In response to COVID-19, RSU3 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 guidelines will be in effect from September 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 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.

Thank you to Heather Perry, Superintendent of Gorham Public Schools and Jeremy Ray, Superintendent of Biddeford Public Schools, for their hard work on creating this handbook. Some things have been modified to support the specific needs of RSU3.

*Guidelines may be extended as needed.

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 their child to check for symptoms of COVID-19. Certain responses will require that a child remain home. In this event, Parents/Guardians should contact their child’s School Nurse.

- 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:
MASKS:

- All students are required to wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth when in the presence of others. 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.

- Masks 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 sitting at their desk in the classroom when more than 6 feet apart while on a designated mask break by the teacher;
  - While on the playground, if social distancing allows
  - 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.

- Masks must be worn by all students utilizing transportation by bus or van.

- Students can be provided with masks (age appropriate design and size) if needed. If disposable, these should be replaced daily. If cloth, these should be washed daily. Masks 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 face masks. Face shields worn in place of a face mask must extend below the chin and back to the ears. Any exception to wearing a mask, must be approved by the school nurse or Director of Pupil Services.
**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 mask, 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.

- The use of lockers will be suspended. Students will be allowed to carry a backpack with them.

- 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.

**FOOD DISTRIBUTION/MEALS:**

- Each school will create procedures around eating meals.

- Students will maintain six (6) feet of physical distance while eating breakfast and lunch as students will be unable to wear masks 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. Water filling stations will be sanitized along with all other “common touch” surfaces. RSU3 will provide one water bottle for each student.

- Shared food is prohibited. Parents are asked only to send food for their child and not class consumption (i.e. birthdays; holiday celebrations).

- Celebration food can be ordered through the School Nutrition Program, where food will be individually packaged per CDC recommendations. Contact your child’s teacher for more information.

- Students will be required to practice [proper handwashing/sanitizing](#) prior to eating.

- All food served to students will be covered and individually wrapped, including utensils.
PLAYGROUND USE (ELEMENTARY):

● Use of designated playground equipment and supplies will be allowed under close monitoring.
● 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 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.
RSU3 will plan for special education students, including students with disabilities and English Learners, to ensure they receive necessary services and accommodations.

Determination of additional PPE requirements will be made by the Director of Pupil 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 masks and/or
- Face shields
- Gloves
- Gowns
- Plexiglass barriers for student desks

Parents/Guardians are encouraged to transport their child to and from school, if able.

Students are required to wear a face mask at all times while on the bus/van, including upon entry/exit.

Students must use hand sanitizer when they enter/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 foot distance.

Students will be seated and distanced according to guidelines with the seat directly behind the driver remaining open. Families may be assigned to sit together.

Students will be assigned seats and must sit in the seats assigned to them.

Students will need to practice social distancing when exiting the bus.

Several windows should be slightly opened to improve air ventilation, weather permitting.

Bus drivers will clean and disinfect frequently-touched surfaces between uses. (High-touch areas in buses such as seat backs, handrails, stability poles, bars, windows and window ledges.)

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 will remain the lobby and/or designated areas for parents/visitors.

● Parents/Guardians will be required to follow the same screening procedures as students prior to entry to any school building. If any response is “yes” to the questions posted at the entrance, the parent/guardian will not be allowed into the building.

  ○ If a parent is allowed into the building:
    ■ Must wear a face mask 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.

● Parents being allowed to enter the school building will be prohibited unless absolutely necessary. Please be sure that students have what they need for each day before leaving the home as restrictions to building access will be extremely limited. (ex: lunch, proper footwear, sports equipment, etc.)

● In a hybrid or remote instruction model, 1:1 devices will be provided to each student in grades K-12. These devices will be transported by the student between school and home. All students and guardians will need to sign the Acceptable Use Policy in order to use the device. K-5 will spend the first two weeks learning how to use the devices, software, etc, and will be able to bring them home after Sept 21st. Students in grades 6-12 will be able to bring devices home as soon as the paperwork is signed and returned.

● Parents/Guardians agree to return the borrowed devices at the end of the school year 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.

● Virtual meetings, whether live or recorded, will be used for educational purposes only. Privacy rights are in place and videos or likeness of others will not be shared for anything other than educational purposes.

● Use of school issued devices, either laptops or internet hotspots, are managed by RSU3. Use of these devices are subject to RSU3 district policies and procedures.
**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 RSU3 student 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.
- Remote learning programs will be fully graded.
- Attendance policies will be enforced.
- Students are expected to follow all school rules such as dress codes, respectful behavior, and appropriate student engagement.
- 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 end of September.
- 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 100.3 F or higher.
- Students will not be penalized for missing school when required to stay home under these guidelines. Secretaries will ask about symptoms when absences are reported. School nurses will be informed immediately.
- If a student develops a fever 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.
- Students may not return to school unless they are fever free for 24 hours (1 day) without fever-reducing medication and be 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.
- 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;
  - Documentation of medical clearance will be required to return to school and must be submitted to the School Nurse;
  - The CDC releases the person from isolation
- 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, clubs, teams, bus routes, playground groupings, etc.
- 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 or submit a negative COVID-19 test to the school nurse before being able to return to school. If students participate in remote learning during the quarantine, those days will not be counted as absences.
• Handwashing
• Social Distancing
• Taking Care of Your Daily Health During COVID-19
• How to wear a mask
• Stop the spread of germs