

December 22, 2020

Dear RSU 16 Families and Communities,

As we prepare for the holiday season and school break, we are thankful for all the in-person school days thus far that have been provided to students and staff during the pandemic. We need all members of our communities to help control the spread of COVID-19. If you are visiting or riding with someone outside the immediate household, please wear a mask, maintain social distance, and wash your hands. We look forward to opening our doors for in-person learning on January 4. Please help us make sure we can do that.

Household Cases of COVID-19 during school vacation

Please report **ANY** household cases of COVID-19 over the holiday break by calling: **(207) 740-0791**. Please leave a message at this number with contact information to receive a call back. Even though we are not in school, it is important to report **ALL** household cases. The school nurses are required to report all student cases to the Department of Education (DOE), and a positive case within your home may impact close contacts within our schools.

If you/your student test positive: Please isolate immediately. Do not wait for a call from the Maine CDC to isolate. You should stay in isolation until you meet criteria to leave. If you have close contact with a positive case, please quarantine at home for 10 days from your last exposure to the positive case. You should stay in quarantine until you meet the criteria to leave.

Travel during school vacation

For students and staff that may be traveling during the holiday break, please remember to inform the school of upcoming travel plans.

There are two options for Maine residents traveling to a non-exempt state (currently this means ANY states besides NH and VT) and returning to Maine per the governor's Executive Order mandate:

1. Complete a 10-day quarantine upon arrival in Maine and continue to monitor for signs and symptoms for an additional 4 days OR
2. Obtain and receive a negative COVID-19 antigen or molecular (PCR, NAAT, or isothermal) test upon return, then the traveler may forgo the 10-day quarantine. The traveler must quarantine while waiting for test results.

It is important for schools to know the date of return and intentions to quarantine upon return to Maine or to obtain a COVID19 test. If testing is completed, please provide a copy of the test results to the school nurse.

Safety Measures to keep school open

Please remember that staying home remains the most effective way to protect yourself and your family. As we look forward to 2021, there is much to be optimistic about as the COVID-19 vaccine has arrived in Maine and we can largely control our destiny by following the steps below:

1. Wear a mask that covers your nose and mouth when you leave home
2. Wash your hands regularly
3. Practice social distancing, even if you are wearing a mask

If we work together, we can stop the COVID-19 spike that is impacting our state at this time.

Support Resources

The increased isolation and anxiety caused by the pandemic can have a significant influence on the mental health of students and families. Listed below are some resources that you may find valuable.

call 211: for COVID19 related information, how to access behavioral health and social service resources

Maine's Statewide Crisis Line: 1-888-568-1112 available 24/7

Maine's Intentional Support Warm Line: 1-866-771-WARM (9276) (peer support)

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) ([or online chat here](#))

National Crisis Text Line: Text HOME to 741741

Trevor Project LGBTQ Crisis Line: 1-866-488-7386 ([online chat here](#) or text TREVOR to 1-202-304-1200)

Teen Text Line: Text 207-515-TEXT (Not a Crisis Line- 12pm-10pm, peer supported)

Wishing all of the RSU 16 family a wonderful holiday season and prosperous New Year.

Sincerely,

Ken Healey and Amy Hediger