

November 20, 2020

Dear RSU 16 Families and Community Members,

Green to Yellow

On Friday, November 13, the color designation for Androscoggin county changed from green to yellow. *Categorization as “yellow” suggests that the county has an elevated risk of COVID-19 spread and that schools may consider hybrid instructional models as a way to reduce the number of people in schools and classrooms at any one time.* RSU 16 was already using a hybrid model, however the change in color designation impacts all in-person extracurricular activities.

- In-person extracurricular activities are suspended.
- All athletic activities are suspended.
- Any activities associated with extracurricular activities or athletics must be conducted virtually or postponed until further notice.
- Our educational cohorts remain the same.

Wednesdays in December and January

In December and January we will use Wednesdays as **half day** in-person instruction for cohorts. These Wednesdays will be half day with dismissal at middle/high school at 11:00AM and elementary school at 12:15PM.

Wednesday, December 9, January 6, and January 20 Cohort A students will attend for half day in-person instruction.

Wednesday, December 2, December 16, January 13 Cohort B students will attend school for half day in-person instruction.

There will be no PreK on Wednesdays.

Our school calendar can be found on our website, www.rsu16.org

Holiday Travel

Any staff or students who travel to any state other than New Hampshire or Vermont (no restrictions for these two states only as of 11/16/20; subject to change), they will be required to either: 1) quarantine for 14 days upon return to Maine **or** 2) provide a negative COVID -19 test once you return to Maine. Students or staff will need to provide the negative COVID-19 test results to their school nurse prior to returning to in-person learning.

Any staff or students who have traveled to restricted states will not be permitted inside the school building until either the negative test result or 14 days has occurred.

This is not dependent on the length of time spent within the restricted states, meaning that a day visit still requires any person to quarantine for 14 days or until a negative test result is confirmed. All members of the household who travel must test or quarantine if over 12 months old.

PLAN AHEAD! Before leaving the state, make your COVID-19 test appointment for when you return. Appointments can be made at your PCP's office or at any Maine testing site. Testing site information for Maine can be found, [here](https://www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine/keepmainehealthy/testing). <https://www.maine.gov/covid19/restartingmaine/keepmainehealthy/testing>

Any person who is quarantining should stay home, and not have in-person contact with others unless there is an emergency.

A non-traditional Thanksgiving can be hard on all of us, and the CDC has some suggestions on healthy alternatives and precautions to consider that can be found, [here](#).

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/thanksgiving.html>

Please stay safe, and help us to keep our school community safe and able to provide for the students we serve.

Close contact

A close contact is defined as someone who was within 6 feet of an infected person for a cumulative total of 15 minutes or more over a 24-hour period starting from 2 days before illness onset (or, for asymptomatic patients, 2 days prior to test specimen collection) until the time the patient is isolated.

Is a close contact of a close contact considered a close contact? No. If you have been around someone who was identified as a [close contact](#) to a person with COVID-19, closely monitor yourself for any [symptoms of COVID-19](#). You do not need to self-quarantine unless you develop symptoms or if the person identified as a [close contact](#) develops COVID-19.

Within the classroom of a confirmed case, all students/staff/teachers in that classroom are considered close contacts regardless of the setup of the classroom or face covering use. Exposures in art, library, and cafeteria settings for student/staff/teacher will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. *If I am a close contact, can I get a negative COVID test and return to work or school?* No, even with a negative COVID test you will still need to complete the 14-day quarantine.

There are multiple ways we can minimize transmission, including physical distancing and masking [Transmission, Exposure, and Masking](#).

Snow Days

Currently our last day of school is Monday, June 7 with no snow days. This school year we will have the joy of four snow days. This means our last day of school, if we use the four snow days, will be Friday, June 11. If (or dare say when) we go over four snow days, we will move to remote learning plans instead of calling a snow day. If power is out, then we would need to reconsider and possibly use a snow day.

Substitutes

RSU 16 has a need for substitutes. If you are available full day, half day, or just a few hours around lunch and recess, we could use your help. Call your school if you are an approved substitute or if you would like to become an approved substitute, email Amy Hediger at ahediger@rsu16.org

Maine CDC recommends prevention measures to help control the spread of COVID-19. These measures include proper handwashing with soap and warm water, which is especially important after using the bathroom, before/after eating, after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing. When soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands and avoid close contact with people who are sick. Cover your cough or sneeze into a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash. Clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and objects.

Thank you for your continued commitment, grace and support. Please continue to take the necessary precautions to keep our communities healthy and safe and our students in school.

Sincerely,
Ken Healey and Amy Hediger