

RSU 56

Framework for Returning to Classroom Instruction



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Pamela Doyen
Superintendent
RSU 56

147 Weld Street, Dixfield, ME 04224

(207) 562-4300 ext. 5

pdoyen@rsu56.org

(Thank you to Jeremy Ray, superintendent in Biddeford, and Heather Perry, superintendent in Gorham, for creating a return to school framework and allowing others to use and modify as needed.)

Preface: MDOE Guidance

To support and inform local SAU decisions about whether and how to bring students back into the classroom, the Maine Department of Health and Human Services and the Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) have developed a three-tiered health advisory system. Full information can be found at the Maine Department of Education (MDOE) website: <https://www.maine.gov/doe/framework>.

This new tiered system, which will be based on a holistic assessment of quantitative and qualitative information that includes but is not limited to recent data on case rates, positivity rates, and syndromic data, will break down into three-color based categorizations by county: red, yellow, and green.

- Categorization as “red” suggests that the county has a high risk of COVID-19 spread and that in-person instruction should not be conducted.
- Categorization as “yellow” suggests that the county has an elevated risk of COVID-19 spread and that hybrid instruction models should be adopted.
- Categorization as “green” suggests that the county has a relatively low COVID-19 risk and that in-person instruction can be adopted, although an SAU may opt for hybrid instruction if its buildings or readiness make adhering to baseline requirements a challenge.

RSU 56 will follow the recommendations outlined for each tier, as appropriate for our communities.

In addition, requirements for safety and additional recommendations have been provided by the Department of Health and Human Services and Center for Disease Control. The requirements are for all models of instruction that involve students being in the school building, and are listed below.

1) Symptom Screening Before Coming to School

1. **Students (parents/caregivers) and staff members must conduct self-checks for symptoms prior to boarding buses or entering school buildings each day. Schools should provide information to families in their primary language to support them in conducting this check.**
2. **Any person showing symptoms must report their symptoms and not be present at school.**
3. **Schools must provide clear and accessible directions to parents/caregivers and students for reporting symptoms and absences.**

2) Physical Distancing and Facilities

1. **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.**
2. **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.**

3. A “medical isolation room” must be designated for students/staff who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms during the school day.
4. Schools should evaluate their existing ventilation capabilities and ensure that they are maximizing their current capacity. Adequate ventilation is required for classrooms, with schools having flexibility in implementation such as using properly working ventilation systems or outdoor air exchange using fans in open windows or doors.
5. Groups in any one area, room, or classroom must not exceed the Governor’s gathering size limits.

3) Masks

1. Adults, including educators and staff, are required to wear a mask.
2. Students age five and above are required to wear a mask that covers their nose and mouth. Masks are recommended for children ages two to four, when developmentally appropriate.
3. Masks must be worn by all students on the bus.
4. Face shields may be an alternative for those students with medical, behavioral, or other challenges who are unable to wear masks. The same applies to staff with medical or other health reasons for being unable to wear masks. Face shields worn in place of masks must extend below the chin and back to the ears.

4) Hand Hygiene

1. All students and staff in a school must receive training in proper hand hygiene.
2. All students and staff must wash hands or use sanitizing gel upon entering the school, before and after eating, before and after donning or removing a face mask, after using the restroom, before and after use of playgrounds and shared equipment, and upon entering and exiting a school bus.

5) Personal Protective Equipment

1. 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.
2. 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

1. Sick staff members and students must use home isolation until they meet criteria for returning to school.

In addition, the MDOE has provided the following color scale to help with the determination concerning whether to return to classroom based instruction in each county:

- Categorization as “red” suggests that the county has a high risk of COVID-19 spread and that in-person instruction should not be conducted.

- Categorization as “yellow” suggests that that the county has an elevated risk of COVID-19 spread and that hybrid instruction models should be adopted.

- Categorization as “green” suggests that the county has a relatively low COVID-19 risk and that in-person instruction can be adopted – although a SAU may opt for hybrid instruction if its buildings or readiness make adhering to the required Health and Safety Measures for All Schools a challenge.

The county “color” can be found [here](#).

RSU 56 Collaborative Planning Team:

Pam Doyen, Superintendent, Principal of DHS

Jason Long, Principal of TWKDMS, RSU 56 Curriculum Coordinator

Charlie Swan, Principal of DES

Jessica McGreevy, Assistant Principal DHS, Athletic Director

Kenny Robbins, BGT Director

Gena Cloutier, Nutrition Director

Brian Keene, Technology Director

Mary Dailey, Business Manager

Heidi Connelly, Special Education Director

Heidi Broomhall, DHS Teacher, DEA President

Andrea Palmer, DES Teacher, Online learning coordinator, grades PK-2

Bethany Meehan-Poulin, DES Teacher, Online learning coordinator, grades 3-5

Nancy Carr, Online learning coordinator, grades 6-8

Rachel Buck, DHS Teacher, Online learning coordinator, grades 9-12

Erin Wainwright, DES School Nurse

Kathy Wilcox, TWKDMS/DHS School Nurse

Earl Couture, TWKDMS Ed-Tech III, COVID 19 Coordinator for RSU 56

Jay Nicholson, BGT Employee

Introduction

This pandemic has caused unprecedented disruption to our students and our traditional school delivery system. The full continuation of education has been RSU 56's priority. Record amounts of innovation and transformation in education have been produced during a short period of time. RSU 56 demonstrated agility and effectiveness in moving rapidly across all three schools in delivering education with distance teaching and learning.

Mission: RSU 56 will continue to keep students as our main priority as we transition back into school buildings while maintaining the innovation and creativity that has been developed for distance education delivery. We will do this by building relationships, cultivating opportunities, and inspiring growth in staff and students.

Purpose: This plan was designed collaboratively with the whole student in mind to address the social, emotional and academic development needs of each student.

Values: RSU 56 commits to doing what is best for students and graduating all students with the knowledge, skills, and disposition to be successful post high school.

Re-Entry Components

The *RSU 56 Framework for Returning to Classroom Instruction* aligns to the Maine Department of Education (MDOE) and Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidance and includes five main re-entry components: Health & Safety Logistics; Academic Support; Social, Emotional Learning (SEL); and Expectations of Hybrid and Remote Learning.

In order to successfully implement these safety requirements, RSU 56 will adjust the school calendar so that September 1, 2, 3 and 4 will become teacher workshop days to allow for additional staff training. (October 9 and March 19 will become student days.) The first student day for grades K-6 and 9 will be on September 8. PreK will start September 14. Updated calendar can be accessed [here](#). The academic school day will be adjusted to 9:00 - 2:00 which will allow teachers additional prep time to prepare for both in-person and remote learning expectations. This will also support the modified entrance/exit procedures as well as staff performing extended duties to support this process. (No late arrival Wednesdays.)

School Board approval of this plan occurred on August 6, 2020.

Board approval of this amended plan occurred on October 13, 2020.

School Decision Scenarios

In addition to utilizing the three tiers as outlined by MDOE and CDC, RSU 56 will follow the outline below if COVID 19 cases are directly involved with our communities or school students/employees.

Scenario One: Zero cases in our communities.

RSU 56 will provide in-person instruction in all three schools, implementing MDOE and CDC safety measures.

Scenario Two: Case(s) in our communities but not in our schools.

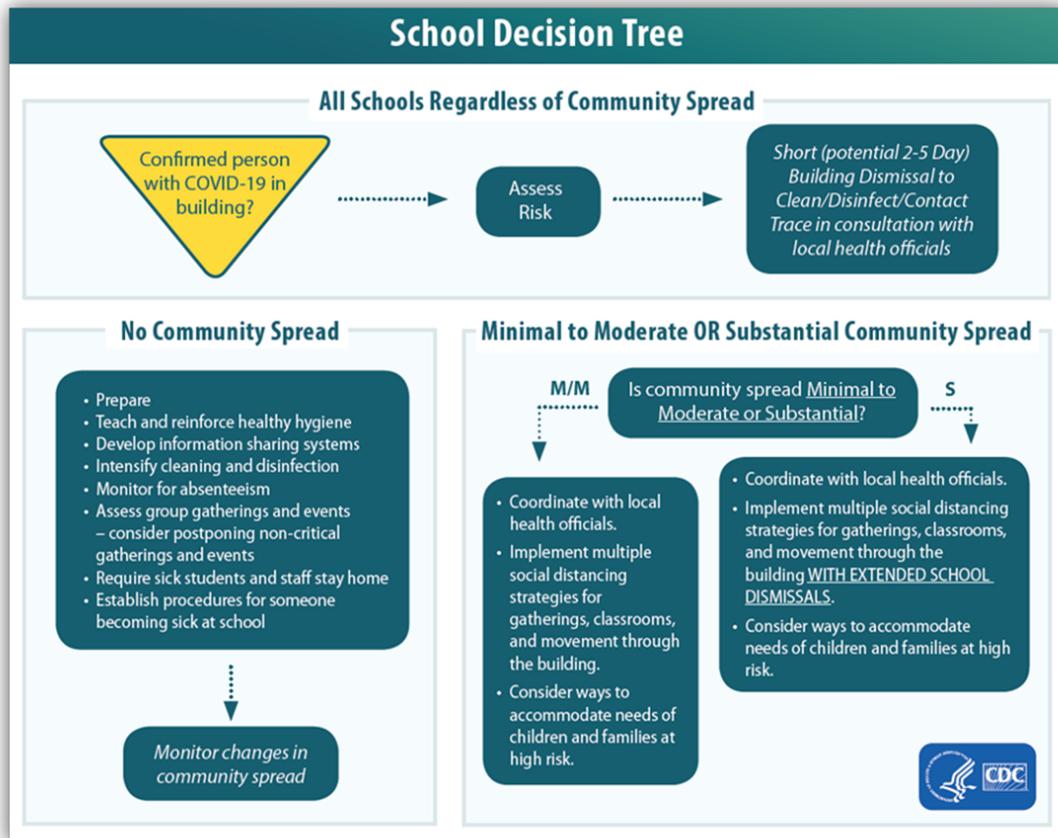
RSU 56 will continue with in person instruction if ongoing spread is not identified in our school community. Again, RSU 56 will follow the procedures outlined by MDOE and CDC. If MDOE or CDC recommends that schools move to hybrid or remote learning, RSU 56 will follow such guidance.

Scenario Three: Confirmed COVID 19 Case in one of our schools.

If RSU 56 becomes aware of a confirmed COVID-19 case in one of our schools, RSU 56 will contact MDOE and CDC immediately. RSU 56 will move to remote learning for at least 72 hours following a confirmed COVID-19 case in a school employee or student. This will allow CDC to conduct contact tracing if desired and discover which close contacts of the case should be quarantined, isolated, and excluded from the school. This will also allow school personnel to conduct environmental cleaning.

Scenario Four: Second Confirmed COVID-19 case occurs in our schools within 14 days of the first.

RSU 56 will move to remote learning for 14 days to reduce the spread and conduct environmental cleaning.



Part I Physical Health & Safety

Throughout Opening

- RSU 56 will continue communication with local and State authorities to determine current mitigation levels in the community. Local and regional health markers will be reviewed.
- RSU 56 will support and protect staff and students who are at [higher risk for severe illness](#), such as providing options for remote work and/or virtual learning if feasible.
- RSU 56 will follow MDOE's Guidance for schools, as updated regularly at <https://www.maine.gov/doe/covid-19/reintegrate>.
- RSU 56 will require external community organizations that use the facilities to also follow this guidance. During this pandemic, RSU 56 will limit the use of facilities for outside groups/agencies.

Safety Actions

- RSU 56 will promote [healthy hygiene practices](#).
- RSU 56 will teach and reinforce [washing hands](#) and covering coughs and sneezes among children and staff.
- RSU 56 will teach and reinforce use of [cloth or disposable face mask](#) among all staff and students. Face masks are *most essential* in times when physical distancing is not possible. For staff of the hard of hearing and deaf, face visors or clear masks may be an alternative consideration. Staff and students should be frequently reminded not to touch the face mask and to [wash their hands](#) frequently. Suggested facemasks can be found at the [Mayo Clinic website](#).
- RSU 56 will limit visitors from entering schools.
- Visiting staff, students, guests and vendors must sign in and out of buildings.
- RSU 56 will consider using disposable plates, cups, cutlery, etc.
- RSU 56 will provide information to all staff and students on [proper use, removal and washing of cloth face masks](#).
- RSU 56 will purchase, as available, adequate supplies to support healthy hygiene behaviors, including soap, hand sanitizer with at least 60 percent alcohol (for staff and older children who can safely use hand sanitizer), tissues, and no-touch trash cans.
- RSU 56 will post signs on how to [stop the spread](#) of COVID-19, [properly wash hands](#), [promote everyday protective measures](#), and [properly wear a face masks](#).

Intensify Cleaning, Disinfection, and Ventilation

- RSU 56 will [Clean and disinfect](#) frequently touched surfaces within the school and on school buses at least daily (for example, playground equipment, door handles, sink handles, drinking fountains) and shared objects (for example, toys, games, art supplies) between uses or use EPA approved cleaning methods that work for an established number of days.
- RSU 56 will clean and disinfect school buses, see guidance for [bus transit operators](#).
- RSU 56 will ensure [safe and correct application](#) of disinfectants and will keep products away from children.
- RSU 56 will sanitize cookware, plates, cups, cutlery and food preparation stations and service areas regularly, and plan for distribution that minimizes handling.

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- RSU 56 will sanitize table surfaces between eating shifts.
 - RSU 56 will ensure ventilation systems operate properly and increase circulation of outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, or other methods. RSU 56 will not open windows and doors if they pose a safety or health risk (e.g., allowing pollens in or exacerbating asthma symptoms) to children or adults using the facility.

Limit Sharing

- RSU 56 will encourage students to separate their belongings from others' in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
- RSU 56 will ensure adequate supplies to minimize sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (art supplies, equipment etc. assigned to a single student) or limit use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
- If food is offered at any event, RSU 56 will have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each attendee instead of a buffet or family-style meal.
- RSU 56 will continue to utilize a meal counting system that reduces contact.
- RSU 56 may consider temporarily limiting certain foods or foodservice processes we believe may lead to enhanced germ distribution.
- RSU 56 will continue to advise students from sharing their food.
- RSU 56 will avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.

Train All Staff

- RSU 56 will train all teachers and staff in the above safety actions.
- All RSU 56 employees will receive a RSU 56 COVID GUIDELINES RETURN TO WORK RULES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL EMPLOYEES. (See Appendix A.)

Checking for [Signs and Symptoms](#)

- RSU 56 will implement self- screenings for all staff and students. (See Appendix B for self screening tool.) The [Maine CDC symptom check](#) can also be used.
- RSU 56 nurses will screen students and/or staff who fail to self-screen, as feasible.
- RSU 56 will encourage staff or children who are sick to stay at home.

Plan for When a Staff Member, Student, or School Visitor Becomes Sick

- RSU 56 will work with school administrators, nurses, and other healthcare providers to identify an isolation room or area to separate anyone who exhibits COVID-like symptoms. School nurses and other healthcare providers should use [Standard and Transmission-Based Precautions](#) when caring for sick people. See: [What Healthcare Personnel Should Know About Caring for Patients with Confirmed or Possible COVID-19 Infection](#).
- RSU 56 will establish procedures for safely transporting anyone who is sick home or to a healthcare facility. (First choice will be for parents/family members to pick up the sick person.)
- RSU 56 will notify state and local health officials, staff, and families immediately of a possible case while maintaining confidentiality as required by the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#).
- RSU 56 will close off areas used by a sick person and will not use the area before cleaning and disinfection, according to CDC guidance: Wait 24 hours before environmental staff [clean and disinfect](#). If it is not possible to wait 24 hours, wait as long as possible. Ensure [safe and](#)

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- [correct application](#) of disinfectants and keep disinfectant products away from children.
 - RSU 56 will advise sick staff members not to return until they have met CDC [criteria to discontinue home isolation](#).
 - RSU 56 will inform those exposed to a person with COVID-19 to stay home and self-monitor for symptoms, and follow [CDC guidance](#) if symptoms develop. RSU 56 will provide options for virtual learning.

Maintain Healthy Operations

- RSU 56 will inform employees of their leave options, as necessary.
- RSU 56 will monitor absenteeism for students and staff.
- RSU 56 will monitor school nurse office traffic. School nurses and other healthcare providers play an important role in monitoring school nurse office traffic and the types of illnesses and symptoms among students.
- RSU 56 has designated Earl Couture as COVID19 Coordinator, responsible for responding to COVID-19 concerns. He can be contacted at eacouture@rsu56.org.
- RSU 56 will encourage staff and families to contact the schools for self-reporting of [symptoms and notification of exposures and closures](#).
- The district will use the following communications strategies for keeping parents, students and teachers informed: alert calls/texts, social media, mailings, and/or direct calls.

Social Distancing

- RSU 56 will post and encourage social distancing.
- RSU 56 will limit mixing between groups, as feasible.
- RSU 56 will limit gatherings and events to comply with Maine CDC guidance and Maine Governor decrees.
- RSU 56 will restrict nonessential visitors, volunteers, and activities involving other groups.
- RSU 56 will stagger arrival and drop-off times or locations, as feasible, to limit direct contact with parents as much as possible.

Part II: Social, Emotional Behavioral and Mental Health

This section will provide guidance regarding Social Emotional Learning (SEL). SEL is the process through which youth and adults identify and regulate emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain meaningful relationships, and make responsible decisions. SEL provides a teaching and learning process where youth and adults develop the necessary skills and attitudes that helps them to engage in learning more successfully, build supportive relationships, engage civically, and have a positive mental health. Thus, SEL provides a foundation for all students to thrive, where some students may need additional support (tier 2 and tier 3) to achieve positive mental health.

- RSU 56 will provide time for all mental health providers (social workers, counselors, etc.) to plan for potential staff and student needs prior to the first student day.
- RSU 56 will publish social work availability.
- RSU 56 will have a social worker in each building for students to access.
- RSU 56 will offer forums for parents, students, and community members so that questions, concerns and ideas can be shared.

- RSU 56 had already provided training on trauma-informed practices. Additional training will be provided, as needed.
- RSU 56 will provide resources to staff, students, and community members as needed.

Resources

- [Teaching the Whole Child](#)
- [CDC Tips to Helping Students Cope](#)
- [Trauma Informed Approach to Teaching through Coronavirus](#)
- [SEARCH Institute Building Developmental Relationships During the COVID Crisis](#)
- [Helping Children with Traumatic Separation or Grief During COVID-19](#)
- [Addressing Barriers to Learning](#)
- [Readiness and Emergency Management for Schools](#)
- [Psychological First Aid](#)
- [Strengthening Adults Social and Emotional Needs](#)
- [Supporting and Responding to Behavior](#)
- [CASEL Guide to Schoolwide Data Reflection Protocol](#)
- [Appropriate vs. Inappropriate Roles for School Counselors](#)
- [NCTSN Coping in Hard Times: Fact Sheet](#)
- [Supporting Children during COVID-19](#)
- [National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments](#)

Part III Academic Programs and Student Learning

- RSU 56 will use ESSER-F funds to pay stipends to online learning coordinators for each of our grade spans. (Andrea Palmer, grades PreK-2, Bethany Meehan-Poulin, grades 3-5, Nancy Carr, grades 6-8, Rachel Buck, grades 9-12)
- RSU 56 will work with Verence Gutierrez, consultant through Catalyst-Ed, on outlining best practices for online learning, including instructional practices, assessments, grading, and student engagement.
- RSU 56 has outlined in-person, hybrid and remote learning possibilities. All variations including following all MDOE and CDC guidelines:

* In person learning will entail incorporating all MDOE and CDC guidelines, including the use of masks, social distancing and traffic flow. Students who willfully and/or repeatedly fail to follow expected guidelines will be transferred to remote learning as well as possible disciplinary action. (Students with medical issues and/or disabilities will be provided multiple opportunities to reteach expectations, including social stories and modeling and will be handled on an individual basis.) During in-person learning, RSU 56 will train students on online learning platforms so that if we need to transition to a hybrid or remote learning model, the staff and students will be prepared. For families who opt not to send their student(s) to in-class sessions, online options will be available. These options will be outlined by building administrators. Families

interested in virtual learning should indicate such on the RSU 56 Family Survey or contact their child(ren)'s building principal. Students registered for in-building learning may transition to virtual learning at any time, however once a student is registered for virtual learning they cannot return to in-building learning until the start of a new grading term. In other words, due to logistical constraints regarding student numbers, once a student is registered for virtual learning they must complete that grading term (trimester at DES/DMS or quarter at DHS) before they again have the option of in-building learning. This does not apply to students registered for in-building learning who are absent for a reasonable period of time but wish to return once they meet the return protocol.

* Hybrid learning would consist of smaller groups attending schools on determined days while others utilize remote learning opportunities.

* Remote learning would consist of all students moving to online (virtual) learning. Set schedules and platforms will be utilized.

(Further details on hybrid and remote learning can be found on page 13.)

In addition, school specific guidance can be found by clicking on the school link below:

[Dirigo High School](#)

[TWK Dirigo Middle School](#)

[Dirigo Elementary School](#)

Resources

- [School Guide Essentials](#)
- [Determining Who Needs Additional Support - Universal Screening Tool](#)

Transportation

RSU 56 will follow all guidelines from Maine CDC and MDOE.

Bus drivers and students will be required to wear masks on the bus.

Drivers will be required to wear face shields on the bus when students are entering or exiting the bus.

A [flowchart](#) should be utilized if a child feels unwell on the bus.

Due to the need to maintain social distancing, bus notes to ride a different bus stop will not be allowed.

Child Nutrition Program

- The RSU 56 Food Service Director will teach and monitor all sanitation procedures while increasing the frequency of cleaning, maintenance of all sanitation charts, and review of HACCP with staff.
- RSU 56 will maintain all CDC standards for food service, masks/face shields, distance, hygiene, etc.
- Each school will investigate alternative dining locations within the school or school grounds to allow for 6' social distancing while eating.
- RSU 56 will consider how meals will be offered to students not in physical attendance.
- RSU 56 will improve ventilation by running exhaust fans more than normal in the kitchens.
- RSU 56 will remove self-serve ability (bars, milk coolers, and extras) during the pandemic.

School Health Office

- RSU 56 schools will decrease traffic to the school health office in order to prevent office congregation and possible exposure of healthy students to a symptomatic one. Classrooms will be provided with basic health need kits, such as band-aids, to distribute in class.
- RSU 56 nurses will triage and monitor symptomatic students and supervise isolation while waiting for dismissal. Each school will identify an isolation room.
- RSU 56 will utilize a standardized protocol for decision making in regards to ill students and staff.
- RSU 56 will use Cares Relief Funds (CRF) to support a school nurse in each building, if one is available to be hired. The school nurse will be responsible for the care and/or assessment of symptomatic adults and students in the building.

Extra and Co-Curricular

RSU 56 will follow all MPA guidance, which will be vetted through MDOE and CDC.

Special Education

Special education services will be provided as outlined in IEPs. For more information, please refer to the [Special Education Framework](#).

Part IV Common Expectations for Hybrid and Remote Learning

Hybrid Model:

A hybrid model would be utilized if the district was unable to meet all the CDC and/or MDOE requirements to be fully in school or is recommended by CDC/MDOE as “yellow” classification. A hybrid model consists of students attending on certain days and working remotely on other days. If RSU 56 has to implement a hybrid model, the following would occur:

If RSU 56 Schools are able to follow CDC guidelines for social distancing with the number of in-person students, then: Students who opted for in-person learning would continue to attend five days per week.

If RSU 56 Schools are unable to follow CDC guidelines for social distancing due to the number of in-person students, then:

On Mondays and Tuesdays, students who live in Peru and Canton would attend in-school sessions. Students who live in Dixfield and Carthage, would work remotely on those days.

On Wednesday, all students would work remotely. This would allow time for industrial cleaning to occur in the schools.

On Thursdays and Fridays, students who live in Dixfield and Carthage would attend in-school sessions. Students who live in Peru and Canton would work remotely on these days.

Remote Model:

A remote model of schooling would be utilized if the district was unable to meet the CDC and/or MDOE requirements for in-session or hybrid learning or if the Governor or MDOE recommends remote learning. A remote model consists of all students learning remotely.

RSU 56 would offer regularly scheduled classes via Google Classroom (grades 6-12) or SeeSaw (grades PreK-5). Students would meet with teachers during Google Classroom and in smaller groups as necessary. Staff would provide direct instruction through googleclassroom and assignments would be completed at home. Additional links within the platforms might be utilized.

Part V Additional Considerations:

At the start of the 2020-21 school year, RSU 56 will offer two options to parents:

1. in-school learning (students attend school daily and follow all MDOE/CDC guidelines) or
2. virtual learning (students learn online from home)

RSU 56 will be following all MDOE and CDC guidelines for students opting for in-school learning. These guidelines include, but are not limited to, wearing facemasks, social distancing and frequent hand cleaning or sanitizing. All students who opt for in-school learning must comply with the established guidelines as outlined both in schools and on the bus.

For families who are not comfortable with in-school learning, virtual learning will be provided by RSU 56. Virtual learning may look different from school to school within RSU 56. If families choose to participate in virtual learning, students must show up for scheduled classes and complete assignments. Virtual learning will be graded. Attendance will be taken. Although students will be issued an RSU 56 device (laptop or i-pad depending on grade), families should have connectivity in order to participate fully. If families choose virtual learning for their child(ren), this decision will remain in effect until the end of the first quarter/trimester at which time they may opt back in to in-school learning by contacting their child(ren)'s building principal.

Appendix A

RSU 56 COVID GUIDELINES RETURN TO WORK RULES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR ALL EMPLOYEES



"Historically, pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and imagine their world anew. This one is no different. It is a portal, a gateway between one world and the next. We can choose to walk through it, dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred, our avarice, our data banks and dead ideas, our dead rivers and smoky skies behind us. Or we can walk through lightly, with little luggage, ready to imagine another world. And ready to fight for it."

- Arundhati Roy

In response to COVID-19, RSU 56 will comply with the guidelines set forth by the federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC), as well as the State of Maine, which are incorporated herein. These RSU 56 Guidelines will be in effect from August 1, 2020 through the end of the pandemic 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 between people. **Therefore, these RSU 56 GUIDELINES are mandatory for all employees.**

The year we are about to embark upon will be a difficult one in which employees will need to be flexible and may need to perform tasks, duties, or be utilized in ways which were not present in previous school experiences. We must consider the work we do for our children as our collective responsibility. With a continued focus on positive relationships, meeting our students' social/emotional needs and the overall wellbeing of the "whole child," we will successfully meet this challenge and become stronger for it.

- Pam Doyen, Superintendent of Schools

Health & Safety

- Before returning to work, employees who have left Maine¹(beyond State's in the current Executive Order--see footnote below) since July 1, 2020 must provide a negative COVID-19 test result or attest that they have sufficiently quarantined. After August 1, travel outside of Maine and non Governor approved states must be reported in advance to your immediate supervisor.
- Each day, before entering RSU 56 property, employees must complete a self-assessment for COVID-19 symptoms. Any yes responses will require an employee to immediately contact their supervisor and remain off RSU 56 property. *See attached daily self-assessment.*
- All employees will be provided with five [face masks](#) and one shield and must [wash them daily](#). Employees may wear their own face mask.
- Upon entering RSU 56 buildings, all employees must wear a face mask (or shield if medically documented and necessary in lieu of a mask) at all times, unless their immediate supervisor has approved an exception. The following exceptions may be approved, provided that the employee can maintain six (6) feet of distance² – about two arm's length—from others:
 1. When the employee's face cannot safely be covered due to a medical condition.
 2. When there are no others in the same room and the door is closed. For example, working in a closed conference room, office, or classroom.
- When outside, Maine CDC guidance will be followed. At this time, masks can be removed if social distancing can be established when outside. The Governor's executive order can be found [here](#).
- All employees must wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds (or use sanitizer if washing is not possible)³ when:
 - The employee's hands are visibly soiled
 - After coughing or sneezing
 - Before and after: eating, using the restroom, or touching bodily fluids
 - Before and after touching common surfaces like workstations, cash registers, table tops, touch screens, door handles, refrigerator doors, buttons or keypads, light switches, cover plates, countertops, bus seat backs, handrails, time clocks, stability poles, bars, windows and window ledges.
- All employees must practice the following proper [CDC infection control measures](#):
 - If coughing or sneezing, employees must cover their mouth and nose with a tissue, or the inside of their elbow, and immediately discard the tissue.

¹ Except for travel to New Hampshire, Vermont, Connecticut, New York, or New Jersey.

² See [CDC guidance on social distancing](#).

³ See [CDC guidance for proper handwashing](#).

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- Avoid touching their eyes, nose, or mouth.
 - Avoid touching any surfaces unnecessarily.
 - Refrain from hugs and hand-shakes
 - Notify their director supervisor if they, or anyone in their household, has been confirmed to have COVID-19. *See Return to Work guidelines attached.*
 - Minimize face-to-face meetings by utilizing alternative methods to move projects forward (i.e. email, conference call, phone call, web-based meetings).
 - Follow any additional guidelines established for their specific job role.

Communal Areas/Breakrooms

- School offices are restricted to administrative and office staff. Any other employee seeking to access main office spaces must request admittance at the office window prior to entering.
- Plexiglas barriers will be installed at public facing work stations, as needed.
- Elevators will be limited to a maximum of two (2) people per ride.

- Eating Restrictions: Shared food is prohibited. There will be no shared utensils or kitchen supplies. Employees who bring their own meals must sanitize appliances after each use and any individual containers/utensils will be discarded at the end of the day. Employees must maintain 6' of distance between others when eating. Employees may eat lunch outside.

Visitors

- Employees cannot bring visitors/volunteers to RSU 56 property without prior approval by their building administrator and all visitors/volunteers must adhere to these RSU 56 Guidelines and leave RSU 56 property immediately after concluding their business.

Work-Related Travel

- Employees are expected to travel alone in their own vehicles for work (unless employees live together) and must receive prior approval from their supervisor for work travel. If employees cannot travel alone, they must wear face masks inside a vehicle.
- Employees must minimize contact with others while traveling and must sanitize RSU 56 vehicles upon return. At their destination, Employees must adhere to any safety guidelines in place at that location, in addition to these RSU 56 guidelines.

Leave

- Employees may have access to the following types of leave for COVID19 related illness:
 - Sick leave & sick bank (if eligible)
 - Families First Corona Virus Act (FFCRA)

- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

Please contact Cathy Arsenault at 207-562-4300 or carsenault@rsu56.org for detailed leave information.

In addition to the RSU 56 COVID GUIDELINES, all transportation employees must:

Health & Safety

- Wash their hands (or use sanitizer if washing is not possible) upon entering the workplace and practice frequent hand washing/hand sanitizing throughout their shift, including upon entering/exiting the bus.
- Wipe all commonly used surfaces and hands before and after each use with the cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer available in all public areas. The general rule here is: “if you touch it, wipe it.”
- Maintain six foot distancing as much as practicable. Wear a mask if within 6 feet of other employees.
- Wear a face shield while driving with others on board. If a face shield is not possible due to obstruction of vision, a face mask
- must be worn.

Bussing of Students

- Limit contact between cohorts and direct contact with parents as much as possible by maintaining a six (6) foot distance.
- Seat one student per row in every other row, the seat directly behind the driver must be open. Prohibited seats will be marked with tape. Families will be allowed to sit together.
- 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, as much as practicable.
- Students will need to practice social distancing when exiting the bus.
- Several windows should be slightly opened to improve air ventilation, when appropriate.
- Up to two (2) children are allowed in each 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, including the driver.
- The Bus/Van should be swept and sanitized after the completion of each assigned route. See “Prevention Measures” below for more details.

Paperwork/Logistics

- Driver log books - Yellow papers will remain in the book on the bus until the end of the week.
- A new copy of required weekly paperwork will be placed in the mailbox at the beginning of each week (i.e. mileage reports).
- Behavior reports will be communicated via the school department-issued email account or text message at the end of each bus run.

Prevention Measures

- Bus drivers will be provided safety glasses that should be worn to wash the outside of the bus.
- Floors should be cleaned first. Often when cleaning the floor of a bus, dust and contaminants on the floor become airborne and land on nearby surfaces. By cleaning the floor first, we can later remove these pathogens through the rest of the cleaning process, so this does not occur. School bus floors should be vacuumed with a backpack or canister vacuum when needed. These are more effective at removing dust and soil and they prevent contaminants from becoming airborne.
- Avoidance of mops suggested. Mops collect soil and contaminants, but these also build upon the mop. Use only when necessary, and with approval from the BGT supervisor.
- At the end of each day, all trash cans must be emptied. Designated staff will spray the busses after employees have finished sweeping floors.

Additional Cleaning Logistics

ITEMS THAT NEED TO BE SPECIFICALLY DISINFECTED DURING A PANDEMIC:

- **Restrooms/Bathrooms:**
 - Door knobs or handles
 - Light switches and cover plates
 - Paper towel dispenser knobs or handles
 - Faucet handles
 - Toilet and urinal flush levers
 - Toilet and urinal partitions, doors (including knobs, levers or slides)
 - Other items identified locally
- **Locker rooms:**
 - Door knobs or handles
 - Light switches and cover plates

- Other items as identified on the checklist provided
- **Classrooms and Office Spaces:**
 - Door knobs or handles
 - Light switches and cover plates
- **Other locations:**
 - Nurse's Office
 - Elevator call and operating buttons
 - Stairway handrails, doorknobs, light switches
 - Hallway door knobs, handles, drinking fountain faucets
 - Vending machines
 - Other items identified
- Special cleaning and disinfecting processes, including wiping down walls, will occur.
- Always follow label directions on cleaning products and disinfectants. Be sure to read the label directions carefully and review SDS (safety data sheets). **Prior district training requires the use of gloves for all cleaning and disinfecting procedures regardless of SDS requirements.** For spray application of disinfectants safety glasses or goggles shall be worn again regardless of SDS requirements. Dwell time (wet time on surface) for the application of disinfectants shall be observed as outlined in application instructions.
- Do not mix cleaners and disinfectants unless the labels indicate it is safe to do so.
- Sharing of personal tools shall not be allowed. District provided tools shall be cleaned/ disinfecting prior to use.
- Permission is granted to maintenance employees to travel in district vehicles to a maximum of two individuals both of which must wear face coverings for the duration of trip.

In addition to the RSU 56 COVID GUIDELINES, all administrative employees must:

- Sanitize common equipment (copiers, projectors, monitors, etc.) before and after each use.
- Sanitize own desk, equipment, and office areas on a regular basis (at least daily) to prevent the spread of germs. (i.e. keyboards, telephones, doorknobs).
- Avoid using coworkers' phones, desks, offices, or other work tools and equipment, unless the employee is authorized to do so by the employee's supervisor. If an employee uses a coworker's phone, desk, office, or other work tools and equipment, the employee must clean and disinfect them before and after use.
- All office communications should be by phone, email, or other remote technology and the use of paper is only for permanent records or communications that must be mailed.
- Employees will thoroughly wash their hands (or use sanitizer if washing is not possible) after opening and handling mail. The use of gloves while opening mail is encouraged.

In addition to the RSU 56 COVID GUIDELINES, all nutrition employees must comply with the following rules:

Health & Safety

- Staff must wear face masks when preparing food and working with or in proximity to employees or students.
- Food Service Workers must practice [proper handwashing](#) throughout their shift with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. In addition to the circumstances under which employees are required to wash their hands set forth in the district-wide Rules and Expectations, Food Service Workers must wash their hands:
 - Before, during, and after preparing food
 - Before and after work shifts-As employee arrives and leaves
 - Before and after work breaks
 - After putting on, touching, or removing cloth face masks
 - After removing gloves
 - After directly handling used food service items
 - After touching objects that have been handled by others, such as utensils, menus, cups, and trash
 - After touching dirty surfaces like floors, walls and soiled carriers and equipment
- Employees must be vigilant to maintain six (6) feet of distance while removing or bringing in items to walk-in coolers or storerooms.
- Staff must properly use gloves during food preparation.

Prevention Measures

- Each employee will have an assigned workstation and should limit interactions with other workstations whenever possible.
- Minimize handling cash, credit cards, and mobile devices, whenever possible.
- Practice routine cleaning and disinfection of frequently touched surfaces, such as workstations, cash registers, table tops, touch screens, door handles, refrigerator door handles, microwave door handles and buttons/keypads, light switches and cover plates, counter tops.
- All food served to students must be covered and individually wrapped. Dining utensils are individually wrapped. All meals must be served as a unit.

- Use disposable food service items (e.g., utensils, dishes). If disposable items are not feasible or desirable, ensure that all non-disposable food service items are handled with gloves and washed with dish soap and hot water or in a dishwasher.
- If food is offered at any event, have pre-packaged boxes or bags for each attendee instead of a buffet or family-style meal. Avoid sharing food or utensils.
- Any food and beverage items served from food service staff will be served by staff following safety and sanitation guidelines, including appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Staff will increase the frequency of cleaning and sanitizing and keep sanitation charts updated. Pay special attention to cleaning “high-touch” areas.
- Staff will sanitize all surfaces and equipment at days end.
- Managers will complete daily safety and sanitation checklists.

In addition to the RSU 56 COVID GUIDELINES, all instructional employees must:

Health & Safety

- Staff will model frequent hand washing/hand sanitizing for students throughout the school day, including upon entering/exiting the classroom.
- Staff will wipe down and sanitize classroom desks and charging stations when students vacate the classroom in the middle of the day. Cleaning products and proper training will be provided.
- **SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS/ED TECHS:** Determination of additional PPE requirements will be made by the Special Education Director based upon the unique needs of each student/situation. Additional PPE may be required for staff working with young children, students with IEPs or students with specialized health plans such as, but not limited to:
 - Clear face coverings
 - Face shields
 - Kevlar sleeves/arm protectors
 - Gloves
 - Gowns
 - Plexiglass barriers for student desks

Shared Objects

- Teachers should do the following with respect to shared objects:
 - Discourage the sharing of items that are difficult to clean or disinfect.
 - Keep each child's belongings separated from others' and in individually labeled containers, cubbies, or areas.
 - Ensure adequate supplies to minimize the sharing of high touch materials to the extent possible (e.g., assigning each student their own art supplies, manipulatives, and other equipment) or limit the use of supplies and equipment by one group of children at a time and clean and disinfect between use.
 - Avoid sharing electronic devices, toys, books, and other games or learning aids.
 - Remove any furniture, toys, rugs, and other items that cannot be easily cleaned each day.
- Prior to being eligible to substitute within the RSU 56, substitutes must complete a district sponsored training program. This training program will include specific

information regarding sanitization practices required for each of the categories listed above.

- All substitutes must then follow the specific guidelines listed above for the areas within which they substitute.

In addition to the RSU 56 COVID GUIDELINES, all nurses must:

- Use appropriate PPE when working with students and staff who visit the nurse's office.
- Frequently sanitize the nurses' station and medical equipment as well as areas used for isolation of suspected COVID-19 cases.
- Keep district administration abreast of any notable health trends, and especially any suspected or confirmed cases of COVID-19.
- Nurses should be vigilant and attend to reporting and documentation obligations, including and especially [NNDSS](#).

In addition to the RSU 56 COVID GUIDELINES, all social workers, counselors, and coordinators must:

- Support SEL health of students upon reentry in buildings.
- Limit home visits to emergency situations only. Employees should follow the same prevention guidelines above (masks; 6-foot distance, travel guidelines) and remain outside the home whenever possible. No home visits should be made without prior approval from the employee's supervisor.

In addition to the RSU 56 COVID GUIDELINES, all technology employees must:

- Staff should continue to attempt troubleshooting tasks remotely.
- Technology staff members may not work on/troubleshoot a device in close proximity to other staff members. A distance of at least six (6) feet must be maintained at all times.
- When working on other individuals' devices, gloves should be worn at all times, and the portion(s) of the device being worked on should be disinfected providing that doing so will not harm the device. Staff will be provided with wipes to accomplish this purpose.
- After all incidents of working on other people's devices, the Technology staff must wash their hands for at least 20 seconds and/or use hand sanitizer.
- Technology staff will devise a system/furniture set up in their own workspaces that will encourage or prevent others from passing a certain point/entering the room.
- Technology staff will encourage staff to drop off devices in need of service. The technology staff will then work on devices without staff waiting to minimize contact.
- When meeting with outside vendors, Technology staff must wear face masks and require vendors to do the same.
- Technology staff will clean their own workspaces, equipment, desks, devices, etc. daily.

In addition to the RSU 56 COVID GUIDELINES, all coaches and stipend positions must maintain adequate cleaning schedules, which will be created and implemented for all athletic facilities to mitigate any communicable diseases. Until an MPA guidance document is produced, please use the [National Federation of State High School Associations Document](#) for detailed guidance.

CDC TRAINING VIDEOS:

- [Cloth Face Coverings Do's and Dont's](#)
- [Handwashing](#)
- [Social Distancing](#)
- [Stop the spread of germs](#)
- [Know the Symptoms of COVID-19](#)

RETURN TO WORK PLAN FOR EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE TESTED POSITIVE FOR COVID-19

RSU 56 will comply with CDC recommendations regarding employees' return to work after testing positive for COVID-19. The recommendations can be found [here](#).

If an employee has been out of work due to testing positive for COVID-1, the employee will need to provide a medical note stating that they are medically cleared to return to work prior to doing so.

RETURN TO WORK PLAN FOR EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE BEEN SELF QUARANTINED DUE TO EXPOSURE TO COVID-19

Employees who believe they have been exposed to COVID-19 should STAY HOME, CONTACT THEIR SUPERVISOR, follow [CDC Guidelines for quarantine and self isolation](#), and contact their PCP. Employees who have been tested and the results were negative should communicate those results to their supervisor. Once done, the supervisor may allow the employee to return to work and forward paperwork along to the Human Resources Manager (Cathy Arsenault). Employees who have not been tested but who have exhibited symptoms of COVID-19 may not return to work until the employee has gone three days without exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19, and at least ten days have passed since the employee's symptoms appeared.

PLAN FOR "HIGH RISK" EMPLOYEES

RSU 56 will work with each individual employee to provide realistic accommodations to employees who may be in need. Communication is the key to the establishment of effective accommodations for employees. Any employees who have a medical condition that is considered to be in a "high risk" category" should communicate with their direct supervisor and provide medical documentation. This will allow RSU 56 to review the circumstances and to understand if accommodations may be made and if there is a need for remote work. Given that we work in a school system in which the majority of students will be at school, there is no guarantee there will be remote work available. Those employees who must be out and who are unable to work remotely, will need to use available leave provided in the appropriate employment agreement/negotiated contract. Additionally, employees may have access to additional leave via FFCRA or FMLA.

COVID-19 RETURN TO WORK AGREEMENT
EMPLOYEE TO SIGN AND RETURN TO DIRECT SUPERVISOR

RSU 56 will adhere to the guidelines set forth by the CDC as well as the State of Maine in response to COVID-19. Our goal is to continue to minimize the interaction and risk of possible transmission of COVID-19 between employees. Work schedules and workspaces may have been modified or reassigned to ensure employees are safe and able to comply in accordance with the RSU 56 COVID-19 Return to Work Agreement.

I, _____, acknowledge, understand, and agree that while working in a RSU 56 building I am to adhere to the following protocol:

1. I will complete a self-screening assessment daily to check for symptoms of COVID-19. Certain responses will require that I remain home. In this event, I will contact my supervisor immediately.
2. I will enter any RSU 56 building with my identification badge and a face mask each day.
3. I will wear my face covering/mask/shield when in the presence of others (ie. restroom, hallway, any suites, elevator, conference rooms, communal areas, etc.) or maintain six (6) feet of distance--about two arm's length- at all times throughout the workday.
4. I will practice [proper handwashing guidelines](#) and use hand sanitizer upon entering the workplace and throughout the workday. Hands should be washed with soap and water for at least 20 seconds when visibly soiled, before eating, and after coughing/sneezing and using the restroom.
5. I will only utilize the elevator with one additional passenger for a maximum of two (2) people per ride.
6. If during my workday, I begin to experience any signs and symptoms of respiratory illness or spike a fever of 100.4°F or higher, I will notify my supervisor immediately to avoid exposing others in the workplace.

- 7. I will notify my direct supervisor if I, or anyone in my household, has been confirmed to have COVID-19. As a response to protect the health and safety of our workforce, RSU 56 will notify the Facilities Director so the work areas can be sanitized and will follow the CDC guidelines to notify all employees that have come in contact with and/or have been exposed to this person in the most confidential manner possible.
- 8. I will minimize face-to-face meetings by utilizing alternative methods to move projects forward (i.e. email, conference call, phone call, web-based meetings).
- 9. I will follow any additional guidelines established for my specific job role and essential travel guidelines which are included in this document.
- 10. I have watched the CDC training videos included and understand the expectations.

My signature below is an acknowledgment that I have read, understand, and agree to comply with the above terms. I also acknowledge that failure to adhere to this agreement could result in disciplinary action with respect to a violation of the RSU 56 Framework for Returning to Classroom Instruction 2020. Employees will be notified of updates as guidance may change.

Andrea D Palmer _____
Employee's Signature

Sept 18, 2020 _____
Date

Director/Supervisor Signature

Date

Appendix B

SELF-ASSESSMENT REQUIRED DAILY BY ALL STAFF:



COVID-19 - RSU 56 Daily Screening Tool

Today or in the past 24 hours have you had any of the following:

YES	NO	
		Fever
		New Cough
		Runny nose
		Sneezing
		Sore throat
		Headache
		Muscle aches
		Chills
		Fatigue
		Malaise (feeling unwell)
		Chest pain
		Shortness of breath
		Difficulty breathing
		Inability to keep liquids down because of vomiting
		Diarrhea
		Loss of taste and/or smell

	YES	NO
In the past 14 days have you had contact with a person known to be infected with the novel coronavirus (COVID-19)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you traveled to any "hot spot" area within the past 14 days?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a sick family member at home with any of the above symptoms?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

****REPORT ANY "YES" RESPONSES TO THE ABOVE QUESTIONS TO YOUR DIRECT SUPERVISOR OR SCHOOL NURSE, WHO MAY ASK FOR CLARIFICATION OF YOUR ANSWERS.****