home school days. Meals are available to purchase or subject to free/reduced eligibility. Please see the included letter from our school nutrition program for more information.

- Group A students: Parents/guardians can pick up meals on Tuesday for Wed, Thur, Fri
- Group B students: Parents/guardians can pick up meals on Friday for Mon, Tues, Wed

Will students be attending CATC? CATC is able to take all of our students, four days a week (MT/TF). On their assigned distance learning days, those students can transport themselves home when they return from CATC, or if they are unable to do so they may remain at school. The first day for CATC is September 11th so that those students may participate with their advisory peers in our day one trainings.

Will my student be outdoor learning? While specific times may vary, all students should be prepared with proper clothing, footwear, and outerwear for daily outdoor learning. In addition to this, passing between most classes will take place outdoors.

What if my student is sick? RMSHS will ask all parents to conduct a self-check of their child before he or she leaves for school each morning. If your child displays certain symptoms identified in the self-check, he or she will need to stay home until they meet criteria for returning to school and/or may require a note from their doctor to return to school. The self-check is enclosed in this mailing.

Will students have sports or other activities? The Maine Principals Association (MPA) has postponed the official start of the high school fall athletic season to Tuesday, September 8. RMSHS will provide an update on School Athletics as soon as we have that information. We will likely be able to host some clubs and activities virtually (NHS, Student Government, Etc.).

What safety requirements are in place for my student? To open school, RMSHS must meet the following six requirements from the State of Maine:

1. **Symptom Screening Before Coming to School:** Students, parents/guardians, and staff members must conduct self-checks for symptoms prior to boarding buses or entering RMSHS each day. At this time, RSU 2 is finalizing a symptom screening tool as well as a protocol for return to school.
2. **Physical Distancing and Facilities:** Adults must maintain 6 feet of distance from others to the extent possible. Maintaining 3 feet of distance is acceptable between and among students when combined with the other measures outlined in this list of safety requirements. 6 feet of physical distancing is required for students while eating breakfast and lunch, as students will be unable to wear masks at that time. A "medical isolation room" must be designated for students/staff who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during the school day. Groups in any one area, room, or classroom must not exceed the Governor's gathering size limits.

3. **Masks/Face Coverings:** Students are required to wear a mask/face covering that covers their nose and mouth. Masks/face coverings must be worn by all students on the bus. Educators and staff are required to wear a mask/face covering. Face shields may be an alternative for those students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks/face coverings. The same applies to staff with medical or other health reasons for being unable to wear face coverings. Face shields worn in place of a face covering must extend below the chin and back to the ears. Medical documentation and prior approval is required for any person requesting to wear a face shield instead of a face mask.
4. **Hand Hygiene:** All students and staff in a school must receive training in proper hand hygiene. All students and staff must wash hands or use sanitizing gel upon entering the school, before and after eating, before and after dining or removing a face mask, after using the restroom, before and after use of shared equipment, and upon entering and exiting a school bus.
5. **Personal Protective Equipment:** Additional safety precautions are required for school nurses and/or 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. 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 students and staff members must use home isolation until they meet criteria for returning to school. Criteria is being developed by RSU 2 in consultation with other organizations.